

# 2020

*An Unprecedented Year*

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Harris County  
Juvenile Probation Department  
2020 ANNUAL REPORT



## Mission Statement

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department is committed to the protection of the public utilizing intervention strategies that are community-based, family-oriented, and least restrictive while emphasizing responsibility and accountability of both parent and child.

## Core Values

We value the belief that everyone is to be treated with dignity and respect.

We value the belief that each person has innate worth, dignity, and the capacity for positive change.

We value services that are ethical, effective, and culturally competent.

We value and promote a positive image of the department, employees, and our role within the community.

We value an environment that promotes initiative, productivity, teamwork, and professional growth.

We value an atmosphere which stresses tolerance and is free of discrimination.

We value developing collaborative efforts with judicial, legislative, and community partners.

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## Harris County Commissioners Court

The Harris County Commissioners Court is a five-member elected body responsible for the general administration of county business.

As a county agency, the Juvenile Probation Department receives most of its annual budget from the Commissioners Court. In Calendar Year 2020, \$83,227,770.53 was allocated for staff salaries, direct client services, county facilities and general operating expenses.

The Commissioners Court also determines county personnel regulations and sets operational guidelines followed by the department. Commissioners Court support enables the Juvenile Probation Department to provide services to thousands of at-risk youth and their families each year.

### The members of Commissioners Court are as follows:

**Lina Hidalgo**  
Harris County Judge

**Rodney Ellis**  
Commissioner, Precinct One

**Adrian Garcia**  
Commissioner, Precinct Two

**Steve Radack**  
Commissioner, Precinct Three

**R. Jack Cagle**  
Commissioner, Precinct Four

## 2020 Harris County Juvenile Board

The Harris County Juvenile Board is the governing body of the Juvenile Probation Department. It also serves as the school board for the Juvenile Probation's Excel Academy Charter School. As mandated by state statute, the Juvenile Board monitors all of the department's programs, institutional services, and residential placement facilities. The board also sets administrative policies and approves the department's annual budget prior to submission to Commissioners Court.



**Judge Lina Hidalgo**  
Harris County,  
Chairperson



**Judge Natalia Oakes**  
313th District Court



**Judge Michelle Moore**  
314th District Court,  
Vice Chairperson,  
Secretary



**Judge Leah Shapiro**  
315th District Court



**Judge Julia Maldonado**  
507th Family  
District Court



**Tanya Garrison**  
157th Civil District  
Court



**Judge Richard Vara**  
Harris County Justice  
of the Peace for  
Precinct 6, Place 1



**Judge Danilo Lacayo**  
182nd Criminal  
District Court

### Associate Judges



**William Thursland**  
313th District Court



**Eric Andell**  
314th District Court



**Dena Fisher**  
315th District Court



**Samanta Davis**  
Detention Referee

## Letter from the Chief

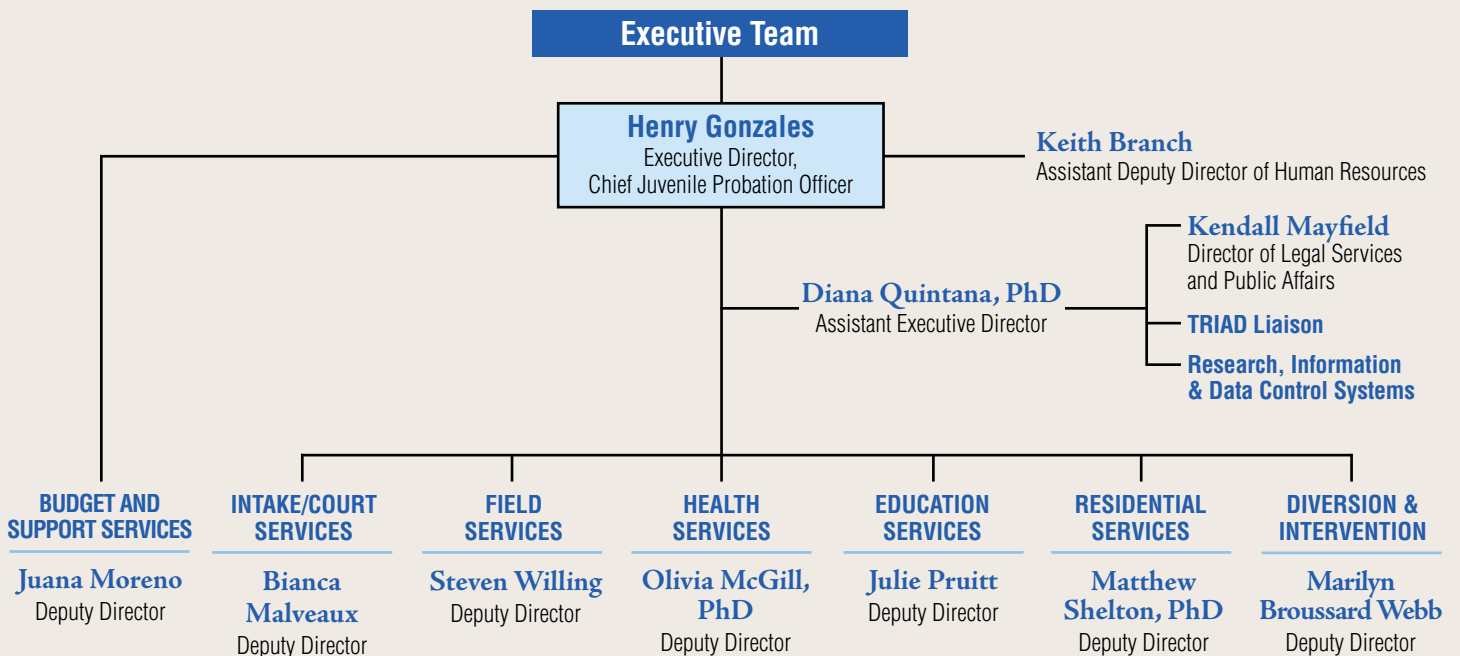


As we entered 2020, we did so with excitement and eagerness as the New Year would bring with it a well-planned focus on Juvenile Justice reform in Harris County. A juvenile justice task force was scheduled to kick-off at the exact time the Covid-19 pandemic took control of 2020. Like with all other sectors, this unprecedented event forced a swift shift in plans and priorities. Suddenly, tasked with determining how to continue our functions in ways that kept everyone involved in our system safe - the young people and their families, our staff, the courts, and the public - the HCJPD staff proceeded forward and successfully navigated this uncharted territory like the true dedicated professionals they are. Juvenile justice stakeholders stepped up to the plate to find safe ways of supporting the young people and their families. Law enforcement agencies referred fewer young people, especially those lower level offenses. The District Attorney's office diverted a significant number of young people out of the court system and straight into diversion programs. The Juvenile Court judges shifted to the use of technology ensuring as much continuity in juvenile justice as possible. Individuals came forward to make sure the needs of the department and the young people it serves were being met. Managing through a pandemic was challenging, but with the help and support of so many juvenile justice stakeholders, not only was the transition into a "new normal" accomplished, but the transformative work the department was committed to, continued.

The excitement, eagerness, and commitment we have to juvenile justice transformation moves forward with us into a new year.

**Henry Gonzales**  
Executive Director

## Organizational Chart





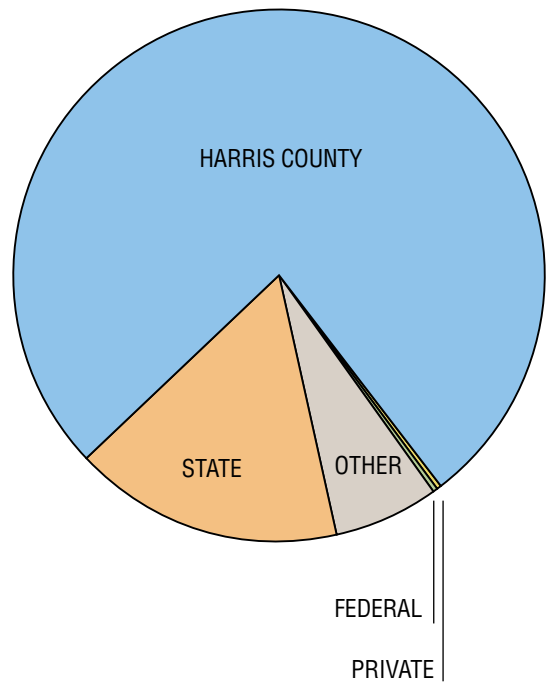
## 2020 Expenditures

### 2020 Harris County Juvenile Probation Departmental Statistics

### 2020 - Total 2020 Expenditures: \$110,353,099.22

HARRIS COUNTY	
Harris County General Fund	\$ 83,227,770.53
Juvenile Supervision Fees	\$ 1,654.24
Family Protection Fees	\$ 6,000.00
Donation Fund	\$ 49.91
TRIAD	\$ 1,586,942.48
	<b>\$ 84,822,417.16</b>
STATE	
TJJD - State Financial Assistance	\$ 16,454,099.75
TJJD - Leadership Academy	\$ 964,790.08
TJJD - Special Needs Diversionary	\$ 272,140.83
TJJD- Regionalization	\$ 430,919.04
Regional Juvenile Mental Health Services	\$ 18,500.00
CJD- Sobriety Over Addiction and Relapse Drug	\$ 3,302.83
	<b>\$ 18,143,752.53</b>
PRIVATE	
Annie E Casey Foundation	\$ 20,283.50
	<b>\$ 20,283.50</b>
FEDERAL	
Title IV-E	\$ 11,096.98
Girls Inspiring Future Triumphs (GIFT)	\$ 479,497.05
	<b>\$ 490,594.03</b>
FEDERAL/STATE/OTHER	
JJAEP Programs and Charter School	\$ 6,876,052.00
	<b>\$ 6,876,052.00</b>
TOTAL 2020 EXPENDITURES	
	<b>\$ 110,353,099.22</b>
JPD Expenditures without JJAEP/Charter School	\$ 103,477,047.22
	<b>\$ 103,477,047.22</b>

<b>HARRIS COUNTY:</b> .....	\$84,822,417.16
<b>STATE:</b> .....	\$18,143,752.53
<b>PRIVATE:</b> .....	\$ 20,283.50
<b>FEDERAL:</b> .....	\$ 490,594.03
<b>OTHER:</b> .....	\$ 6,876,052.00



**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Budget Services Division**  
**Juana Moreno**, Deputy Director

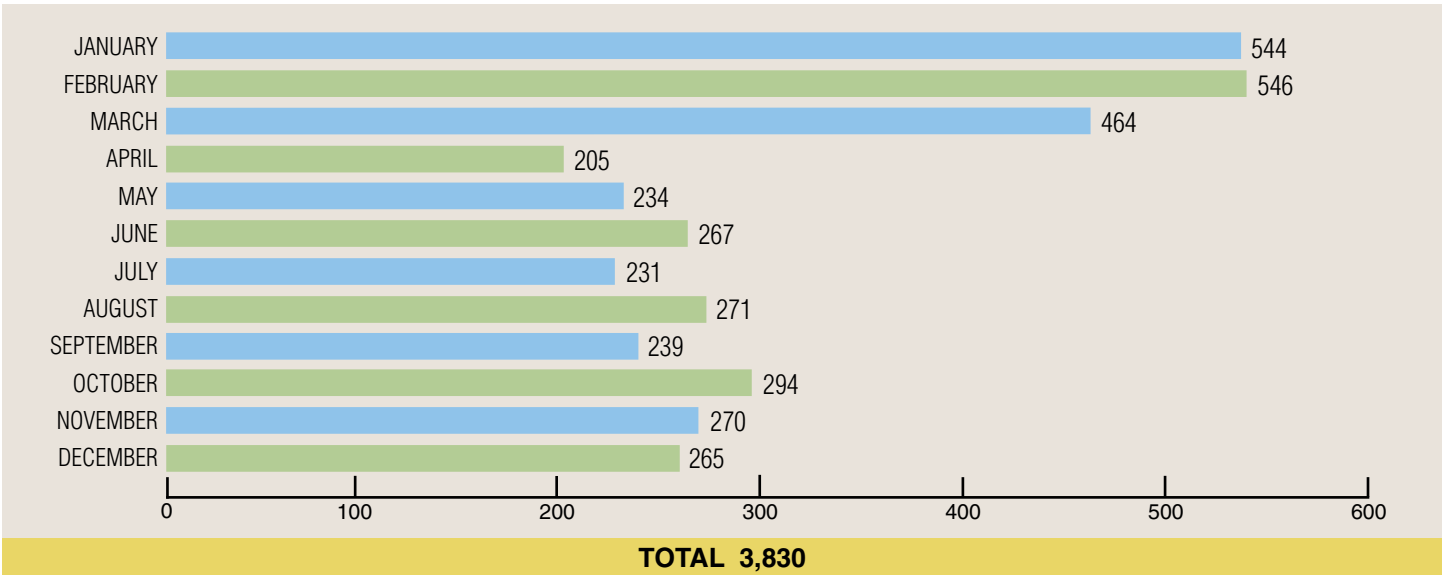
During the COVID Pandemic, the department quickly acted on identifying the supplies needed to ensure the continuance of essential functions in ways that were safe. These supplies were suddenly in high demand and difficult to secure. Much needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) became a commodity and sanitation products were suddenly in short supply. The technology needed to shift all juvenile justice related functions into a virtual mode was also in great demand.

With vendors unable to fulfill orders, the Budget Division worked closely with Harris County Purchasing to obtain the supplies needed to safely serve the youth in our care as well as for our direct line staff and others within the department. Working with elected officials, other departments and organizations, and individuals who personally delivered needed supplies, the department was able to continue to do its work safely.

Unprecedented situations yield unique approaches to getting needs met, and because of extraordinary people who assisted in procuring the supplies, goods, and services needed, the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department was able to ensure the continuance of its essential functions.

# Referral Data 2020

## Number of Referrals by Month



## Referrals for Females by Ethnicity and Age

AGE	African American	Hispanic	Caucasian	Other	TOTAL
10	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
11	2	1	0	0	<b>3</b>
12	19	10	1	0	<b>30</b>
13	45	29	6	2	<b>82</b>
14	57	51	18	6	<b>132</b>
15	86	107	33	4	<b>230</b>
16+	108	103	58	5	<b>274</b>
<b>FEMALES SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>752</b>

## Referrals for Males by Ethnicity and Age

AGE	African American	Hispanic	Caucasian	Other	TOTAL
10	3	2	0	1	<b>6</b>
11	18	6	2	1	<b>27</b>
12	35	23	4	2	<b>64</b>
13	92	97	19	9	<b>217</b>
14	202	240	43	5	<b>490</b>
15	363	404	85	11	<b>863</b>
16+	631	625	135	20	<b>1,411</b>
<b>MALES SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>1,344</b>	<b>1,397</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>3,078</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3,830</b>



### COVID RESPONSE:

#### Intake/Court Services Division

**Bianca Malveaux**, Deputy Director

*This Intake/Court Services Division successfully maintained essential operations as well as implemented new methods for operating business, some that will continue beyond the COVID pandemic.*

*Keeping the Detention Center population down was vital in minimizing the spread of the virus. Working hand-in-hand with the medical professionals and local law enforcement agencies, protocols were implemented to divert as many young people away from detention as possible. When appropriate, alternatives to detention were utilized.*

*Although the pandemic significantly disrupted the judicial process, the use of technology was vital in getting these essential functions back up in a safe and secure manner through collaborations between our department, the Harris County Court Administration, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and defense attorneys. The use of virtual meeting platforms allowed youth, their families, attorneys, and court personnel, the ability to conduct interviews, as well as participate in court hearings.*

## Referral Data 2020

### Referrals by School District

SCHOOL DISTRICT	African American	Hispanic	Caucasian	Other	TOTAL
Aldine	119	162	7	2	<b>290</b>
Alief	88	83	13	11	<b>195</b>
Channelview	9	6	1	0	<b>16</b>
Clear Creek	14	22	13	0	<b>49</b>
Conroe	1	0	1	0	<b>2</b>
Crosby	7	3	4	0	<b>14</b>
Cypress-Fairbanks	152	91	37	8	<b>288</b>
Deer Park	0	19	7	0	<b>26</b>
Excel Academy	70	98	6	1	<b>175</b>
Fort Bend	22	9	1	0	<b>32</b>
Galena Park	48	37	2	0	<b>87</b>
Goose Creek	13	32	7	0	<b>52</b>
Houston	458	470	36	23	<b>987</b>
Huffman	2	0	15	0	<b>17</b>
Humble	37	27	19	2	<b>85</b>
Katy	27	29	25	3	<b>84</b>
Klein	61	41	39	1	<b>142</b>
La Porte	2	6	8	0	<b>16</b>
Pasadena	32	126	16	0	<b>174</b>
Richard Milburn Academy	1	1	3	0	<b>5</b>
Sheldon	15	2	1	0	<b>18</b>
Southwest School	2	4	0	0	<b>6</b>
Spring	125	60	7	1	<b>193</b>
Spring Branch	16	88	11	0	<b>115</b>
Stafford	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Texans Can Academies	29	27	1	0	<b>57</b>
Tomball	5	2	5	0	<b>12</b>
Waller	2	1	1	0	<b>4</b>
Charter Schools	56	44	4	2	<b>106</b>
GED Program	18	13	6	0	<b>37</b>
Private/Parochial	10	11	12	1	<b>34</b>
Out of County	90	79	24	6	<b>199</b>
College/University	1	1	2	0	<b>4</b>
Home School	33	25	23	0	<b>81</b>
H C Education Dept	8	16	3	0	<b>27</b>
Juvenile Board Charter School	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
In transition-not enrolled	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Not Available	88	63	44	5	<b>200</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3,830</b>

### Referring Agency

AGENCY	TOTAL
Baytown Police Department	52
Constable's Office	369
Harris County Sheriff	610
Houston Police Department	1,605
Juvenile Probation Officer*	136
Pasadena Police	140
Schools	368
Other	550
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,830</b>

\* Referrals representing Juvenile Probation Officer include administrative actions, early termination of probation, and request for change in custody. Referrals are not limited to violations of probation and/or detention.



**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Education Services Division**  
**Julie Pruitt**, Deputy Director

*In order to ensure safe instruction, educational services shifted to a virtual format. Through the Excel*

*Academy's existing participation in a consortium with Break Free Education, teachers received training on the technological skills needed to ensure the delivery of effective remote instruction. The purchase of large flat screen televisions for every unit as well as Chromebooks for every student and teacher made remote instruction possible. An instructional technologist provided professional development and one-on-one support to both teachers & students.*

*The Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) worked closely with home-districts to transition into the virtual learning format. The program utilized asynchronous and synchronous instructional strategies with the primary modes of instruction while maintaining ongoing communication with parents and students by phone, text, and email.*

*To address the lack of access to technology among students at the community based Education Transition Center (ETC) campus, community partners stepped in to assist in getting student laptops. The staff at ETC worked with families to navigate free Wi-Fi and the campus opened as a learning annex to provide students access to computers and the internet to do virtual school. Despite all of the pandemic related setbacks, the ETC continued to provide vocational training and produce GED graduates.*



## Offense Data 2020

### Offense Per Referral 2019 - 2020

REFERRAL TYPE	2019	2020
<b>Felonies</b>		
Arson	26	15
Assault - Felony	373	319
Auto Theft	42	34
Burglary	213	193
Drugs - Felony	209	77
Evade/Resisting Arrest Felony	167	167
Homicide	18	9
Mischief/Felony	34	32
Other	156	101
Other Personal	57	33
Robbery	468	422
Sexual Assault	76	65
Theft - Felony	114	68
Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle	259	216
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>1,751</b>
<b>Misdemeanor A &amp; B</b>		
Assault	1,163	508
Drugs	630	64
DWI - MA/MB	8	15
Evade/Resisting Arrest	474	364
Mischief	180	82
Other	623	423
Theft	539	302
Trespass - MA/MB	319	123
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>3,936</b>	<b>1,881</b>
<b>Violations of Probation</b>		
Violation of Probation-Technical	217	92
Violation of Probation - New Off/Other Jurisdiction	197	106
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>6,562</b>	<b>3,830</b>

### Court Activity 2020

COURT DECISIONS	YOUTH REPRESENTED
Certification	5
TJJD Commitment	8
TJJD-Determinate Sentence	17
Probation*	525
Placement	250
Field Supervision	274
Probation Other	1
Deferred Adjudication	185
Non-Suit/Dismissed TOTAL	677
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,417</b>

\*Note - probation is a total of placement, field supervision, and probation other

### Offense Per Admission to Detention 2019 - 2020

OFFENSE	2019	2020
Murder	16	10
Arson	26	10
<b>Assault</b>		
Felony	377	287
Misd A/B	581	250
Misd C	0	0
Sexual Assault	80	45
Robbery	470	458
Burglary	135	80
<b>Theft</b>		
Felony	61	37
Misd A/B	133	58
Misd C	0	0
Auto Theft	22	16
Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle	156	93
<b>Drugs</b>		
Felony	37	27
Misd A/B	141	9
Misd C	0	0
<b>Mischief</b>		
Felony	19	14
Misd A/B	70	15
<b>Evade/Resisting Arrest</b>		
Felony	134	95
Misd A/B	170	76
DWI - Misd A/B	2	4
Trespass	134	39
<b>Other</b>		
Felony	162	71
Misd A/B	339	206
Misd C	2	0
Disorderly Conduct	0	0
City Ordinance	0	0
Violation of Probation	408	148
Runaway* (CINS)	56	39
Other* (CHINS) Offenses	0	0
TJJD Runaways	5	0
Administrative Actions	104	83
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,840</b>	<b>2,170</b>

\*Children in need of supervision (status offenses)  
Includes diverted youth

# Admissions to Detention Data 2020

## Admissions to Detention by Age\*

AGE	10	11	12	13	14	15	16+
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,024</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>

## Admissions to Detention by Month, Ethnicity and Gender\*

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	%
<b>African American</b>														
Female	45	36	30	9	7	11	13	18	15	17	21	16	<b>238</b>	<b>11.0%</b>
Male	151	108	91	35	44	53	47	58	49	59	48	47	<b>790</b>	<b>36.4%</b>
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1,028</b>	<b>47.4%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>														
Female	33	24	18	6	9	13	9	7	10	7	11	12	<b>159</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
Male	105	101	101	31	59	73	55	53	49	66	58	50	<b>801</b>	<b>36.9%</b>
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>44.2%</b>
<b>Caucasian</b>														
Female	8	4	7	1	3	2	3	7	4	3	4	2	<b>48</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
Male	10	19	8	8	9	9	7	9	4	10	6	6	<b>105</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
<b>Other</b>														
Female	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	<b>10</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
Male	2	1	0	2	1	2	0	1	3	3	4	0	<b>19</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>2,170</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* Youth may be counted multiple times if a youth had multiple admissions within the noted time period.

Includes diverted youth

Definition of Detention: Detention is the temporary and safe custody of juveniles. Generally, secure detention should be utilized for youth who, by nature of their offense(s) or conduct, are found to be a danger to self/others, or are believed to be a flight risk. Less restrictive alternatives to secure detention are preferred.



**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Residential Services Division**  
**Dr. Matthew Shelton**, Deputy Director

*The Residential Services Division continued to provide safety and security for the youth in our residential facilities.*

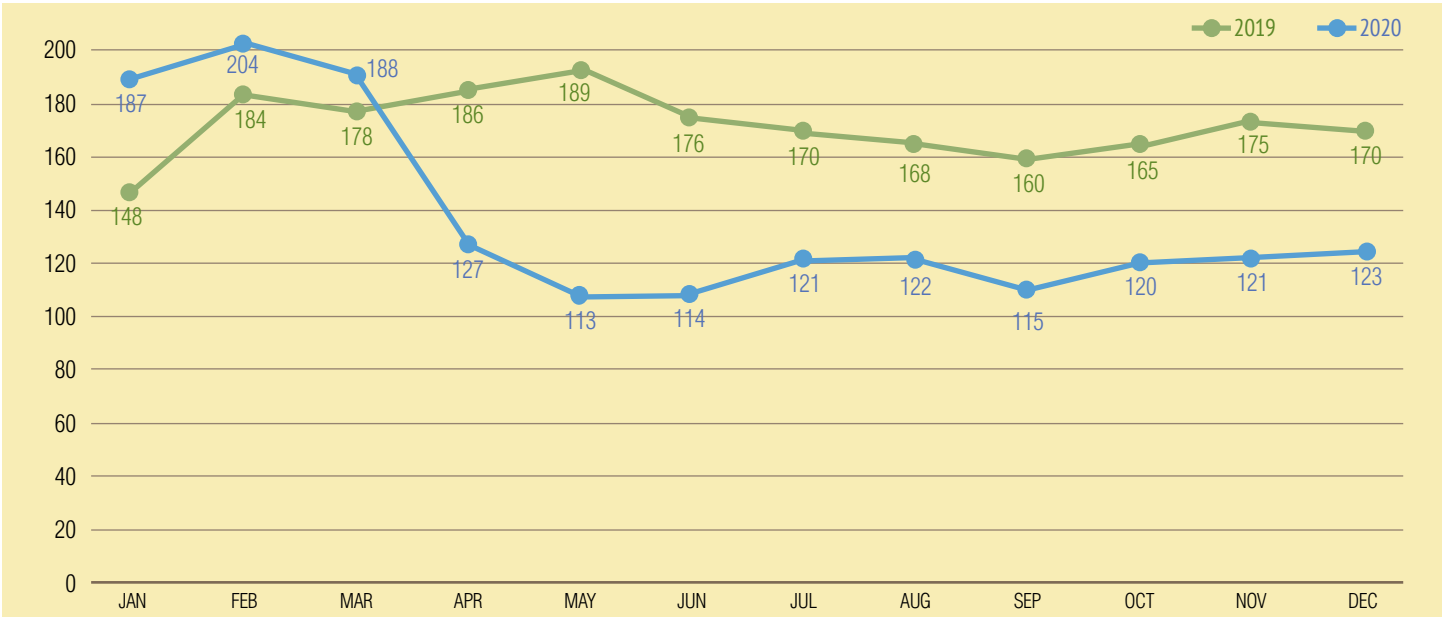
*Through a court approved furlough program, youth within the post-adjudication facilities went home with continued monitoring from facility staff. As a result, Youth Village was temporarily closed and staff were relocated to maintain appropriate ratios at the other facilities. The Detention Center's medical staff, in coordination local and national medical experts, developed a safety plan including*

*a thorough COVID screening process. Residents were spread out throughout the building into cohorts limiting interactions between cohorts. A special medical unit with specially trained staff provided operating precautions for youth who had symptoms of COVID-19.*

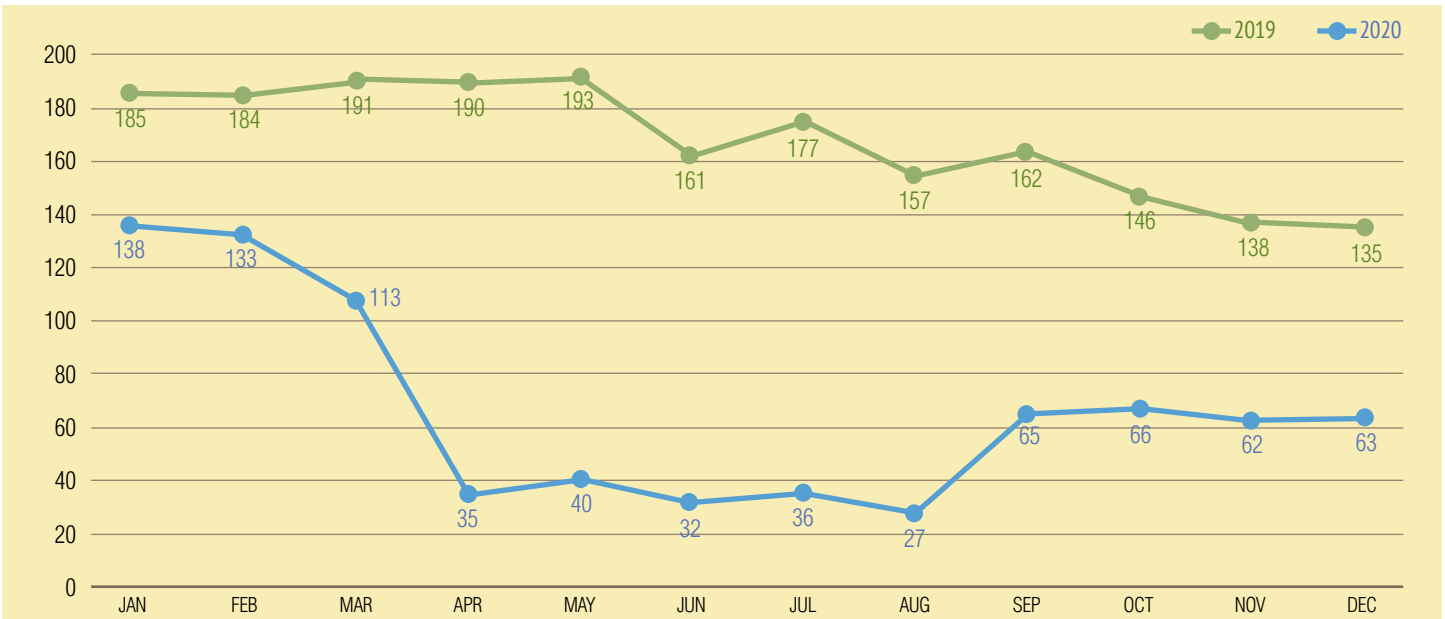
*To provide support to staff, personal protective equipment (PPE) and training on precautionary measures and social distancing were provided. COVID-19 testing was available to all employees at no cost. Lastly, staff were also trained in Restorative Justice and Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) as part of continued juvenile justice transformation efforts. In recognizing the increased level of support the Juvenile Supervision Officers were providing to the residents of the facilities, their job title was appropriately changed to Youth Development Coaches.*

## Average Daily Population 2019-2020

### Pre-Adjudicated Average Daily Population



### Post-Adjudicated Average Daily Population



*Medical staff pre-screen employees for symptoms and/or fever prior to starting work.*

Photo:  
©Tom Hough/HCPD

## Field Services Division

### Youth Under Supervision, 2018 - 2020

2018	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	MTHLY AVG
Probation	1,524	1,483	1,466	1,426	1,431	1,425	1,448	1,554	1,617	1,612	1,614	1,606	1,517
Deferred Adj	666	668	711	759	779	857	936	952	978	954	921	806	832
Deferred Pros (180)	148	137	144	171	213	234	243	236	227	222	203	183	197
Deferred Pros (90)	177	166	161	184	232	294	282	226	157	117	128	157	190
Deferred Pros (90) Under Age 12	7	9	8	7	7	13	19	17	14	6	4	3	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,522</b>	<b>2,463</b>	<b>2,490</b>	<b>2,547</b>	<b>2,662</b>	<b>2,823</b>	<b>2,928</b>	<b>2,985</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>2,911</b>	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>2,746</b>

2019	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	MTHLY AVG
Probation	1,583	1,543	1,520	1,501	1,423	1,379	1,379	1,361	1,325	1,265	1,225	1,278	1,399
Deferred Adj	695	605	841	638	678	721	800	788	771	656	546	481	685
Deferred Pros (180)	186	187	198	212	196	219	200	220	206	174	136	123	188
Deferred Pros (180) Fifth Ward	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	5	9	5
Deferred Pros (90)	213	219	233	250	289	326	302	283	204	148	182	227	240
Deferred Pros FIRST	-	7	15	53	68	87	100	102	115	112	123	141	84
Deferred Pros (90) Under age 12	6	7	7	7	5	4	2	2	2	1	2	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,683</b>	<b>2,568</b>	<b>2,787</b>	<b>2,661</b>	<b>2,659</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>2,783</b>	<b>2,756</b>	<b>2,626</b>	<b>2,360</b>	<b>2,219</b>	<b>2,263</b>	<b>2,605</b>

2020	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	MTHLY AVG
Probation	1,166	1,138	1,102	1,050	976	910	825	728	660	623	591	553	860
Deferred Adj	373	374	279	226	170	101	77	54	26	31	45	51	151
Deferred Pros (180)	153	151	177	161	154	153	107	63	35	22	15	7	100
Deferred Pros (180) Fifth Ward	12	12	18	18	18	13	12	9	5	3	-	-	12
Deferred Pros (90)	266	269	245	230	195	166	94	40	21	6	-	-	153
Deferred Pros FIRST	119	113	119	116	94	76	76	75	47	67	90	83	90
Deferred Pros (90) Under age 12	4	4	4	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	-	-	3
Diversion 180	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	62	91	117	163	192	108
Deferred Pros 180 Under age 12	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Second Chance	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	37	73	85	74	72	60
Second Chance Under 12	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,093</b>	<b>2,061</b>	<b>1,944</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>1,422</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>1,545</b>





**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Field Services Division**  
**Steve Willing**, Deputy Director

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional probation operations had to shift away from in-person interactions in order to keep the youth, families, and staff safe. All community-based staff worked remotely, shifting to virtual approaches. Quickly thereafter, community-based service providers also transitioned to virtual programming.*

*Staff across the division found a variety of opportunities through local churches and school districts to help support youth and families. Youth were provided the appropriate technology for educational needs and access to on-line tutoring. Staff joined in the efforts of organizations such as the Houston Food Bank and Houston reVision to deliver hot meals and necessities to families in need. Staff eventually developed a safe way to resume in-person visits with our youth and families by going back into the communities and conducting "curbside visits" following safety guidelines. By the summer of 2020, community offices re-opened strictly following health and safety protocols.*

*To keep youth positively engaged and provide an outlet to feel connected, the community-based offices used virtual platforms to conduct "Town-Hall" meetings bringing youth together to discuss a variety of topics that are affecting them and their families. New approaches to engage with youth and families were established and set a precedent on how services can be delivered in the future.*



**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Diversion and Intervention Division**  
**Marilyn Broussard**, Deputy Director

*During the pandemic, the Diversion Intervention Division (DID) continued the mission of diverting youth from the juvenile justice system by providing informal alternatives to court proceedings. Services continued to be targeted, strength-based, and individualized to meet the identified needs of the youth/family and to ensure they were equipped with sustainable resources.*

*At the onset of COVID-19, partnering agencies collectively utilized the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to continue the twenty-four hour operation of TRIAD. For protection of staff and the community, virtual walk-ins became the mode of providing intervention for families in crisis. Families welcomed the safety of obtaining services virtually and it made it easier for those families with transportation issues.*

*The addition of the Residential Treatment Center Diversion Program offered youth referred to the department, who are under conservatorship with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, alternatives to minimize their involvement in multiple systems. Community-based diversion programs such as the Center for Urban Transformation (CUT) provided alternatives to juvenile court involvement through programs in the youth's specific community.*



*Youth participate in the Animal Kingdom program where they learn to care for chickens, goats, and rabbit at the Harris County Leadership Academy.*





**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Health Services Division**  
**Dr. Olivia McGill**, Deputy Director

*Congregate care facilities were particularly vulnerable to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Our UTHealth medical providers and HCJPD nursing staff jumped into action to assess risk, test, quarantine, and treat youth. The medical team worked to implement routine testing and developed a cohort system to reduce the spread of the virus to others. The team also recognized the importance of providing education to both youth and staff about the virus and ways to prevent its spread.*

*Similarly, it was vital to find effective ways to continue to meet the mental health needs of the youth in our residential care. During 2020, a unique and intense short-term treatment program was created to help youth get the services they needed expediting their return to the community.*

*While the pandemic created a number of challenges, it also provided opportunities for enhancement. Greatly expanding the use of available technology addressed the transportation barrier that many families typically experienced. The use of secure video sessions enabled families to actively and consistently participate in treatments and assessments. Likewise, our specialty courts began conducting hearings remotely allowing the youth and their families to participate, minimizing the time away from school or work.*



**COVID RESPONSE:**  
**Administration**  
**Dr. Diana Quintana**, Assistant Executive Director

*COVID helped us connect with families at a level we had not done before. While we had identified the need to improve our collaboration with families as a transformation goal, COVID helped us internalize the importance of providing family supports and understand how fear and anxiety can impact family dynamics. Our efforts to provide support to families resulted in new relationships with community organizations which met a goal of transformation.*

*While we had begun efforts to reduce facility population, COVID provided an increased sense of urgency. By identifying youth that were at a lower risk based on offense, progress in the program, or because of strong community/family support, we were able to decrease the population in the facilities, particularly in Detention. In order to make judges more comfortable with releases to Detention, we added elements of case management to our Pre-Adjudication Team. While we were looking to expand diversion programs, the added focus resulted in changes to the level and extent of intervention that is still evolving.*

*While COVID helped us understand the need to maintain flexibility in the system, it also helped us appreciate our work family in a way that we did not before.*



Youth participate in a Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) Nurture Group session at the Burnett Bayland Rehabilitation Center.



Youth fishing at the Harris County Youth Village pier.



Youth participate in the Animal Kingdom program where they learn to care for chickens, goats, and rabbit at the Harris County Leadership Academy.



Youth drumline at the Harris County Leadership Academy.

During a very turbulent and uncertain year, we were humbled by the compassion and generosity of our community. The support from various organizations lifted our spirits and sustained the incredibly important work that we do. From providing services to donating protective gear and supplies to dropping off goods, their contributions have helped us make a meaningful difference. It is because of organizations like these, that we remain strong.

*From all of us at the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department,  
Thank You!*

Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Arnold Ventures  
City of Houston Public Health Department  
City of Houston Public Library  
Columbia Justice Lab  
David Peck  
Disability Rights Texas  
Dr. Laura Spaulding, Emory University School of Medicine  
Eight Million Stories  
Fifth Ward Community and Center for Urban Transformation (CUT)  
Harris County District Attorney's Office  
Harris County Public Health  
Harris County Judge's Office  
Hon. Caroline Baker & the Hurley Family  
Mayte Sera Weitzman, Goya Foods of Texas  
Memorial Hermann  
Methodist Hospital  
My Brother's Keeper Houston  
Redefining Youth Justice Coalition  
reVision Houston  
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San Jacinto College  
Sandra Alhorn  
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State Representative Gene Wu  
Swati Narayan  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
Texas Policy Lab  
University of Houston Law Center - Street Law Volunteers  
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth)



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