

MASSACHUSETTS JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM COALITION

COALITION MEMBERS

Over 60 organizations from every corner of the Commonwealth are members of the Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Coalition, including:



The mission of the Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Coalition is to improve the experiences, opportunities and lives of young people - from birth through their mid-20s - by advocating for legal system reforms that advance:

- **Transparency, Equity, and Accountability**
 - Assess the fairness and effectiveness of youth-serving system through data collection and reporting.
 - Reduce the glaring racial and ethnic disparities throughout the system.
- **Preventing Entry into the Legal System**
 - Reduce the unnecessary court processing of youth for low-level offenses.
 - Promote developmentally appropriate interventions, including community alternatives to court and incarceration when appropriate.
- **Reducing Harms of Legal System Involvement**
 - Preserve a youth's right to education.
 - Promote Positive Youth Development.
 - Remove barriers to successful re-integration.

PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2013 - RAISE THE AGE TO 18

The coalition successfully advocated for ending the automatic prosecution of 17-year-olds as adults in Massachusetts.

2014 - ENDING JUVENILE LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE

The coalition successfully advocated for ending juvenile life without parole sentencing in Massachusetts which was affirmed by the Supreme Judicial Court.

2018 - JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORMS

The coalition advocated for comprehensive systemic reforms, that were adopted in the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act. Since the adoption of the law, overall juvenile cases dropped by 50%.

2020 - YOUTH-FOCUSED POLICING REFORMS

The coalition advocated for provisions in the 2020 Police Accountability legislation to address the unique harms that young people face from overzealous and biased policing, including expanded expungement, limits on school police and the use of deadly force and a right to bias free policing.

JOIN THE COALITION!

My organization endorses the goals of the coalition and joins as a member and my organization will:

- be listed as a coalition member on fact sheets and testimony
- be added to the coalition email list and participate in coalition meetings (as possible)
- receive youth justice updates by signing up for CfJJ's "JJNews" e-newsletter

Organization | _____

Contact Name | _____ Title | _____

Address | _____ City/Zip | _____

Email | _____ Phone | _____



AN ACT IMPROVING JUVENILE JUSTICE DATA COLLECTION

Demand transparency in legal system responses to youth by requiring reporting of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity data at major decision points to allow us to see disparities where they occur and to identify policies or practices to reduce these disparities.



AN ACT TO PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY AND BETTER OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Reduce crime in our communities by ending the automatic prosecution of 18-to 20-year-olds as adults to prevent long-term criminal justice system involvement by ensuring young people are held accountable and engaged in treatment, education, and vocational training that are more effective to get them back on the right track.



AN ACT RELATIVE TO JUDICIAL SUPERVISION TO PROMOTE CHILD WELL-BEING

Expanding judicial diversion allows for a neutral party to decide if youth and public safety are better served through alternatives to the juvenile justice system. The collateral consequences of court processing are harsh and long-term. Through diversion, courts can still hold young people accountable without the risk of detention or adjudication.



AN ACT RELATIVE TO EXPUNGEMENT

Expungement is an important tool to rectify the over-policing and disparate treatment of people of color. Reducing barriers to expungement of juvenile records have significantly reduced re-arrest/recidivism rates and increased college graduation and incomes.



AN ACT RELATIVE TO CONSENSUAL ADOLESCENT SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Massachusetts is one of only four states that criminalizes consensual sexual activity between two adolescents. Most states have peer exception laws to ensure that these relationships are handled by parents, not judges. This bill would create a peer exception to protect teens from criminal prosecution for consensual sexual activity between peers.

LEVELS OF BILL ENDORSEMENT

Each organization determines their level of involvement on each bill

- **Level 1** | Top Organizational Priority
- **Level 2** | Endorse
- **Level 3** | Do Not Endorse.
- **Level 4** | Not ready to endorse, but open to discussion for future endorsement



AN ACT TO PROMOTE THE EDUCATION SUCCESS OF COURT INVOLVED CHILDREN

Current law allows a student to be suspended from school at the mere filing of a complaint against the child prior to arraignment without the opportunity for any due process in the juvenile court. This bill preserves a child's right to education by requiring a basic determination that the case will move forward in court and requires that the offense be a "serious violent felony" to qualify for school exclusion.



AN ACT TO PREVENT THE IMPOSITION OF MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES BASED ON JUVENILE ADJUDICATIONS

Juvenile adjudications (though legally not convictions) count towards mandatory minimum sentences in adult cases, and particularly young people in the adult system. This bill excludes juvenile cases as predicate offenses that trigger extreme mandatory minimum sentences in a future case as an adult.



AN ACT RELATIVE TO SAFER SCHOOLS

This bill support schools seeking to transition to police-free school safety and set the guiding principle to differentiate between conduct requiring disciplinary or law enforcement responses. It also creates a grant program, administered by DESE, to assist schools and districts to plan and implement holistic safety practices to all for their transitioning to police-free schools.



AN ACT PROTECTING YOUTH DURING CUSTODIAL INTERROGATIONS

Interrogations of adolescents by law enforcement, particularly with coercive or deceptive means, are more likely to result in false confessions and wrongful convictions, with socio-economic status and foster care involvement driving these unjust outcomes. This bill protects the constitutional rights of young people by requiring videotaping and that an attorney is present at the reading of Miranda rights and during police interrogations when a youth has a pending felony charge.

*Coalition members endorse the overall mission of the Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Reform Coalition, and sign on in support of many, but not necessarily all, of the coalition's legislative priorities for each session. These legislative priorities are decided by a vote of the coalition's membership prior to each two-year legislative session. [Organizations are not obligated to support the entire legislative package and can select which individual bills to endorse and support.](#)