

Contacting Us

Who should contact the Ombuds Program and when? The Ombuds Program is available to youth, families, staff members, professionals, and the general public to answer questions or address concerns about conditions of confinement.

The first point of contact for most concerns should be the correctional center where the youth is housed. A youth's chance for success increases when parents and facility caregivers are partners in the process. Building relationships with the facility staff members also helps families know how to prepare for release and a successful transition back to the community.

If you have contacted the facility and find you need additional assistance, encounter a problem the facility can't handle, or would prefer to remain anonymous or talk with someone outside the facility, please feel free to contact the Ombuds Program. The Ombuds Program is not an emergency response program, but your inquiry will be addressed as quickly as possible.



Ombuds Program
(804) 588-4414

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PREA Response Team
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DJJ Juvenile Correctional Centers

Beaumont (804) 556-3316
Bon Air (804) 323-2550

OMBUDS PROGRAM



Virginia Department
of Juvenile Justice

One Team.
New Ideas.
Extraordinary Purpose.

Program Description

The Department of Juvenile Justice's Ombuds Program began in 2002. Its purpose is to monitor living conditions within the Department's juvenile correctional centers, serving as an "early warning system" when problems are identified. It also provides a way for parents and staff to privately report any areas of concern, including allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse in accordance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003.

The program is staffed by the centrally-located ombuds and grievance coordinators assigned to each facility.



Program Components

In addition to its staff members, key components of the Ombuds Program include the Grievance Procedure, Student Government Association in each facility, and the safeguards provided under the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003.

Grievance Procedure

The Grievance Procedure is the tool given to committed youth to alert a facility's administration when there is a misinterpretation or misapplication of a policy or procedure. Residents write grievances on standardized forms and place them in locked boxes in living units and in other easily accessible locations within the facility. The facility's grievance coordinator collects and investigates the grievances and meets with the residents to discuss the findings on the grievances and any suggested remedies.

Orientations to the Grievance Procedure are given to all youth when they arrive at the facility's intake unit and are repeated each time they move to another facility. Training on the Grievance Procedure is part of the initial training for all new staff members and is covered again during in-service training.

Student Government Association (SGA)

Student Government Association meetings are held monthly. The purpose of the meetings is to provide youth an opportunity to have input into facility issues impacting their lives. Meetings are attended by a resident representative from each housing unit; members of the facility's administrative staff; and staff representatives from food service, education, health care, and maintenance departments. Meetings are facilitated by the facility's grievance coordinator.

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

The Board of Juvenile Justice's PREA policy establishes the agency's zero tolerance toward any incident involving the sexual assault, sexual harassment, or rape of a committed youth. It makes preventing, detecting, and responding to such incidents a priority in all its facilities and is the framework for the agency's compliance with the federal PREA standards.

Orientations to the safeguards provided under the PREA standards are given to all youth when they arrive at the intake unit and are repeated each time they move to another facility. Training on the PREA standards is part of the initial training for all new staff members and is a topic during in-service training.

Family and staff members may use the Ombuds Program phone number on the back of this brochure to express any concerns or report any suspected sexual assault or sexual harassment.