

3 Special Topics

DJJ's Research Unit analyzes data to evaluate programs, initiatives, and trends in order to provide meaningful information to decision-makers for improving services and outcomes. The following studies represent a selection of the projects completed during the past year. Data in this section of the report may not match other sections due to different dates of data download.

Youth Violence and Weapon Trends

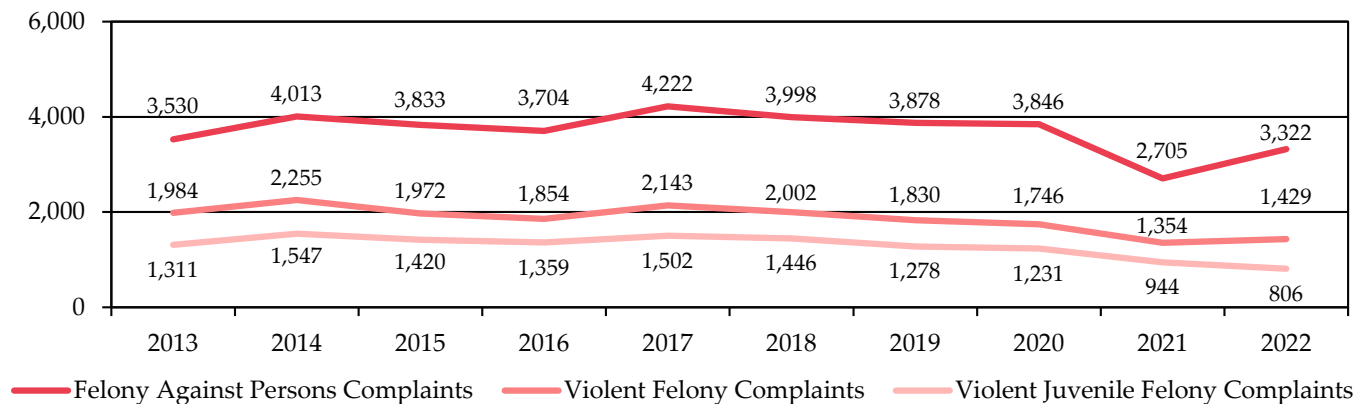
The COVID-19 pandemic directly affected the juvenile justice system (e.g., reduced court operations) and led to different behaviors among the general public (e.g., state of emergency, stay-at-home orders, in-person school closures), impacting actual and tracked criminal and

delinquent behavior. At the national level, OJJDP estimated that the violent crimes¹ arrest rate decreased by only 9.3% between CY 2015 and CY 2019 but by 26.2% in CY 2020, an acceleration of previous downward trends in violent crime.² As a result, the following section investigates Virginia trends in violent offenses and weapon-related offenses among youth after the initial decline during the pandemic.

¹ Violent crimes reported by OJJDP include the offenses of murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.

² OJJDP. (2022, July 8). *OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book*. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/crime/JAR_Display.asp?ID=qa05218&selOffenses=35

Felony Against Persons, Violent Felony, and Violent Juvenile Felony Intake Complaints, FY 2013-2022*

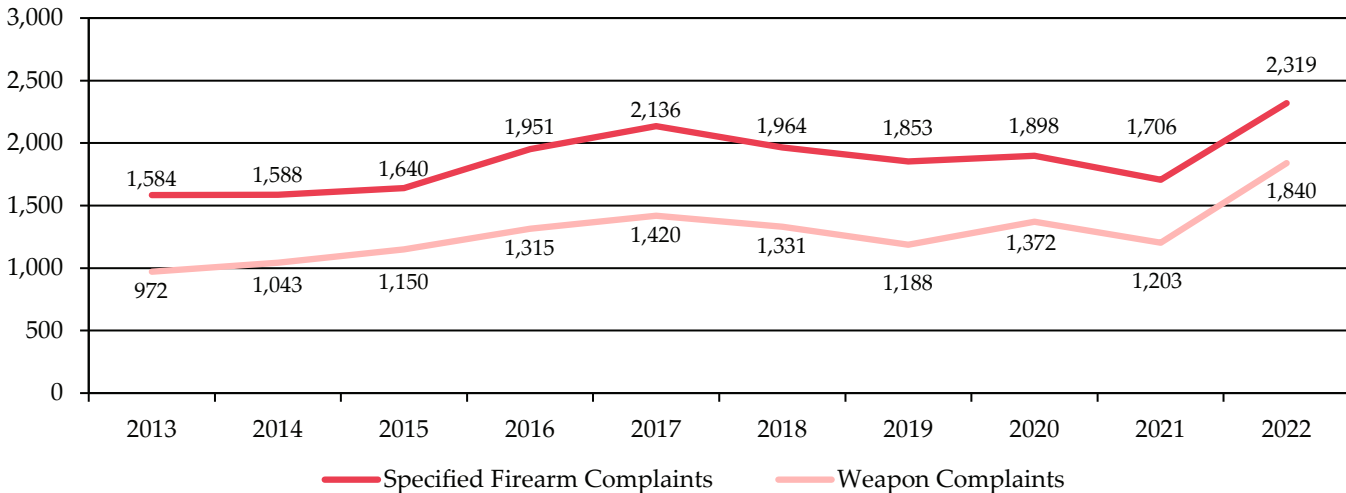


* Felony against persons complaints are categorized based on the DAI ranking. Violent felony complaints include offenses enumerated in § 19.2-297.1 in addition to aggravated murder in § 18.2-31 of the *Code of Virginia*. Violent juvenile felony complaints are defined on page 8; only offenses considered violent juvenile felonies without being contingent on a youth's other offenses are included. The three groups are not mutually exclusive.

- » Felony against persons, violent felony, and violent juvenile felony complaints increased from FY 2013 to FY 2017, each by at least 8%. Across this timeframe, FY 2017 had the highest count of felony against persons complaints, and FY 2014 had the highest counts of violent felony and violent juvenile felony complaints.
- » All three types of complaints decreased from FY 2017 to FY 2020. Each type of complaint decreased by at least 8% across this time period. Declines accelerated from FY 2020 to FY 2021, with each type of complaint decreasing by at least 22%.
- » From FY 2021 to FY 2022, the complaint types fluctuated differently. While felony against persons and violent felony complaints increased by 22.8% and 5.5%, respectively, counts remained lower than prior to the pandemic. Violent juvenile felony complaints decreased by 14.6%.



Weapon and Specified Firearm Intake Complaints, FY 2013-2022*



* Specified firearm complaints include VCCs listed in DJJ's Administrative Directive A-2022-005 (Mandatory Overrides for Weapons Offenses on the DAI), including WPN-5253-M1. Weapon complaints are offenses with a VCC prefix of WPN. The two groups are not mutually exclusive.

- » From FY 2013 to FY 2017, specified firearm and weapon complaints increased by at least 34% each.
- » From FY 2017 to FY 2019, both types of complaints decreased by at least 13% before increasing in FY 2020.
- » From FY 2020 to FY 2021, specified firearm and weapon complaints decreased by 10.1% and 12.3%, respectively.
- » From FY 2021 to FY 2022, specified firearm and weapon complaints increased by 35.9% and 53.0%, respectively, reaching 10-year highs.

Conclusion

Violent and weapon-related juvenile intake complaints across different definitions decreased from FY 2020 to FY 2021 during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the following year, different patterns emerged based on the complaint type. Weapon and firearm complaints reached 10-year highs in FY 2022. Meanwhile, most measures of violent crime indicated violent offenses among youth returned to approximately pre-pandemic trends. DJJ will continue to monitor trends in youth violence and weapon-related complaints and share this information with stakeholders.

Violent and weapon-related complaints across different definitions decreased in FY 2021, but different patterns emerged in FY 2022; weapon and firearm complaints increased to 10-year highs while most types of violent offenses returned to approximately pre-pandemic trends.



Initiative-Specific Performance Measures, FY 2020-2021

Purpose

Performance measures serve as an important tool for DJJ to examine, understand, and improve the agency's programs and services. Performance measures are created to align with the goals and objectives of each initiative, providing a quantifiable way to monitor implementation, identify areas of improvement, and create a feedback loop between partners. Through a collaborative process, DJJ has established performance measures for both CPPs and RSCs, such as how many youth received services, how quickly services were offered, and if youth made progress in the provided services. After analysis, the QA Unit uses the results to make recommendations and create individualized CQI plans. Some of these performance measures are highlighted below.

Examples of CPP Performance Measures

CPPs are highly structured residential programs operated for direct care youth in JDCs. A goal of the CPPs is to place youth in smaller settings closer to their home communities to facilitate a smoother transition after release and to increase family engagement. (See page 44 for more detail.) Two examples of CPP performance measures are listed below:

	2020	2021
The percentage of youth who began services within 14 days of placement at a CPP*	46.4%	56.9%

* Services include aggression management treatment, substance abuse treatment, and therapy (family or individual).

- » During FY 2020, 151 youth were placed in a CPP, and 46.4% of those youth started services within 14 days of placement.
- » During FY 2021, 109 youth were placed in a CPP, and 56.9% of those youth started services within 14 days of placement.

	2020	2021
The percentage of youth whose families were actively engaged while the youth was at the CPP	88.7%	88.1%

- » During FY 2020, 238 youth were in a CPP at least one day, and 88.7% of those youth had a family member actively engaged in their treatment (i.e., a family member must have attended at least one treatment team meeting).

- » During FY 2021, 176 youth were in a CPP at least one day, and 88.1% of those youth had a family member actively engaged in their treatment.

Examples of RSC Performance Measures

DJJ utilizes a continuum of services and alternative placements that offer programs to meet treatment needs, divert youth from future involvement with DJJ, provide appropriate dispositional options for youth under supervision, and support successful reentry upon return to the community. (See page 45 for more detail.) Two examples of RSC performance measures are listed below:

	2020	2021
The percentage of youth who ended services with at least some progress*	87.1%	79.1%

* Assessments/evaluations, monitoring services, and non-intervention services are excluded.

- » During FY 2021, 465 youth were referred to RSC services and ended at least one service by the time of the report; 79.1% of those youth made at least some progress (i.e., met some or all of their overarching and/or service goals). Because the service FYs are determined by the referral date, some FY 2021 services may not have ended by the time of reporting; therefore, FY 2021 rates may change as more services finish.

	2020	2021
The percentage of services completed	84.6%	83.2%

- » During FY 2020, 2,745 referred services were approved and began; 84.6% of those services were completed.
- » During FY 2021, 1,243 referred services were approved and began; 83.2% of those services were completed.



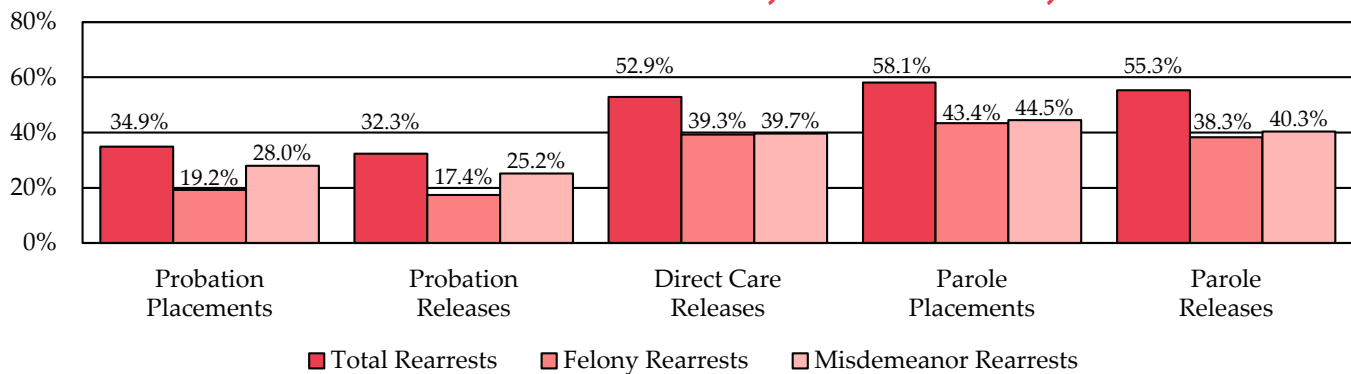
Types of Reoffenses

As part of a multi-phase recidivism project, the Research Unit analyzed rearrest offense category and severity, along with several other factors, including risk level, timing from placement or release to first rearrest, and frequency of rearrests. Select results are presented below.

Due to the quality of data received from collaborating agencies, distinction between types of felonies and misdemeanors cannot be determined. Therefore, all felo-

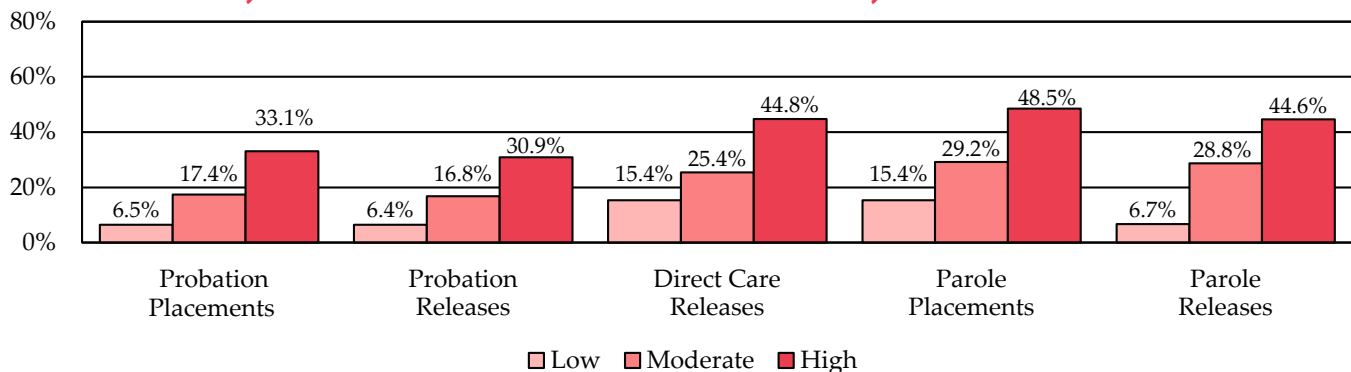
nies are grouped together, and all misdemeanors are grouped together. Youth may be rearrested for more than one offense. Between FY 2016 and FY 2020, there were an average of 1.5 complaints per rearrest. Reoffense data is presented on a two-year time lag to allow adequate time for data cleaning. The analysis below includes placements and releases from FY 2016 through FY 2020 (tracked through FY 2021). Data in this section of the report may not match other sections due to the time lag and different date of data download. (See pages 71-84 for an explanation of DJJ's recidivism methodology and the annual recidivism rates.)

12-Month Rearrest Rates for Placements/Releases by Reoffense Severity



- » 34.9% of probation placements and 58.1% of parole placements were rearrested within 12 months of placement.
- » A smaller proportion of youth were rearrested for a felony; 19.2% of probation placements and 43.4% of parole placements were rearrested for a felony within 12 months of placement.

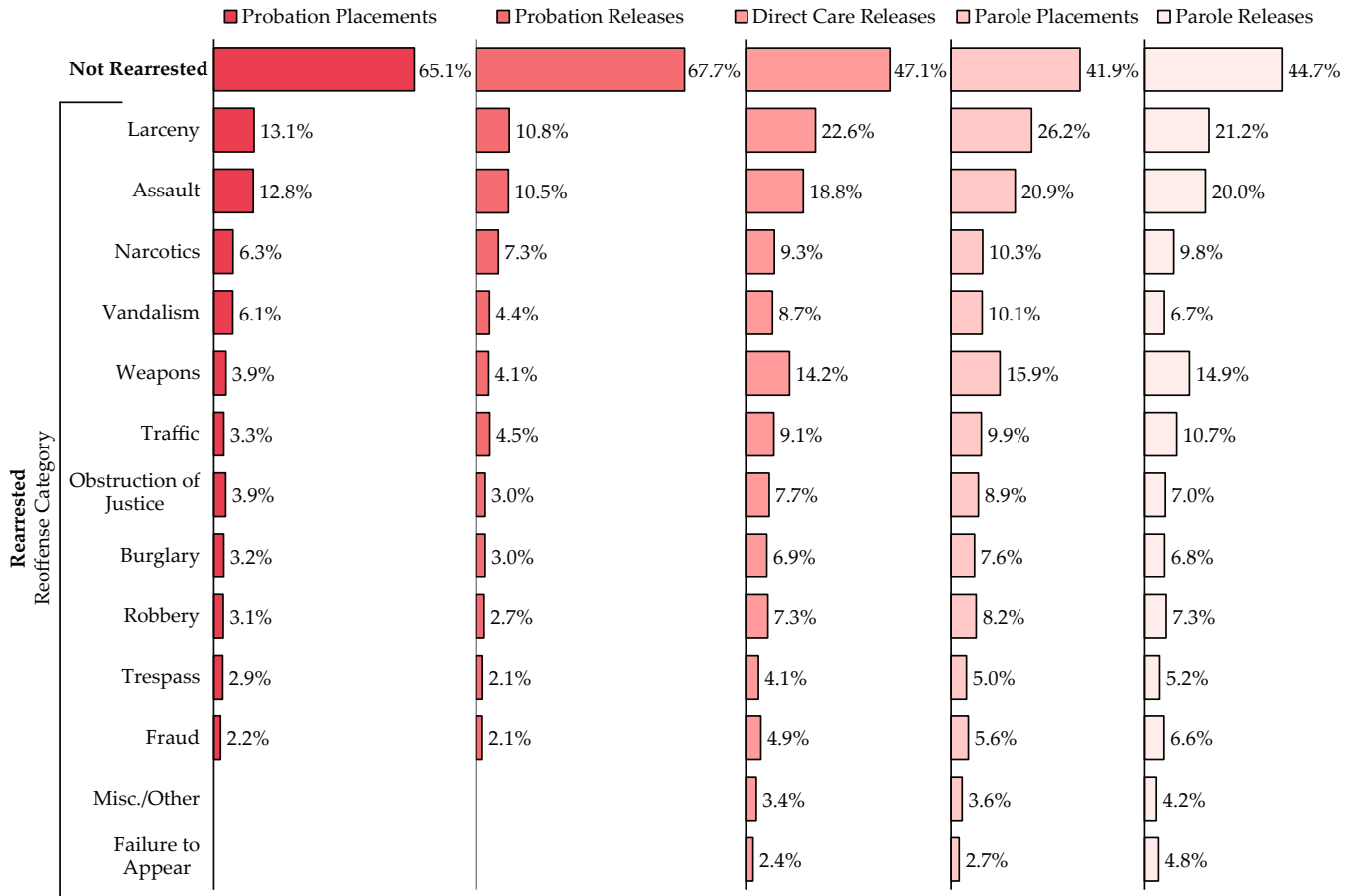
12-Month Felony Rearrest Rates for Placements/Releases by Risk Level



- » High-risk youth were the most likely to be rearrested for a felony.
 - › Among probation releases, 30.9% of high-risk youth were rearrested for a felony within 12 months of release, compared to 16.8% of moderate-risk and 6.4% of low-risk youth.
 - › Among direct care releases, 44.8% of high-risk youth were rearrested for a felony within 12 months of release, compared to 25.4% of moderate-risk and 15.4% of low-risk youth.
 - › Among parole releases, 44.6% of high-risk youth were rearrested for a felony within 12 months of release, compared to 28.8% of moderate-risk and 6.7% of low-risk youth.



12-Month Rearrest Rates for Placements/Releases by Reoffense Category*



* Percentages below 2.0% and missing reoffense information are not shown.

* Youth may be rearrested for more than one offense. Between FY 2016 and FY 2020, there were an average of 1.5 complaints per rearrest.

- » Approximately two-thirds of probation placements and probation releases were not rearrested within 12 months of placement/release.
- » Among probation placements and probation releases, the most common types of reoffenses were larceny and assault.
 - › 13.1% of probation placements and 10.8% of probation releases were rearrested for larceny.
 - › 12.8% of probation placements and 10.5% of probation releases were rearrested for assault.
- » Less than half of direct care releases, parole placements, and parole releases were not rearrested within 12 months of placement/release.
- » For direct care releases, parole placements, and parole releases, the most common types of reoffenses were larceny, assault, and weapons offenses.
 - › 22.6% of direct care releases, 26.2% of parole placements, and 21.2% of parole releases were rearrested for larceny.
 - › 18.8% of direct care releases, 20.9% of parole placements, and 20.0% of parole releases were rearrested for assault.
 - › 14.2% of direct care releases, 15.9% of parole placements, and 14.9% of parole releases were rearrested for weapons.

