



Judicial Council of California

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M E M O R A N D U M

Date

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Action Requested

Please review

To

Members of the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) Subcommittee

Deadline

N/A

From

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Contact

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Subject

JBSIS 4.0 Juvenile Justice

In preparation for JBSIS 4.0, staff are reviewing the JBSIS Manual for relevant updates and revisions. Staff noticed that the term “Juvenile Delinquency” has been replaced with “Juvenile Justice” in several Judicial Council of California (JCC) and Superior Court resources. Therefore, staff are seeking the Subcommittee’s recommendation on language updates in the JBSIS 4.0 manual in regarding to “Juvenile Justice”.

Juvenile Delinquency/Justice

Delinquency court handles cases in which a minor is accused of breaking the law, which is filed under a 602 petition¹. If the judge decides the petition is true, the child becomes a ward of the court as a “delinquent”, thus the name of the court. However, delinquency court also handles

¹ Welf. & Inst. Code, § 602,

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=602.&lawCode=WIC

601 petitions², in which a minor is habitually disobedient or truant and is called a “status offender”.

Due to the potential negative connotation associated with the label “delinquent” and the handling of status offenses, many Superior Courts have changed “delinquency court” to “juvenile justice court” or other resources referencing “juvenile delinquency” to “juvenile justice”. In fact, 25 of the 58 Superior Courts have made changes on their websites towards “juvenile justice”.

Furthermore, within the JCC, the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) now uses “juvenile justice court” instead of “delinquency court” on their self-help guide websites³. According to an attorney at the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) within the JCC, CFCC is slowly changing their resources to use the term “juvenile justice” except when citing statutes.

Juvenile Delinquency in JBSIS

In JBSIS 3.0, Report 08a is titled “Juvenile Delinquency” and captures the trial courts’ workloads generated by status offenses, non-minor dependent cases, miscellaneous juvenile petitions, and delinquency cases in juvenile courts. The term “Juvenile Delinquency” is used in three ways in Report 08a:

1. Overarching term used as the report title.
2. General term with “court”, “filing”, or “case”
3. Specific statute references (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 602).

Additionally, in report 04a Appellate Court Appeals, “Juvenile Delinquency” is case type 50, in which it is referring to cases that fall under Report 08a.

Recommendation

Change the report title and general terms with “juvenile justice” unless specifically related to Welf. & Inst. Code, § 602.

To follow the trend of Superior Courts and JCC divisions shifting towards the use of “juvenile justice” instead of “juvenile delinquency”, staff recommend the JBSIS Subcommittee approve similar language changes in Report 08a for JBSIS 4.0.

² Welf. & Inst. Code, § 601,

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=601.&lawCode=WIC

³ <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/juvenile-justice/court-process>

First, the title of Report 08a would be changed to “Juvenile Justice” due to the fact this report captures more than just juvenile delinquency cases, but also status offenses, non-minor dependents, and miscellaneous juvenile petitions.

Furthermore, general terms often used with “delinquency” would be changed to “juvenile justice” unless specifically related to delinquency under Welf. & Inst. Code, § 602. For example, the following sentence would be changed from:

“A minor or nonminor dependent is the unit of count for a juvenile delinquency case, so each juvenile named in a petition is reported as a separate case.”

to:

“A minor or nonminor dependent is the unit of count for a juvenile **justice** case, so each juvenile named in a petition is reported as a separate case.”

Additionally, case type 50 in 04a would be changed to “Juvenile Justice” to reflect the update report name of 08a.

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