



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

July 30, 2015

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JUVENILE & DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISTRICT COURT SERVICES UNIT IMPLEMENTATION OF DIVERSION PILOT FOR JUVENILES

Staff of the Court Services Unit (CSU), Fairfax County Police Department, and Fairfax County Public Schools has recently been selected as new members of the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, CJJR, Fellows Network, located at Georgetown University based on approval of their capstone project. The project is focused on juvenile diversion.

“The Fairfax County team is collaborating with multiple partner agencies to reduce ethnic and racial disparity in the juvenile justice system,” said Shay Bilchik, Director of CJJR. “The key components of the project include developing a Community Restorative Justice Program and redesigning the juvenile intake process to incorporate diversion. This project has the potential to ensure that youth’s risks and needs are accurately identified and addressed while at the same time ensuring public safety.”

The CSU will be piloting a new intake process for juvenile complaints beginning August 1. A specific group of intake officers throughout the CSU will be conducting intake assessments of all complaints using evidence based tools and a decision making matrix to guide the determination of diversion in lieu of a petition, and what specific program/services match the juvenile and families’ needs. This process will require interviews of juveniles and families in cases eligible for diversion prior to an intake decision. The pilot will run approximately one year and the data will help ensure the intake process meets the goal of the project.

The team and its partners, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services and Northern VA Mediation Service, have been providing guidance on the implementation of a Community Restorative Justice program to all School Resource Officers, and to officers at the Mount Vernon District Station. The team will be expanding the program to the Franconia and West Springfield District Stations September 1. The Restorative Justice program has a new name, Alternative Accountability Program (AAP), Repairing the Harm from Youth Offenses in the Community. AAP will continue to be a primary option for SROs and Patrol Officers to consider for eligible cases in lieu of filing a complaint at intake.

For further information regarding this pilot and project contact James McCarron, Deputy Director, Probation Services, JDRDC, at 703-246-3343.

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