

Court Resource Home JDAI Subcommittee

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The Court Resource Home JDAI Subcommittee is exploring the option of utilizing “Court Resource Homes” as a short-term pre-adjudication alternative to detention in South Dakota for justice involved youth. The subcommittee is developing a proposal to the Council for Juvenile Services to ask for support and reimbursement for this program at their June meeting.

Court Resource Homes as a detention alternative are already being used in other states such as Minnesota, Kentucky, Nebraska, and Oregon to name a few. These states have found this option to be less costly with better outcomes- especially for rural areas. The subcommittee has heard from other states about licensing requirements, reimbursement rates, and recruitment strategies.

The proposal will include a reimbursement rate for families that can, and are willing to, shelter youth pending their court date. The subcommittee has identified these homes will follow current state foster care licensing requirements. Recognizing that recruitment of families will be a challenge, the committee is asking that families receive up to a \$200 incentive for going through the background check and then completing all necessary training to become licensed foster care families.

Based on information and data gathered by the subcommittee, the proposal will include a reimbursement rate of \$100 per day for the first two days of youth in their care. The rate for the remaining five days of care, if needed, would be \$70 per day. The goal is to incentivize the youth to be placed back with their family as quickly as possible and to compensate families fairly for the higher need in the first couple days of care. Reimbursement would be allowed per incident, with a completed RAI, up to 7 days.

The subcommittee would like to include in their proposal an on-call stipend for families that make themselves available to accept youth at a rate of up to \$100 per week. This is an important aspect that other states have implemented. After reviewing data, the subcommittee anticipates the number of youth that will be placed in Court Resource Homes will be small but the need is great. Incentivizing families to participate in the project, even when youth are not in their care, is key.

As mentioned, the number of youth that need this option as an alternative to detention across South Dakota is relatively low. However, in many areas across the state there is no overnight alternative to detention option. This results in unnecessary overrides of youth into secure detention. Looking at 2020 RAI data, 18 youth (in JDAI sites excluding Minnehaha and Pennington) had qualifying override reasons and were placed in secure detention after scoring for an alternative on the RAI. The qualified override reasons the subcommittee identified were; victim in the home, parent unwilling to accept youth, and run risk.

Using 2020 data, an estimated cost of reimbursement to counties that choose to implement Court Resource Homes would be \$9,900 for the entire year and across the state. The on-call stipend would depend on how many families can be recruited and how often they are available. At \$100 per week, one family that was available for 30 weeks out of the year would cost \$3000.

The subcommittee believes Court Resource Homes will be an excellent option, for a small number of youth in the state, that need temporary out of home placement.