

Healthy Communities Secure Care Legislation ([SB 1033](#)/[HB 551](#)) ***2020 Virginia General Assembly legislative priority***

Healthy Communities Secure Care legislation puts Virginia on the path towards nationally recognized standards of care for youth who come into contact with the law. This bill ensures that when secure care is absolutely necessary for Virginia youth, it happens in small facilities, 30 beds or less, within the young person's communities.

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), guided by its 2016 Transformation Plan has made significant progress in reducing the number of young people incarcerated. However, its recent attempts to build medium-size facilities that will hold majority Black youth, in rural white areas, are not in keeping with best practices. Decades of system oppression and the hyper criminalization of Black and Brown youth have driven juvenile justice policy. That must be reversed.

Healthy Communities Secure Care promotes young people being treated justly and given the opportunity all young people deserve--to learn and grow from their mistakes. Further, it promotes sustainable public safety. Investment in young people in their communities encourages healing, trust building, and aligns the success of young people with their broader community.

What's in the Legislation?

- Juvenile community correctional centers shall be 30 beds or less.
- When a juvenile community correctional center is built, it shall be placed within high committing localities of the state.
- In the event a youth is committed to the care of the Department of Juvenile Justice, and it is determined the youth shall be placed in a juvenile community correctional center, that youth shall be placed in the juvenile community correctional center closest to their family and community and shall be within 1 hour of their home via car and no more than 1 1/2 hours via public transportation.
- All measures shall be taken to prevent a placement that is more than 1 hour from a juveniles home to include considering placement at a juveniles local detention center.
- High committing for the purposes of this code section shall be defined as meeting a threshold of 5% and averaging the rates of three consecutive years.

RISE for Youth a nonpartisan campaign committed to dismantling the youth prison model by promoting the creation of community-based alternatives to youth incarceration. Our work centers the voices of impacted youth and communities and challenges racial injustice in Virginia.