Instructions for the Identification of Disproportionate Incident Reporting Management Tool

Within the juvenile justice system, the handling of incidents within residential facilities and community-based programs is one area where discretionary decision-making may result in disparate treatment of juveniles. In its efforts to address disproportionate minority contact in Connecticut's juvenile justice system, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) developed a tool to assist managers and board members of both public and private residential facilities and community-based programs.

The Identification of Disproportionate Incident Reporting Management Tool is a program in Excel that calculates incident report statistics and assessment ratios from facility data entered on reported incidents and client admissions. It can direct managers' attention to potential disproportionate incident reporting and provides accurate information with respect to rates of incident reporting by race/ethnicity.

The Tool does not require changes in facility policies and procedures, but is, in fact, tailored to each institution. Its usefulness is in providing understandable data to managers, who may then choose to look more closely at personnel, training, and program data to identify whether action is warranted.

I. Preparing to Use the Identification of Disproportionate Incident Reporting Management Tool

There are a few steps that an organization must take to prepare to use the Identification of Disproportionate Incident Reporting (IDIR) Management Tool.

a. Juvenile Identification Numbers

The IDIR Tool requires a unique identification number for each juvenile admitted into the facility or program. This number is then used to automatically complete some of the data fields for the incident report and also allows the tool to count the number of incident reports written for each juvenile. The identification number can be any length, and can include numeric and/or string characters; this should allow facilities or programs to use a pre-existing juvenile identification numbering system. For those without an existing system, one will need to be developed prior to using the IDIR Tool.

b. Charge and Consequences Classifications

The IDIR Tool analyzes data by the seriousness of the charge for which a juvenile received an incident report as well as the seriousness of the consequence received for the incident.

1. Charges

The IDIR Tool provides for up to three levels of charges ("A," "B" and "C"), with "A" being the most serious and "C" the least serious. Each facility or program will need to determine which charges used within their facility or program will be classified within each of the three levels. If an organization decides not to use the three levels, it has the option of using just two levels, or recording all charges at the same level.

2. Consequences

The IDIR Tool provides for up to four levels of consequences. Codes "1," "2," and "3" are used to record the seriousness of the consequence with "1" being the most serious and "3" the least serious. For organizations that wish to record an incident as being "dismissed," the code used for this purpose is "4." Again, a facility or program may choose to use only one or a couple of the consequence categories.

c.   *Racial/Ethnic Groups*

The IDIR Tool provides the ability to record information for four racial/ethnic groups: African-American (non-Latino), Caucasian (non-Latino), Other (non-Latino), and Latino. Each facility or program must determine how they will use these groupings, and use them consistently throughout the facility or program and for every juvenile. If a particular organization has different needs with regard to the racial/ethnic groups with whom they work, customization of the IDIR Tool is possible.

II. Working Within Excel

The IDIR Tool has been developed in Excel and users will need to be able to navigate within Excel to successfully use the IDIR Tool. Some very basic instructions for using the Tool within Excel are provided below.

- In order to use this tool, macros must be "enabled" when the file is opened.

- The "View" in Excel should be set at "Normal" (first option under the "View" tab menu).

- To access the various pages within the Tool (each page is called a "worksheet"), click on the tabs at the bottom of the screen. The names of the different worksheets are on the tabs.

III. Basic Use of the IDIR Tool

The bullets below provide some overall instructions on the basic use of the IDIR Tool.

- The admissions are entered on one worksheet for the entire year. Each juvenile's admissions information must be entered prior to entering any incident reports for the juvenile or error messages will appear on the incident report worksheet.

- The incident reports written within the facility or program should be entered by quarter. The IDIR Tool uses calendar year quarters (1Q – January 1 to March 31, 2Q – April 1 to June 30, 3Q – July 1 to September 30, and 4Q – October 1 to December 31) for recording incident reports.

- For a particular incident, incident information should be entered for every juvenile that received an incident report (e.g., if there is a fight, each juvenile with an incident report written should have the information entered into the incident report data worksheet).

- There are instructions on each worksheet where information gets entered. The instructions provided in the yellow shaded boxes provide specific instructions for that section (e.g., Shift Incident Occurred, the directions say, "record shift 1, 2, or 3"). The instructions provided in the green shaded boxes indicate that the computer automatically fills in that information; the user cannot manually enter any data in these fields.

- By default Excel defines all of the rows (rows run horizontally left to right) in the spreadsheet with numbers and all of the columns (columns run vertically top to bottom) with letters. The IDIR Tool has provided numbers for the rows within the Tool itself. Be sure to start entering information on the worksheets starting on row number one as defined by the Tool (not in row one as defined by Excel).

- All dates entered in the IDIR Tool should be in the month/day/year format (e.g., 01/02/1991 for January 2, 1991).

- For some data fields, specific predefined options must be used (e.g., for "shift" a "1," "2," or "3" must be used to indicate the shift). These specified options are provided in the yellow instruction area at the top of the data entry worksheet.

- Predefined ranges and rules for specific data items have been built into the IDIR Tool to reduce data entry errors. The instructions in the yellow shaded boxes at the top of the worksheet define the valid values. If an invalid value is entered, an error message will appear on the screen providing the user with the valid entry options (e.g., Shift Incident Occurred, the directions say, "record shift 1, 2, or 3."). If a 4 is entered, a box will appear saying Input Error and "Please enter a value of 1, 2, or 3."

- Much of the IDIR Tool is locked to prevent inadvertent harm to the complex programming that makes the Tool work. A message will be displayed if the user tries to modify an area of the Tool that has been locked.

IV. Entering Admissions Data

Data for all current year admissions into the facility or program should be entered into the worksheet labeled "*1Q-4Q Facility Admissions.*" Ideally, admissions data will be entered on an on-going basis
(e.g., entered as part of the admissions process). In addition, all juveniles admitted must be recorded, not just juveniles who get an incident report written. Otherwise the total care days within the facility cannot be accurately calculated.

Below are instructions for entering the various data items on the admissions worksheet.

- Record the unique juvenile identification number used by the organization for the juvenile.

- Record the juvenile's first and last name in the appropriate columns.

- Record the juvenile's gender by recording a "1" in the appropriate column.

- Record the juvenile's race/ethnicity by recording a "1" in the appropriate column.

- Record the juvenile's date of birth.

- The age of the juvenile at the time of admission will be automatically calculated and filled in once the date of admission is entered.

- Record the date of the juvenile's admission.

- When a juvenile is discharged, record the date of juvenile's discharge.

- The number of "care days" received by the juvenile will be automatically calculated using the dates of admission and discharge. Care days are calculated for each quarter.

V. Entering Incident Report Data

The IDIR Tool requires that incident report data be recorded on the worksheet for the appropriate quarter. This enables the Tool to provide statistics both quarterly and annually.

Each worksheet for the entry of incident report information is named to indicate the quarter for which it should be used (e.g., the "*Enter 1Q Incident Report Data"* worksheet should be used for

the first quarter). If the incident date does not fall within the appropriate date range for a worksheet, an error message will be displayed.

Below are specific instructions for entering the various data items for the incident report data worksheets.

First, at the top of the worksheet for the First Quarter, enter the facility's or program's name. The name will then be applied to the other worksheets.

Incident Information

- Enter the report number for the incident report being recorded.

- Enter the shift the incident occurred (predetermined options of 1, 2, or 3).

- Record the date of the incident using the month/day/year format (e.g., 01/02/2006 for January 2, 2006).

- The corresponding day of the week will be automatically filled using the date of the incident.

- Record the level of the offense for which the incident report was written. The IDIR Tool will accept categories "A," "B," and "C" for the types of offenses (with "A" being the most serious and "C" the least serious).

- Record the level of consequence given for the incident. The IDIR Tool will accept up to four categories ("1," "2," "3," and "4" with "1" being the most serious, "3" the least serious, and "4" serving as the dismissed code).

Juvenile Information

- The only piece of information entered for the juvenile on the Incident Report Data worksheets is the unique juvenile identification number for the juvenile. After the identification number is entered, the IDIR Tool will automatically fill in the rest of the information about the juvenile (i.e., name, gender, race/ethnicity, date of birth, and age at the time of the incident).

- Record the staff member's unique identification number used by the organization (if applicable). This number can include numeric and/or string characters.

- Record the gender and race/ethnicity of the staff member reporting the incident by entering a "1" in the appropriate columns.

VI. IDIR Statistics Worksheets

The IDIR Tool provides four types of statistics worksheets: (a) admissions statistics, (b) incident report statistics, (c) a comparison of care days to incident reports written, and (d) incident report juvenile counts.

Please note, until data are entered in the worksheets used for data entry, the cells in the tables provided on the statistics worksheets will display an error message (i.e., #DIV/0!). These error messages will disappear once data have been entered.

a. Admissions Statistics

The admissions statistics worksheet provides information on the facility's or program's admissions during the calendar year (i.e., count and percentage of admissions by gender, age and race/ethnicity of the juveniles as well as the count and percentage of admissions by quarter).

At the bottom of the worksheet, there is a light blue box area. This box provides the "Data Check." The numbers in the data check area count the number of times a piece of information was entered on the *Enter 1Q-4Q Admissions* worksheet. Ideally the number corresponding to each type of data entered for the admissions would be the same. If a particular piece of information is often not entered for the admissions worksheet (e.g., the age of the juvenile), the percentages provided on the admissions statistics page for that piece of data may be skewed due to the missing data.

b. Incident Report Statistics

The incident report statistics worksheets provide information on the facility's or program's incident report writing. There are separate worksheets for each quarter as well as a cumulative worksheet for the year.

The incident report statistics worksheets provide count and percentage breakouts of the incident reports by:

- shift and day of the week;

- the gender and race/ethnicity of the juvenile for whom the report was written;

- the offense/incident category and consequence category; and

- the gender and race/ethnicity of the staff member for the incident report.

Similar to the Admissions Statistics worksheet discussed above, the Incident Report Statistics worksheets have a data check box to identify missing data that might skew the statistics.

c. A Comparison of Care Days to Incident Reports Written

The statistics worksheets that compare the care days to the incident reports written provide the assessment ratios that administrators can use to assess whether or not there may be disparate use of incident reports within their facility or program.

The assessment ratios provided on these worksheets compare the proportion of juveniles of a specific race/ethnicity receiving incident reports to the proportion of this race/ethnicity in the facility's or program's total care days. If the assessment ratio is equal to one, the representation of juveniles of that race/ethnicity is what would be expected based on the care days provided by the facility. If the ratio is less than one there is underrepresentation, and if the ratio is more than one there is overrepresentation.

Each worksheet provides the assessment ratios by race/ethnicity overall, as well as broken out by the offense/incident category enabling comparisons by the seriousness of the incident.

A care day vs. incident report statistics worksheet is provided for each quarter as well as for the year overall.

d. Incident Report Juvenile Count Worksheets

For each quarter, the *Incident Report Juvenile Count* worksheets count the number of incident reports written for juveniles in that particular quarter. The sheet only counts juveniles who have at least one incident report written.

These statistics could be very helpful in determining whether or not a juvenile or a couple of juveniles of a particular racial/ethnic group could be playing a large role in the assessment ratios for that group by having an unusually high number of incident reports written.

e. *How to Use the Statistics*

The assessment ratios provided within the IDIR Tool are intended to identify areas that may need to be examined more closely. Just because juveniles of a particular race/ethnicity have an assessment ratio of more than one does not necessarily mean that the organization is not acting equitably with regard to juveniles of that particular racial/ethnic group. What it does mean is that administrators need to review additional data to determine <u>why</u> the assessment ratio is higher than desired. Was there a particular juvenile in that racial/ethnic group that repeatedly acted out and got written up? If so, was there a better way staff could have responded to the juvenile? What other factors might have contributed to juveniles of that racial/ethnic group receiving more incident reports? Is there a personal or training issue? What additional data do the managers need to review?

When an organization begins to use the IDIR Tool, technical assistance and support can be provided to help staff learn how to best use the tool for their particular facility or program.

For additional information about the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee's activities or the Identification of Disproportionate Incident Reporting Management Tool, contact Ms. Valerie LaMotte at the Office of Policy and Management (860-418-6316).