

The Intersection of Mental Health and the Juvenile Justice System
Terminology and Sources
May, 2018

Definitions

An asterisk (*) represents data that are suppressed due to confidentiality for cells in which the numerator is less than 10 or, in the case of percentages, a denominator is less than 100.

Involuntary Baker Act Examination – The Baker Act defines “involuntary examination” as an examination performed under sections 394.463, 397.6772, 397.679, 397.6798, or 397.6811, Florida Statutes (F.S.) to determine whether an individual qualifies for involuntary services. “Involuntary services” means court-ordered outpatient services or inpatient placement for mental health treatment pursuant to sections 394.4655 or 394.467, F.S. Once a Baker Act has been initiated, the individual must be examined by one of the following mental health professionals to determine if the criteria for involuntary services are met and to determine the appropriate course of action:

- Physician
- Clinical psychologist
- Psychiatric nurse (within the framework of an established protocol with a psychiatrist)

The statutorily established examination period is for up to 72 hours. For minors, however, once a Baker Act determination is made, the clinical examination to determine if the criteria for involuntary services are met must be initiated within the first 12 hours of their arrival at the facility. This means the mental health professional must have begun the clinical examination no later than 12 hours after the minor is received.

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Intake/Arrests – Youth are not technically arrested; a law enforcement officer takes a youth into custody based on probable cause and charges the youth with a law violation. The youth is then screened and assessed for the violation of the law or court order. The number of arrests received is determined by counting only the most serious offense for which a youth is charged on any specific date, as recorded in Florida Juvenile Justice Information System.

Misdemeanor – A less serious crime that usually results in a small fine and/or jail time of less than one year in a jail facility rather than a prison facility.

Felony – A category of crimes that are often classified as the most serious types of offenses, and they can be either violent or non-violent.

Civil Citation - The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) civil citation initiative addresses a youth’s behavior at his or her first encounter with the juvenile justice system and provides an alternative to arrest for that child.

Youth Eligible for Civil Citation – The first time misdemeanants (excluding sex offenses and firearms) with no history of having been issued a civil citation or utilizing any other alternative to arrest.

Issued a civil citation or other alternative to arrest – Total number of youth issued a civil citation or provided with any other alternative to arrest. Offense date is used to determine the reporting month.

Arrested - Total number of youth arrested for first-time misdemeanor offenses (excluding sex offenses and firearms) with no history of being issued a civil citation or provided with any other alternative to arrest. The arrest date is used to determine the reporting month.

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