

Policy Idea Statement: Revise current policies relating to Protective Action Response (PAR)

Providers who deliver services under contract with the DJJ are required to be trained in PAR, (protective action response) which is a use of force intervention developed by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. We believe that there other crisis intervention strategies, such as *Handle with Care* that are safer, less restrictive and nationally recognized and that should also be permitted.

FJJA maintains that state dollars are also wasted in the training of non-residential staff that would not need this use of force training. We recommend that DJJ develop a menu of “DJJ approved” generally accepted verbal/physical intervention products. Each option would be reviewed to ensure it is not in conflict with prior DJJ directives about use of force techniques.

3 Key Points

1. Expanding menu of DJJ approved crisis intervention responses beyond the current PAR mandatory requirement would allow DJJ to immediately eliminate DJJ PAR training staffing FTE’s and associated related costs. *Providers would select from an approved menu and train at their own expense.*
2. Eliminating the requirement of all non-residential programs to be PAR trained would provide cost avoidance for providers and allow further reductions in DJJ training staff.
3. Nationally recognized crisis intervention strategies, such as *Handle with Care* should also be permitted. Add language to the current statute 985.645. 6 (b) to say:
 “Establish training curriculums for protective action response certification of employees and instructors. ***The Department may authorize the use of any nationally recognized curriculum that meets the requirements of this section.*** The training curriculum for employee certification shall, at a minimum, require the employee to.....”

Fiscal Impact:

- Immediate cost savings as a result of reduced DJJ staffing and related costs.
- Expanding the menu of options would also cause providers to train at their own expense saving the state dollars.
- Eliminating non-residential PAR training as unnecessary would allow providers to utilize funding for other key services.

Legislative:

- Change in current statute needed as noted above.
- Opposition: The DJJ has not been supportive of this as a cost savings or cost avoidance.

PROS

- This recommendation will save state resources by eliminating staff positions dedicated to PAR training.
- This recommendation will shift the cost and responsibility of crisis intervention training to the provider as part of their contractual obligation.
- Other crisis intervention methods which have been used by the provider community have been validated on a national scale.

CONS

- None.