
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CAPITAL BUDGET

RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES ANALYSIS

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE CAPITAL BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE DELEGATE MARK CHANG

February 24, 2025

BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE CAPITAL BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE SENATOR CRAIG J. ZUCKER

February 25, 2025

Issues:

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1. The department also plans to use its operating budget funds to support certain technological costs that are critical to facility operations. In some facilities, DJS plans to replace programmable logic controller (PLC) systems to upgrade its video surveillance servers and to expand its server storage. PLC systems link intercom, door, and video surveillance systems within the facilities. The BCJJC PLC replacement is expected to cost \$1.1 million in general funds and is included in the fiscal 2026 allowance as a fiscal 2025 deficiency appropriation. The allowance also includes \$2,950,000 in general funds to fund PLC replacements at Hickey, LESCC, and WMCC in fiscal 2026. DJS should comment on what planned projects in the FMP may be eligible for the Department of General Services' (DGS) facility renewal program. **DJS should comment on what planned projects in the FMP may be eligible for the Department of General Services' (DGS) facility renewal program.**

DJS Response: Yes, the projects that are eligible for the DGS Facility Renewal Program will be submitted through the Project Justification/Preventative Maintenance Operation (PMO) package submission process, which is due in mid-March 2025. The Department has been working diligently to conduct a thorough review of all prior pending and current DJS, DGS level, and PMO facility related projects while maintaining ongoing open communication with DGS to determine the best path forward. Additionally, DJS is focused on aligning with the new Facilities Master Plan (FMP) and fostering a transparent approach to these efforts.

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2. Temporarily Closed Facilities: The FMP describes the following properties as temporarily closed: the Alfred D. Noyes Children's Center (Noyes), which was closed in October 2022; the Garrett Children's Center, which was closed in March 2020; and the Meadow Mountain Youth Center (MMYC), which was closed in June 2020. Noyes was a detention center with the ability to serve male and female youth. When it closed, Noyes had a bed capacity of 29, though prior to March 27, 2020, its capacity was 57 beds. The FMP notes that Noyes is well suited for detention programs and services. The Garrett Children's Center was a staff-secure committed treatment facility for male youth. When it closed, it had a capacity of 24 beds, though it formerly had a capacity of 36 beds. Throughout fiscal 2024, the facility was used by some of the department's educational staff to broadcast virtual instruction to other facilities. MMYC provided 40 staff-secure committed treatment beds for male youth. The FMP notes that MMYC is well suited for female youth detention programs and services. DJS used MMYC as a programming space for its Reflections Program in fiscal 2024. In 2022, DJS reported that it was working on a memorandum of understanding to transfer MMYC to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DJS reports that it is continuing its efforts to transfer this property to DNR by working with that department and DGS. Though the department did not state its intentions to reopen any of these properties within the next 10 years in the FMP, these properties are considered temporarily closed rather than permanently closed. **In its testimony, DJS should comment on why the use of pending placement units at detention facilities is preferable to reopening temporarily closed staff-secure treatment centers.**

DJS Response: DJS established pending placement units within detention facilities to address the challenges faced by youth waiting for an available treatment bed. These units allow treatment to begin while youth are still in detention, reducing unnecessary delays in service provision. Since these youth were already in detention, utilizing existing space for treatment was both a practical and efficient solution.

Reopening a temporarily closed facility would require significant resources, including staff for residential care, behavioral health, medical, food service and maintenance. For example, we need around 141 staff to operate a 25-bed facility. This does not include educational services, such as teachers and a principal. These operational costs make reopening facilities far more expensive than leveraging existing detention center space.

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3. The FMP includes information about recent and planned DJS initiatives, including the launch of the Youth Opportunities Learning Occupations (YOLO) Academy. The FMP states that DJS will develop the YOLO Academy as a residential treatment program focused on workforce development and employment opportunities. The program would be for youth who have completed high school or are on the GED track. The department would also help youths to gain employment when returning to the community. DJS reports that this program would be opened on the grounds of an existing DJS facility, and its planned date for making this program available to youth is January 2026. DJS should comment on how many youths the YOLO Academy will serve and whether the YOLO Academy will be available for male and/or female youth.

DJS Response: DJS expects to serve 20 male youth.

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4. Project Status and Schedule: Though the design phase was projected to start in December 2024, the project received Part I and Part II program approval from the Department of Budget and Management on December 20, 2024. Accordingly, the design phase will now begin in July 2025. Due to this change in schedule and cash flow needs, the fiscal 2026 request is \$596,000 lower than planned in the 2024 CIP. Construction, which was previously estimated to start in December 2026 and take 18 months, is now expected to begin in October 2027 and take 20 months. **DJS should update the committees on the progress that has been made to procure the project's architect.**

DJS Response: The Department of General Services (DGS) has submitted to DGS procurement all documentation required to procure the Architectural professional services as of the week of February 10, 2025. The DGS Project Manager is waiting on DGS procurement to advise that all documents have been uploaded to eMMA for the Architectural solicitation.