

APPLICATION COVER PAGE

REGIONAL YOUTH JUSTICE TEAMS

Region:	
Lead Entity:	
Lead Entity Address 1:	
Lead Entity Address 2:	
City, Postal Code:	
County:	
Telephone:	
Website:	
Lead Entity Authorized Signatory:	
Title:	
Address 1:	
Address 2:	
City, Postal Code:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Lead Entity Main/ Additional Contact:	
Title:	
Address 1:	
Address 2:	
City, Postal Code:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

Signature, Authorized Signer

Date

REGIONAL YOUTH JUSTICE TEAMS:
New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services
and
New York State Juvenile Justice Strategic Planning Action Committee (SPAC)
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	2
II. Purpose of Regional Youth Justice Teams	4
III. Eligibility	5
IV. Evaluation Criteria	7
V. Required Application Content	7
VI. Timetable	10
VII. Administration of Agreements	10
VIII. Approval and Notification of Selection	11
IX. RFP Technical Assistance	12
X. Final Application Checklist	12

RFP Attachment 1: Application Cover Page

RFP Attachment 2: Regional Characteristics Template

RFP Attachment 3: Regional Youth Justice Team Membership Roster

I. Introduction

INTENT

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), on behalf of the New York State Juvenile Justice Strategic Planning Action Committee (SPAC), is seeking proposals from qualified regional community collaborations to serve as regional youth justice teams. Each regional team will act as a liaison between its region and State policy makers, providing the region with a voice at the State level and serving as a conduit for channeling technical assistance, juvenile justice expertise, local data and information about best practices from the State level back to the local region. The regional team will coordinate local stakeholders in data driven analyses of local juvenile justice trends, and will play an important role in planning, supporting and evaluating effective juvenile justice services and reforms in each of the 10 designated regions in New York State outlined in Section III (Eligibility).

BACKGROUND

New York State's juvenile justice system is a highly complex network of state and local agencies and non-profits with myriad connection points to other systems; policies and procedures vary across agencies and systems. Improving outcomes for youth and for communities requires a coordinated, strategic effort by multiple actors working toward a shared vision and common goals. That vision must encompass agencies at all decision and service points in the network, from initial contact and arrest through to post-placement re-entry and aftercare. The needs of youth, families and communities must be taken into account, and coordination with other relevant systems ensured.

In 2010, key leaders from across the state and from a cross-section of organizations representing the juvenile justice system and other systems established a steering committee. The committee engaged in a strategic planning process that explored and articulated that vision and produced, in July 2011, New York State's first ever strategic plan for juvenile justice. The steering committee's full report (*Safe Communities, Successful Youth: A Shared Vision for the New York State Juvenile Justice System*) can be found on the New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) website: (<http://www.nysjjag.org/documents/safe-communities-successful-youth-full-version.pdf>).

The plan identifies four components of system excellence:

1. System governance and coordination;
2. Effective continuum of diversion, supervision, treatment and confinement;
3. Accountability of system and organizations within the system, and
4. Shared data and information-driven decisions and policy.

The SPAC and its work groups are charged with overseeing action steps critical to implementing the strategic plan, which include the development of regional coordination structures.

Efforts to enact the strategic plan and fulfill the vision it articulates must not be overly burdensome to state or local governmental entities or to the SPAC, which will need to be responsive to system dynamics and reforms. As a result, this RFP calls for the creation of 10 regional teams as opposed to one team for each county in the state.

Increased communication within and across New York's 62 counties will be a key lever for overall system improvement. Enhanced networking across agencies, organizations, courts, and other systems will enable sharing of best practices, alignment of standards, programs, and organizational missions and analysis of overall

system outcomes. This is especially important at key junctures at which the juvenile justice system and the education, mental health and child welfare systems intersect. Considerable portions of juvenile justice involved youth have significant educational deficits and health issues that include mental health and substance abuse diagnoses; many are involved in the child welfare system.

It's anticipated that coordinated policies, regulations, structures and funding mechanisms will support the development of partnerships, enable the sharing of relevant information, and increase coordination and effectiveness of services among all system actors at local and state levels. The SPAC's responsiveness to these new regional teams will be a critical component of accomplishing this new level of state-local collaboration.

Regional Youth Justice Teams will benefit from the establishment of official communication channels with the SPAC. The Office of the Deputy Secretary for Public Safety, in collaboration with partner agencies and stakeholders, will provide technical assistance and training to teams regarding local data related to juvenile justice system utilization and state level planning and reform efforts, as requested and within available appropriations.

II. Purpose of Regional Youth Justice Teams

Each regional team will provide a venue for local communities and city, county and state agencies to engage in formal communication and planning around juvenile justice issues. The team is intended to be an independent entity that works to improve system collaboration and service delivery across the region; it is not intended to provide services to clients, though its member organizations may.

Teams will help facilitate a regional approach to assessing local needs and developing effective strategies for working with children and families that maximizes resources and reduces unnecessary duplication of services. Through close analysis of county and regional trends and through data and technical assistance provided through the SPAC, teams will identify promising practices within their region and consider strategies to replicate those promising practices throughout the region.

The Teams will also assist in the assessment, alignment, coordination, prioritization and measurement of available services and programs that address the needs of children and youth at-risk for becoming or who are system-involved. The assessment and coordination of services shall include, but are not limited to prevention, early intervention, diversion, alternatives to detention and placement, treatment services, residential placements and reentry services. Through the Teams, the SPAC intends to foster and promote a continuum of community-based services and systems reflecting service integration at the local, regional and state levels.

Finally, the regional team will represent the designated region at the SPAC, informing the SPAC about the region's needs and concerns. The team will provide the SPAC with local perspectives on juvenile justice reform and, through recommendations to the SPAC, will have a voice in influencing policy and funding directions. Teams will serve as key advocates for additional and appropriate resources for at-risk and system-involved children and youth in their respective regions.

A. Role of the Team:

- Encourage collaborative efforts among local stakeholders for assessing the physical, social, behavioral and educational needs of children and youth in their respective communities that lead to juvenile justice involvement.
- Identify services, supports and opportunities for system-involved children and youth in their communities.
- Identify barriers that inhibit access to services and strategize solutions.
- Identify current key gaps in services and resources and address those gaps, with a focus on best practices and evidence-based or evidence-informed solutions. Solutions should include family engagement whenever appropriate and possible.
- Analyze and evaluate current available funding streams and assess potentially more effective utilization of funds.
- Explore and generate additional non-governmental resources for at-risk and court-involved children and youth.
- Assist in the development of comprehensive plans to address factors that lead to juvenile justice system involvement. The infrastructure for planning is intended to be data-driven and encourage the use of evidence-based approaches and programs to support positive youth development.
- Identify and recommend specific solutions for key “hot spots” of juvenile justice related activity within the region, using research-driven and evidence-based practices to the greatest extent possible.
- Develop strategies for improving services and outcomes, for example:
 - Decreasing the number of children and youth referred to court;
 - Addressing disproportionate minority contact along the juvenile justice decision-point continuum;
 - Enhancing information-sharing and knowledge about the juvenile justice system, local needs and resources and evidence-based practices;
 - Supporting interagency approaches to prevention and positive youth development;
 - Creating partnerships between the courts, local communities and state agencies that enhance the effectiveness of community-based interventions;
 - Facilitating families’ access to information and services, and
 - Being organized to respond to federal, state and private funding opportunities.

B. Benefits to the Region:

The SPAC is engaged in developing strategies and programs to meet the needs of system-involved juveniles and their families. Their work includes developing policy and budget recommendations for State leadership. Teams will have ready access to the SPAC to provide regional input regarding state level policy and budget recommendations.

Additional benefits to the regional teams will include:

- The SPAC will share state and local data regarding the juvenile justice population, needs and gaps in services with the regional teams.
- Teams will be provided with updated information about budgeting, state laws, policies and programs associated with the juvenile justice system.
- Teams will give their region a voice in state policy making discussions by providing the SPAC information regarding local, regional and/or community concerns and needs related to positive youth development and juvenile justice.
- Teams will have access to technical assistance and training related to data driven analysis of local and regional juvenile justice trends and building regional approaches to juvenile justice system improvement.
- The Team's lead entity will be notified of any training slots available through state-sponsored trainings.
- Regional approaches to service coordination and delivery may allow for greater local efficiencies through the development of greater economies of scale for needed services.

C. Commitment and Responsibilities

Lead entities and regional team members will be asked to make a two year commitment to their respective teams. This commitment will be made through a memorandum of understanding between the lead entity and DCJS.

It's expected that regional youth justice teams will establish a regular schedule of meetings to be held at least quarterly, and that those meetings should be open to any interested juvenile justice stakeholder. The lead entity should have the capacity to send a representative to SPAC meetings when requested with no compensation from DCJS for time, travel or any other related expense.

III. Eligibility

DESIGNATED REGIONS

The following regions and their associated counties are aligned with those established in Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils (2011). One team will be selected per region and teams should follow this regional structure:

Capital Region: Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington

North Country: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis

Mohawk Valley: Herkimer, Oneida, Fulton, Montgomery, Otsego, Schoharie

Central New York: Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego

Southern Tier: Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins, Steuben

Finger Lakes: Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Yates, Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming

Western New York: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara

Mid-Hudson: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester, Sullivan, Ulster

New York City: Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond

Long Island: Nassau, Suffolk

Recognizing that some existing functional collaborations might include only some of the counties in an identified region or might include counties spanning more than one region, the SPAC will consider approaches to regionalization that preserve existing relationships. In such instances, efforts should be made to ensure that counties in a designated region that are not part of the existing collaborative are included in the regional coordination structure. An applicant should either invite such counties to join the existing collaborative, or it should be ascertained that they are being included in applications submitted by other regional teams with which they have contiguous boundaries as a result of an existing collaboration with a different, but contiguous, region. Applications for teams that do not include all counties as designated above or that span more than one region should explain how this issue was addressed.

Regional Youth Justice Teams will be formally established and recognized through this competitive Request for Proposals. Successful applications will demonstrate the necessary capacities and collaborative relationships to successfully serve as an effective regional collaborative and a strong representative to the state-level SPAC. Ideally, recognized teams will utilize the technical assistance and access to state policy makers made available through this initiative to enhance existing efforts to coordinate services and improve juvenile justice service delivery to children and youth in their communities.

Team Composition:

- One lead entity should be identified to represent the team. The lead agency should have demonstrated leadership skills and have experience and interest in community engagement and juvenile justice issues. Lead entities may be public agencies or community-based organizations.
- The proposed team must have parent, community-based agency and government involvement; teams should include broad community representation, as follows:
 - Strong applications will include at least one key representative from each county and from each city with a population of 20,000 or more.
 - Team membership would ideally include, but is not necessarily limited to, youth and families with experience in the juvenile justice system, advocates, law enforcement, crime victims, district and county attorneys, attorneys for children, family court judges, juvenile probation offices, local departments of social services, detention facilities and providers, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regional offices, county executives and other elected officials, youth bureaus, boards of education and schools/ school districts, social service providers, mental health and other health care providers, faith-based organizations, and business/ labor organizations.

Final team composition will be subject to DCJS review and approval.

IV. Evaluation Criteria

Listed below are the multi-tiered criteria that will be used to rate applications and determine team selection.

TIER 1 Evaluation:

Tier #1 will be rated with pass/fail responses. Any application that does not meet each of the following criteria will be immediately disqualified without further review:

1. The application is submitted on time. **The deadline for applications is 12 noon, April 15, 2013.**
2. The application includes **all application materials in a PDF document with a cover page that is completed in its entirety and signed.**
3. The application is complete with **answers to all applicable questions** in Section V.
4. The application includes **letters of support** from the agencies, organizations and individuals that are proposed as regional youth justice team members.
5. The application includes both:
 - a. A completed Regional Characteristics Template
 - b. A completed Regional Youth Justice Team Membership Roster.

TIER 2 Evaluation:

Following Tier 1 evaluation, each application will be read and reviewed independently by a minimum of two reviewers as part of the Tier 2 evaluation. Reviewers may consist of DCJS staff, SPAC members, or peer reviewers in the field. The reviewers will evaluate the submissions and score each application according to the scoring criteria addressed in the application questions (Section V). DCJS and the SPAC reserve the right to request additional information from an applicant as deemed necessary to more fully evaluate its proposal.

The maximum score that can be achieved for meeting application requirements is 100 points. Scores will be averaged to establish a list of eligible applicants from highest to lowest average score. The scores will provide a framework for the independent review that will follow in Tier 3, and will in no way bind the final determination that will be made as part of the Tier 3 evaluation.

TIER 3 Evaluation:

Subsequent to the Tier 2 review process, the SPAC will conduct independent reviews of each application. The SPAC may require the applicant to answer additional questions regarding the proposed team during the Tier 3 evaluation. Final decisions will be made by the SPAC in accordance with the best interests of the State. Nothing herein requires DCJS or the SPAC to approve selection of any applicant.

V. Required Application Content

This request for Proposals seeks applications from Regional Youth Justice Teams to represent each of the 10 designated regions in New York State, as outlined above.

Applications must be submitted by a lead agency on behalf of a defined region and should include commitments to participate as team members from regional representatives of juvenile justice stakeholders such as youth and families, advocates, law enforcement, crime victims, district and county attorneys, attorneys for children, family court judges, juvenile probation offices, local departments of social services, detention facilities and providers, OCFS regional offices, county executives and other elected officials, youth bureaus, boards of education and schools/ school districts, social service providers, mental health and other health care providers, faith-based organizations, and business/ labor organizations and other key community partners.

The lead agency must demonstrate commitment of proposed team members through letters of support from each proposed team member. The lead agency will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the team for the region and will act as the team liaison to designated state staff.

The application must establish the lead organization's capacity for fulfilling the roles outlined. The lead organization must have demonstrated leadership skills; its mission must be aligned with the stated goals for the juvenile justice system and its organizational structure and resources must be adequate to support RFP requirements.

Successful applications must include responses to the questions / requirements outlined in each of the following sections: Executive Summary, Region: Key Characteristics, Regional Youth Justice Team, and Lead Entity Qualification and Experience.

Each applicant should compose narrative responses to all questions in a Microsoft Word document. The applicant must submit a PDF document that includes the word document and all required attachments, AND the original word document.

Executive Summary (5 points)

This section identifies the applicant's region, the lead agency and provides a brief overview of the proposed regional youth justice team membership. This section is worth 5 points of the overall application score. Please address the following items in this section:

1. Executive Summary

Applicants must provide a brief executive summary (not to exceed 250 words) to: identify the region and its member counties, if different from those designated; identify the lead organization; briefly describe the region and summarize the proposed membership in terms of its representation of key groups.

Region: Key Characteristics (25 points)

This section provides a description of the applicant's region in terms of key population characteristics and demonstrates the applicant's familiarity with existing resources.

2. Region: Key Characteristics

A. Regional representation

1. Define which designated region will be served by the regional youth justice team proposed. If the team membership does not include all counties as designated above or includes a county or

counties from a different region, list the counties included in the application. Describe efforts that were undertaken to ensure that counties in the designated region that are not part of this application were not excluded from participation in the regional coordination structures (see Section III, page 5). If a county or counties outside of the prescribed region are included, explain the existing collaborative efforts that made inclusion of the county or counties necessary to preserve existing relationships.

- B. Regional characteristics:** Use the Regional Characteristics Template to demonstrate the applicant's knowledge of the region; briefly summarize the information as outlined.
1. List the region's major population centers; provide their population and identify the county in which they're located.
 2. List existing coalitions and collaborative whose work is related to juvenile justice issues. List member agencies and organizations or, if the list is lengthy, categorize participants in terms of affiliations/ roles (i.e., law enforcement, probation, not-for-profit service providers etc.).
 3. List the region's major juvenile justice service providers (agencies and organizations that serve system-involved youth and families). Summarize the types of services they provide (i.e., prevention programs; education; clinical services/ therapeutic interventions etc.).

Regional Youth Justice Team (35 points)

This section describes the proposed team membership and shows that it represents a substantial cross-section of key regional leaders and juvenile justice stakeholders, as outlined above.¹ This section is worth 25 points of the overall application score.

3. Regional Youth Justice Team

Please address the following items in this section:

- a. Team membership – Use the Regional Youth Justice Team Membership Roster to list proposed member agencies, organizations and – if applicable – individuals. Provide brief descriptions of the connection that each proposed team member has to the juvenile justice system.
- b. If the team membership roster does not name individuals such as system-involved youth and families, crime victims, advocates and so on, describe the team's plan for soliciting their participation. Provide points of contact (where will the desired individuals be found?) and outreach efforts that will be undertaken to engage them.
- c. Provide letters of support from each proposed team member.
- d. Provide evidence that the proposed team has the support of local government, community-based agencies and community leaders who – although not represented on the team – are key stakeholders

¹ (youth and families, advocates, law enforcement, crime victims, district and county attorneys, attorneys for children, family court judges, juvenile probation offices, local departments of social services, detention facilities and providers, OCFS regional offices, county executives and other elected officials, youth bureaus, boards of education and schools/ school districts, social service providers, mental health and other health care providers, faith-based organizations, and business/ labor organizations and other key community partners)

involved in juvenile justice issues in the region. MOA's, letters of agreement or support, or other existing contracts or agreements will provide sufficient evidence.

- e. If an existing community collaboration is applying for recognition as the designated region's youth justice team, please describe its history, membership, and mission. Provide evidence of the collaborative's impact on juvenile justice issues in the affiliated designated region.
- f. Describe any technical assistance or training needs that the team may have in order to effectively meet the requests of the SPAC to function as such.

Lead Entity Qualification and Experience (35 points)

This section establishes the applicant's capacity for leading the regional youth justice team and representing its members. It should reflect the qualifications and experience of the organization that will be primarily responsible for implementing the proposed activities. This section is worth 25 points of the overall application score.

4. Lead Entity Qualification and Experience

Please address the following items in this section:

- a. Identify the lead entity and briefly explain its function. Include its history and mission, highlighting their relevance to this proposal.
- b. Describe the lead entity's experience in providing leadership in juvenile justice issues.
- c. Discuss the connection between the lead entity and other proposed team members.
- d. List title(s), desired qualifications and anticipated roles of staff that will be utilized to lead the project.
- e. Describe how the lead entity will work with team members to convene the team and to provide team representation to the SPAC.
- f. Address whether the lead entity is currently under investigation by any federal, state, or local authority for criminal, civil or regulatory violations.

VI. Timetable

Applications must be received by 12 noon Friday, April 15, 2013. Complete applications received by that date will be considered for review. Applications received after that date and time will not be considered. The SPAC will meet in May of 2013 to make the final decisions.

VII. Administration of Agreements

Obligations and plans made under this RFP are subject to the continuing operation of and commitment by the SPAC.

DCJS will negotiate and develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with selected applicants. In the event that the successful applicant and/ or team cannot begin activities within 90 days of MOA execution or are unable at any time during the commitment period to fulfill their commitment, DCJS reserves the right to rescind the selection and identify and alternate lead entity and/ or team.

A. Agreement Approval

All agreements are subject to the approval of DCJS and until said approval has been received and indicated thereon, the agreement shall be of no force and effect.

B. Agreement Period

DCJS and the SPAC will enter into agreements for a period of 24 months, with optional renewal for a second period of 24 months, pending review by all parties. DCJS reserves the right to modify the agreement period for lack of performance or in the best interests of the State.

C. Agreement Changes

Agreements resulting from this RFP may be executed, terminated, renewed, extended, amended, or renegotiated at the discretion of the Acting Commissioner of DCJS in light of a grantee's performance, changes in SPAC conditions, or otherwise.

D. Liability

Nothing in the agreement between DCJS and the grantee shall impose liability on the State of New York for injury incurred during the performance of approved activities or caused by the use of equipment purchased with grant funds.

F. Reports

DCJS will work with successful applicants to develop project workplans that will become part of their agreements. DCJS will provide reporting guidelines and forms for documentation of key activities. Reports will be due quarterly, based on a calendar quarter; they will be submitted by email as PDF documents. DCJS' goal is to simplify and streamline reporting requirements so that reports are not overly burdensome to the team.

Reports will be focused on the following:

- Documentation of team meetings, member attendance and key decisions;
- Action plan steps and accomplishments;
- Requests for training, technical assistance or other resources that may be provided by DCJS and/ or the SPAC.

VIII. Approval and Notification of Selection

Once a project is approved by the SPAC, selected applicants will be notified in writing and a memorandum of agreement between the applicant and DCJS will be developed. An applicant whose proposal is not selected for funding will also be notified in writing.

IX. RFP Technical Assistance

Questions regarding this RFP may be emailed to funding@dcjs.state.ny.us through **Friday, March 1, 2013**. Please reference “RYJ Teams RFP” in the subject line of your email. On **Friday, March 8, 2013** DCJS will post answers to the received questions on our website at <http://criminaljustice.ny.gov/ofpa> without identifying questioners. **Application deadline is 12:00 noon April 15, 2013.**

X. Final Application Checklist

Applicants must submit applications electronically by email to funding@dcjs.state.ny.us with a subject line that reads “RYJ Teams RFP”. Before submitting your application, please ensure that you have:

- Completed the **Application Cover Page** included in this RFP as an attachment (Attachment 1). The cover page must be completed in its entirety and signed by the lead entity’s authorized signatory. Failure to submit appropriate signatures will be cause for disqualification from the RFP process.
- Provided **responses to the questions** outlined in Section V, “Required Application Content,” in a Microsoft Word document;
- Completed a **Regional Characteristics Template** as instructed in Section V (2)(B);
- Completed a **Regional Youth Justice Team Membership Roster** as instructed in Section V (3.a);
- Provided **letters of support from proposed team members and evidence of support from other key stakeholders** as instructed in Section V(3c and 3d);
- Provided the Microsoft Word document with question responses **and a PDF document that includes all application content in one email with a subject line that includes “RYJT Application” and identifies the applicant’s region (i.e., “RYJT Application – Capital region”)**.

Applications must be submitted by **12:00 noon, April 15, 2013**. No late applications will be accepted nor reviewed.

