

Juvenile Justice & Youth Services

Office of Operational Policy & Special Projects



Office of Operational Policy & Special Projects Overview

Program Director - Reg Garff, rgarff@utah.gov

The Utah Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services (JJYS) provides a continuum of intervention, supervision, and rehabilitation programs to youth offenders while assuring public safety. The Office of Operational Policy and Special Projects provides support to the various areas of programming offered by JJYS. Support includes:

- Employee Peer Support
- Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Access (EDIA)
- Operation Policy
- Sexual Assault Victimization Elimination (SAVE)
- Youth Employability & Transition
- Other Special Projects

Programs



Employee Peer Support

JJYS employee peer support program includes knowledgeable, skilled, and trained peer supporters for Division staff. It provides confidential support to employees dealing with the personal and professional complexities of working in a high stress work environment that includes primary and secondary trauma.

Program Manager: DeAnn Mason, dmason@utah.gov



Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Access (EDIA)

JJYS is committed to view its work through a lens of equity. Our mission can best be achieved when we create an inclusive, equitable, culturally mindful, and supportive environment for staff, youth and families. The EDIA Advisory Council is made up of diverse community partners and JJYS program personnel. It provides expertise and guidance on civic engagement, development and implementation of strategic plans, policy and program implementation. EDIA data informs progress on racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.

EDIA champions youth voice. Youth councils are established in residential facilities and staffed locally and by a youth coordinator. Youth have the opportunity to elevate concerns, suggest meaningful improvements and learn positive means of communicating their needs. Youth voice has a direct impact on the work and services provided by JJYS.

EDIA Director: Michelle Sanchez, mlsanchez@utah.gov



Operational Policy

Review, update and maintain internal, operation policy for JJYS by convening an internal policy committee made up of staff from a variety of JJYS programs. Policies are reviewed by the policy committee on a three-year cycle. Subject matter experts, youth and the EDIA Council provide input on how to improve policies to better meet the needs of JJYS clients. Policies are available on the JJYS Website.

Reg Garff, rgarff@utah.gov



Sexual Assault Victimization Elimination (SAVE)

JJYS does not tolerate any sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse and sexual harassment. JJYS is committed to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse in JJYS residential facilities (UCA 80-5-202). Efforts included to keep youth safe while in our care:

- Enforcing a zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse and sexual harassment.
- Special training for all staff, volunteers, and contractors.
- Informing all youth of their rights and responsibilities.
- Provide multiple ways for youth, staff, volunteers and family members to report suspected abuse.
- Provide access to medical, mental health and victim services.

Program Manager: Saskia Prince, sprince@utah.gov



Youth Employability & Transition

The Second Chance Act Grant has supported transition efforts at JJYS for a number of years. The current program focuses on developing employment-related skills and supplying employment-related equipment for youth participating in JJYS services. Efforts revolve around assessing the interests of JJYS involved youth and providing opportunities for vocational training and certifications. JJYS partners with outside organizations to connect youth with stable careers and help build a solid future.

Program Manager: DeAnn Mason, dmason@utah.gov

Program Manager: Justin Seely, jdseely@utah.gov

Other Special Projects

- COVID Response: develop, maintain and update COVID-19 protocols, staff members return to work, and data collection.
- Amazon Wish List: provides a means for the community to donate to the needs of JJYS youth transitioning back to the community.
- JJYS RBA Tracking: develop, maintain, and update the JJYS RBA plan through regular meetings and accountability.
- Employee Recruitment: augment the efforts of DHRM to recruit a diverse workforce.
- Health Care Coordination: implementation and maintenance of an electronic health record and working towards NCCHC accreditation.

