

juvenile justice and delinquency prevention

107985

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# PROBATION

## The Michigan Holdover Network

Short Term Supervision Strategies  
For Rural Counties

# The Michigan Holdover Network

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Houghton, Michigan, is a small resort town located on a finger of land that juts about sixty miles into Lake Superior. It belongs to an area of Michigan known as the "Upper Peninsula"—upper because it is separated by Lake Michigan and the Mackinac Straits from the rest of the State. Southern Michigan residents tend to think of the Upper Peninsula as a vacationer's paradise. Its heavy annual snowfalls make for excellent skiing in the winter, and in the summer, its numerous lakes and forest areas give downstate city dwellers a chance to escape the hectic pace of urban life. Residents of larger commercial centers in the Upper Peninsula such as Escanaba and Sault Ste. Marie often have to make it clear to visitors that their third of the state is *not* one vast forest preserve. But in Houghton, life revolves pretty much around the tourist season. During long stretches of the year there's not much happening here.

Above one of the storefronts that line Houghton's main street is a nonsecure juvenile holdover. As juvenile detention settings in small, rural communities go, this holdover is quite remarkable. First, it is located in a spare room at the community's *Dial Help* office, the local crisis telephone center, and consequently one could walk by it and never know it was there. Second, the room itself does not display any overt intent to intimidate or control behavior. In other words, it doesn't look anything at all like a "cell," it looks like all the other rooms in the office building, except for the fact that it doesn't contain a desk.

The holdover's major purpose is to give court officials someplace besides the local county jail to hold juveniles after they have been apprehended. Michigan's Department of Social Services established a network of nonsecure holdovers in the Upper Peninsula five years ago so that small, rural communities like Houghton could avoid having to reorganize the entire population in a jail to make room for a juvenile. Because of the trauma and abuse youths in jail can suffer at the hands of resident adult inmates, Michigan State law forbids placing a juvenile in a jail cell that is within sight and sound of any resident adults. But many county and city jails are so overcrowded that there often is simply no way a jailer can find room for a juvenile, especially if an entire wing of a jail will have to be emptied to accommodate one youth. Sometimes the jailers at an overcrowded facility have to choose between doubling the number of inmates in each cell or putting a youth in solitary confinement, the cell meant to punish ungovernable adults. Also, aside from these more practical aspects of the problem, many justice officials are opposed to the jailing of juveniles for ethical or philosophical reasons.

Many communities avoid having to place juveniles in adult jails by placing them in secure juvenile detention centers, facilities designed specifically for juveniles. But Houghton County does not have easy access to a secure juvenile detention center. The closest one is about 440 miles away. Consequently, until about four years ago the only place one could hold an arrested juvenile was the county jail. Now that the county has a holdover, however, youths who are charged with non-serious delinquency offenses and "status" offenses—offenses that would not be considered crimes if committed by adults—are brought to a holdover rather than to the county jail. Often problems such as incorrigibility and running away originate in an unstable home situation, which makes the issue of juvenile jailings all that much more problematic. "A lot of the youths we see are victims of abuse and neglect," commented Lynn MacGregor, Juvenile Diversion Officer for Schoolcraft County, another county in the Upper Peninsula that operates a holdover. "By taking the youth to a holdover rather than to a jail, we feel that we are gaining some time. The youth has time to make some decisions and think through his or her options, and local officials have some time to decide how to handle the case." For youths like this who are living in a community where everyone knows everyone else, having to cope with the stigma of being sent to jail complicates their problems considerably.

The holdovers are also used to detain some felony offenders who are not considered dangerous to themselves or others. Youths who have committed property felonies or some minor aggressive felonies are held in a holdover pending a preliminary hearing. At the hearing the court decides whether to place these youths in a detention center or to return them to their homes.

The Upper Peninsula's holdover network is part of an innovative "alternative services" program that now serves all of the rural areas of southern and northern lower Michigan as well. Alternative services—i.e., alternatives to jail and secure juvenile detention such as court-ordered home detention and temporary youth shelters—are a relatively new idea in juvenile justice programming. To a certain degree they represent a response to worsening economic conditions, widespread overcrowding in city and county jails, and the consequent need for more efficient means of detaining status and nonoffenders, persons in need of supervision, and youths accused of delinquent offenses. But a more immediate cause for the development of alternatives to the secure holding of youths in adult facilities was the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 and its subsequent amendments, which require participating states to remove all juveniles from adult jails and lockups by December 1988. Communities that are committed to a policy of "jail removal" (as it is called by those in the field), but who have no access to a secure juvenile detention center and cannot raise the funds to build one, have had to find other, less costly ways to supervise youths in trouble with the law.

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***Lynn MacGregor,  
Juvenile Diversion Officer  
for Schoolcraft County***

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Unfortunately, establishing a network of alternative placement options has been particularly difficult for rural areas, where resources for new programs are often nonexistent. But Michigan's alternative services program has not only proven to be successful, it is extremely economical as well. The network's key components, a series of nonsecure holdovers and a home detention program, have required almost no capital outlay for building construction or major renovation, and the services are staffed by locally trained, paid "quasi-volunteers." In 1984 the entire Upper Peninsula alternative services program (including administrative expenses) cost the State only \$118,194.

How does the program work? Suppose that two local police officers arrest a youth on a breaking and entering charge. If the arresting officer cannot locate the youth's parents immediately, or if the youth cannot or should not be sent home, the police can bring him to a nonsecure holdover where a youth attendant will wait with the boy until a face-to-face meeting can be arranged with an officer of the court. Then, if the judge decides at the hearing that the youth does not need to be held in secure detention, but nevertheless needs some sort of court supervision before the case is adjudicated, s/he can order the boy to participate in a home detention program, and a home detention contract is drawn up and signed by the judge, the youth, his parents, and the home detention worker who is assigned to the case.

Michigan officials developed these alternative services not only in response to federal legislation, but also as part of a philosophical commitment to the idea that putting juveniles in jail to punish them or "teach them a lesson" doesn't help them solve their problems. Instead, it generally postpones the problem-solving until they are returned to their families, where the problem often originates. Sometimes it even makes the problem worse, in that a youth may leave the jail feeling alienated and bitter. Or worse, sometimes when youths are placed in adult jails, where the staff may not be adequately trained to provide the necessary supervision, they may become severely depressed and try to take their lives. If something tragic happens, the local court faces the risk of expensive lawsuits, unfavorable publicity, and the loss of public confidence.

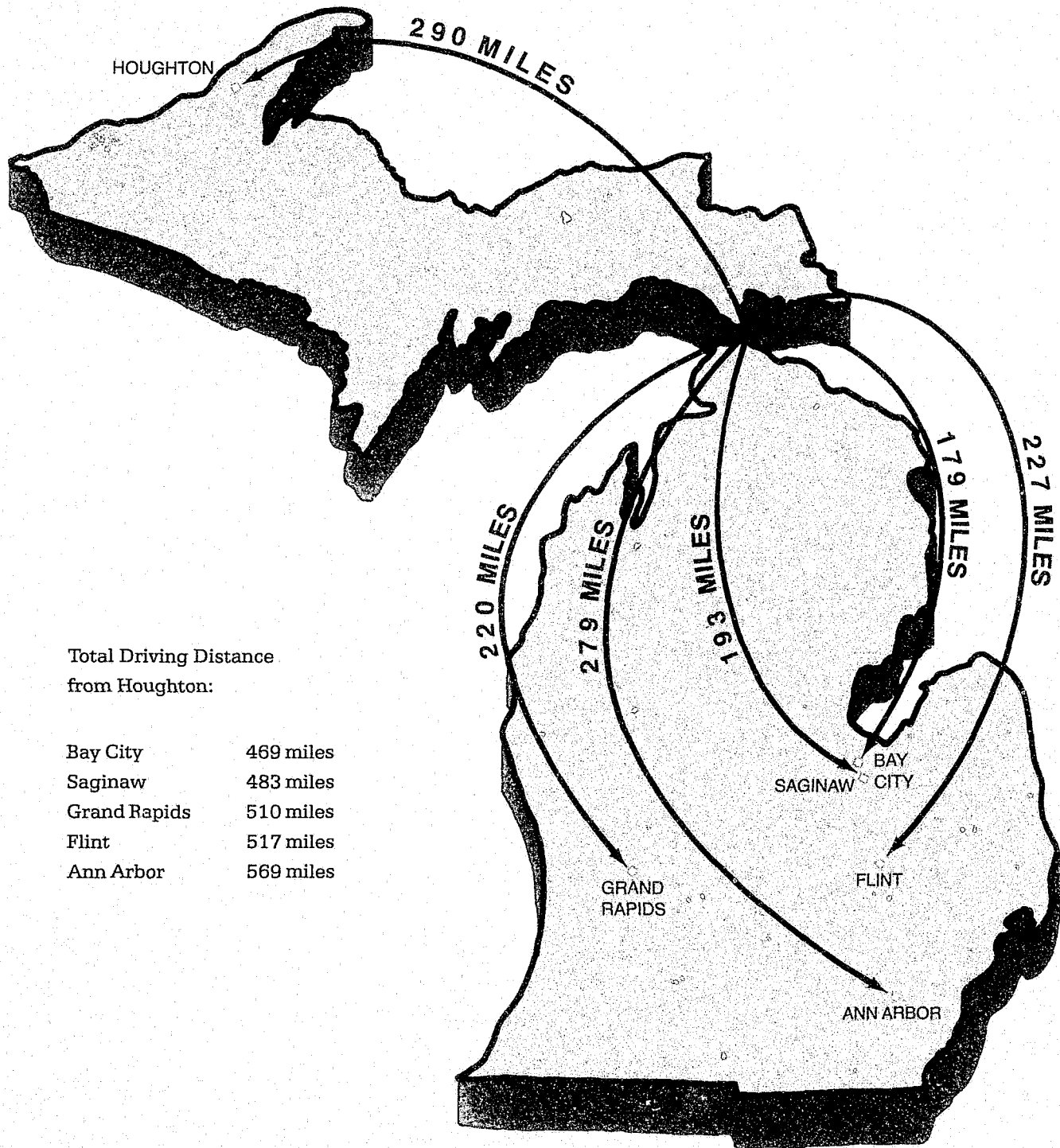
But what is most remarkable about Michigan's stance on jail removal and its highly effective network of alternative programs and services designed to prevent juvenile jailings, is the fact that these alternatives have been instituted in the Upper Peninsula despite a number of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. First, there is no secure juvenile detention facility anywhere in Northern Michigan. The nearest county-run detention center is in Bay City. The only State-run detention center is located in Flint, over 500 miles from the peninsula's northwest corner. To drive there, one would first have to travel to the east end of the peninsula, cross the Mackinac Bridge, and then head downstate—about the same distance as driving from Flint to Lexington, Kentucky (See Map). Second, although in 1978 the State Legislature authorized plans for building regional detention centers throughout the State, deteriorating economic conditions in Michigan have prevented the plans from being implemented. Third, because of the long distances involved, it is not practical to transport more than a few youths to available detention centers downstate. Local officials prefer to use these facilities only as back-up centers, particularly for serious or chronic offenders who require longer-term detention and are likely to be placed in a training school or private residential program. Also, the parents of incarcerated youths would find it difficult to make frequent visits and arrange meetings with legal counsel at such a distance. Nor do they want their children, who may not have a history of serious crimes, mixed with street-wise youths from large cities in Southern Michigan.

Because of all these factors, officials in Michigan's Department of Social Services developed a plan in 1979 to establish a network of regional detention programs in the northern part of the State. As a first step in implementing the plan, in 1980 the agency applied for a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) which, if awarded, would enable them to develop plans for a network of regional detention programs. Meanwhile, the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University conducted a study on jailing practices in the State. Published in 1980, the study indicated that of all youths booked and placed in a cell in the Upper Peninsula, about 44 percent were held in secure custody for less than 24 hours. Of the youths who remained in jail longer than 24 hours, over half (51 percent) were there for dispositional placement. These figures, coupled with a rise in the per diem rates at the Flint detention center, overcrowded jails throughout the State, and few available tax dollars to build new facilities for either adults or juveniles, led State officials to concentrate on planning for low-cost, short-term alternatives to secure residential detention in the State's northern regions.

By March of 1981 the State had received a second OJJDP grant award to implement the program, and the Flint Regional Detention Center director began meeting with representatives from Northern Lower Michigan and the

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## DRIVING DISTANCES BETWEEN HOUGHTON AND FIVE DOWNSTATE DETENTION CENTERS



Total Driving Distance  
from Houghton:

Bay City	469 miles
Saginaw	483 miles
Grand Rapids	510 miles
Flint	517 miles
Ann Arbor	569 miles

0 20 40 60 80 100 Miles

Upper Peninsula to discuss ways to pilot an alternative services network in a few selected counties. These meetings helped the Office of Children and Youth Services prepare a revised version of the 1979 regional detention plan, which it submitted to the State Legislature in October 1981. Under the revised plan participating Upper Peninsula counties would receive funds to set up nonsecure holdovers, shelter care programs, home detention programs, and a transportation service to the Regional Detention Center in Flint, or to other county-run detention centers. The plan also called for the appointment of a Regional Detention Services director for the Upper Peninsula. The director's first responsibility was to contact local judges and other state and county officials to secure widespread cooperation and participation in the program. In general, local response to the proposal was favorable, and by December 1982 there were ten nonsecure holdovers in the Upper Peninsula, seven secure holdovers, nine in-home detention programs, and *jailings in the participating counties had dropped by 74 percent.*

This immediate and drastic reduction in jailings brought national attention to the Upper Peninsula's program, and Regional Detention Center officials at Flint soon found themselves receiving calls from juvenile justice specialists around the country who wanted to implement similar alternative programs and services in their own jurisdictions. As time went on the program was modified to better suit the needs of Upper Peninsula counties, and gradually the program has been expanded throughout the State. To date, in addition to the Upper Peninsula's alternative services, there are eighteen nonsecure holdovers, nine secure holdovers, and sixteen home detention programs in Northern Lower Michigan, and thirteen nonsecure holdovers, seven secure holdovers, and fourteen home detention programs in the 22 eligible counties in lower Michigan. The programs in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Michigan are now 100 percent state-funded, and State officials expect the lower Michigan network to be entirely state-funded by 1988.

## THE NETWORK

The alternative services network as it now exists features six basic programs.

**Nonsecure Holdovers.** Each participating county found space (usually a room) for a holdover in a nonsecure public facility, or in a nonsecure area of a public facility, that was accessible to the public. It could be located in a state police post, sheriff's office, detox center, community mental health center, local hospital, or other appropriate agency. (See Table One for a list of holdover sites.) Each holdover has access to bathroom facilities and a phone, room for a cot or couch, and access to meals. Normally a youth can be

held there for only 16 hours at a time, but in exceptional circumstances juveniles can be held up to 24 hours, and as long as local officials keep to the 16-hour time limits and provide full documentation for any cases where a youth is held for more than 16 hours, the county will be fully reimbursed by the State Department of Social Services for its expenses. All holdovers are limited to this maximum holding period of 24 hours, mainly because facilities which hold youths in care for over 24 hours must be licensed. Any time a local court decides to keep a youth in a holdover

Table One

Holdover Sites in the Upper Peninsula	
County	Where Located
Mackinac	Sheriff's Department
Chippewa	County-City Building
Luce	Sheriff's Department
Schoolcraft	Sheriff's Department
Dickenson	Service Building behind Courthouse (houses ambulance service, sheriff's department and county commissioners)
Iron	Michigan State Police Post
Gogebic	Sheriff's Department
Ontonagon	Sheriff's Department
Houghton	Crisis Hot Line Center Office
Alger	Sheriff's Department

longer than 24 hours without sufficient reason, it has to assume responsibility for its own expenses.

In general, youths who are charged with an offense so serious that they cannot be returned home, who have violated probation, or who have run away from home may be placed in a nonsecure holdover. A volunteer youth attendant is assigned to each youth in a holdover immediately after the youth arrives. The attendant, who stays in the holdover as long as the youth is there, must be of the same sex as the juvenile; if the youth is unruly, or drunk and disorderly, or if there is reason to believe the youth is a high security risk, the court may use two attendants to provide necessary supervision. In case of emergency, the attendants must be able to call on staff members from a nearby 24-hour agency.

Since the holdover is nonsecure, there are no locked doors and no barred windows in the room where the youth is staying. This means that any juvenile brought to a holdover technically *can* leave it, though almost all of them don't. "We've never had anybody walk out of a holdover,"



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said Lynn MacGregor, when asked how Schoolcraft County handles its security problems. "There's nothing in our holdover to keep someone from walking out, but our youth know they are not supposed to. They are in the holdover for a reason, and they know they've got to face up to their problems when they get there. They realize that the community is taking what they have done very seriously." What keeps a youth from leaving, according to MacGregor, is knowing the consequences if someone walks out: youths who leave a holdover will have to explain why they did so to the judge. That, and the fact that an adult attendant remains in the room with the youth during his or her entire stay.

The rate of pay for holdover attendants is \$5.00 per hour. There are no educational requirements for the job, but holdover workers are required to attend a four-day training session before they begin their first assignment. The types of people generally attracted to the job are court volunteers, college students, senior citizens, social service workers, police officers, and adults interested in community service projects. Since the holdover program is actually a quasi-volunteer service (the work is too unsteady to be relied upon for income), workers are usually recruited because they are concerned about the welfare of youths caught up in the juvenile justice system, and not because they need the money.

When juveniles apprehended by local police qualify for holdover detention, the arresting officer first asks the local probate court for permission to place the youth in detention. If nonsecure detention is approved, the judge or a designated representative will phone a volunteer attendant and ask him or her to report to the holdover. Meanwhile, the police will keep the youth in custody at the holdover site until the holdover worker arrives and assumes responsibility for the youth. While the holdover worker has the youth in custody, he or she must give the youth constant, direct supervision until the youth is released or another attendant arrives for the next shift. Attendants may talk with the youth, but should not discuss the youth's alleged offenses, because they are expected to review the youth's adjustment in holdover detention with the court at the preliminary hearing. They may even be asked to recommend where the youth should be placed during the period before formal court disposition.

**Home Detention.** This alternative program was designed for youths requiring court supervision during the period between the preliminary hearing and formal adjudication and disposition. There is an initial two-week limit on the home detention contract, but under certain circumstances court staff may request extensions if, for example, more time is needed to assess the youth or family in order to make a disposition, or if the court calendar prohibits a final hearing until a specific date. Under the program, a youth who has been arrested may be returned home, where he or she is supervised by a trained volunteer home detention

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***Court officials in participating Upper Peninsula counties have found that the greater attention given to youths under the Home Detention program provides the court with more information about a juvenile, and consequently gives the judge a more complete and reliable basis upon which to make placement decisions. Also, youths under a home detention contract do not have to be sent out of the county to receive appropriate care, and the entire court process benefits from the closer liaison between the youth, home detention worker, and the court.***

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worker of the same sex as the youth. The worker must make at least one face-to-face contact with the youth each day, and a nightly phone contact, to insure that the conditions of the home detention agreement are being met. Home detention workers may make other contacts with the family, school, employer, etc., depending on the nature of the contract and the specific circumstances of the case. They must also keep a daily log of the time and manner of each contact, whether the youth was keeping to the terms of the contract, how the youth was behaving at the time, and any other appropriate comments. This log must be submitted to the court for review periodically or at the end of the detention agreement, and the worker should review the youth's behavior with the court either just before the final disposition hearing, or during the hearing. Workers may also be asked to recommend where the youth be placed—i.e., at home on probation, in foster care, residential care, a training school, or a special treatment program. Home detention workers must also file a formal Worker Summary, which officially records any appropriate observations and recommendations with the court.

To authorize a Home Detention Contract the court must indicate that out-of-home placement, either in the form of shelter care, secure detention, or jail, would have been used if home detention had not been available, and the contract must be signed by all participating parties, including the youth, the youth's parents or guardians, the probation officer, judge, and home detention worker. Home detention workers are paid \$10.00 per day for their services, an amount which is fully reimbursed by Michigan's Department of Social Services.

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**Transportation Network.** In certain situations, usually because of delays in the court process and/or the nature of the youth's alleged crime, counties in the Upper Peninsula will need access to longer-term secure detention. To provide this service a transportation network was established between the Regional Detention Center in Flint and the Upper Peninsula. Youths requiring long-term secure detention are brought to the Mackinac Bridge by the county, where they are transferred to a secure vehicle from the Genesee facility which brings them to Flint, a distance of about 180 miles, or to some other county detention facility. The youth is returned to the Upper Peninsula via the same system.

To be eligible for these services, a local court must either have (a) eliminated juvenile jailings, or (b) established a working system of holdover and home detention programs and/or other "jail removal" alternatives. Each county using the service must recruit its own drivers and/or attendants to transport the youths to the Mackinac Bridge and back. Because they've already been trained and are familiar with the local juvenile court system, volunteers for the home detention and holdover programs are well-suited for the task. The transporters may use their own vehicles, in which case the vehicles must be safe, properly insured, and equipped with appropriate items such as a spare tire, jack and lug wrench, etc. Drivers and attendants are paid \$5.00 per hour, plus expenses, during their working hours (i.e., while the youth is in their custody and they are in transit), unless they are on-duty police officers or social service workers who are already being paid by the county for their time, in which case they are only reimbursed for mileage and meals. Local officials prefer to use police and other county employees in the program only when they are off duty, so as not to disrupt their regular work. And, as in the other attendee programs, either the transporter or the attendant must be of the same sex as the youth.

While the costs of transporting the youth to and from Flint are fully reimbursable, the daily fee for use of the Genesee facility must be split between the county and the State. This charge-back encourages local courts to use alternative services, which cost very little under current arrangements and are fully reimbursable, rather than relying on expensive residential services downstate. "We don't send our youths to Flint very often," said one Upper Peninsula official. "We can't afford it! Besides, we can usually handle their problems here anyway." Still, for those youths who need longer-term secure custody, the Flint detention center is available at a reasonable price, but the Upper Peninsula counties generally regard it as a last resort.

**Secure Holdovers.** Federal OJJDP guidelines allow rural jurisdictions to hold violent offenders in adult jails for up to 48 hours, provided the juveniles are separated by sight and sound from adult offenders. Department of Social Services officials in the Upper Peninsula, following the intent of these guidelines, developed a series of secure

holdovers located in adult jails where violent offenders could be kept in secure custody for up to six hours, pending a face-to-face meeting with a court worker, and/or an informal hearing and/or a preliminary hearing. The youth in question must be charged with either murder, criminal sexual conduct in the first or third degree, armed robbery, kidnapping, or an assault which is a felony. Secure holdovers may also be used for up to six hours if the youth is fifteen years or older, is being charged with an adult-type offense, and/or is otherwise out of control. The holdovers are located at the county jail; they must be separate from the main cell block and must not allow for any verbal, visual or physical contact with adult prisoners. Each one must also be approved for use as a holdover by a Regional Detention Services staff member as well as the sheriff.

Whenever an out-of-control youth is placed in the secure holdover to "cool off," the youth must be moved to a nonsecure holdover after six hours, and the six hours must be counted toward the nonsecure holdover time limit of sixteen hours (i.e., four hours in secure custody, plus twelve hours in nonsecure custody equal the limit of sixteen hours in a holdover).

The operating procedures for a secure holdover are similar to those for a nonsecure holdover. The holdover attendant is to provide constant, direct supervision of the youth as long as the youth is in the holdover. In addition, every 15 minutes either the attendant or the Sheriff's deputy should make entries in a monitoring log describing the youth's behavior and attitude. Then, once every hour he or she should also indicate why the youth is still in secure custody (e.g., "youth still out of control" or "looking for an available bed in a detention center"). This log must be submitted to the Department of Social Services, along with other required documents specifying the youth's alleged offense and other demographic data, in order for the county to be reimbursed for holdover expenses.

Because Regional Detention Services staff and local justice officials in the Upper Peninsula generally are opposed to juvenile jailings, very few youths have been held in the area's network of secure holdovers. In 1984 eight youths were admitted to secure holdovers in the Upper Peninsula, for an average length of stay of 5.5 hours. Sixty-six youths, on the other hand, were admitted to nonsecure holdovers during the same period.

**Holdover and Home Detention Worker Training.** Every three months a four-day training session totaling 23 hours of instruction is offered for recruits to the holdover and home detention worker programs. Since this type of contact with youths is generally new to a majority of the workers, it is essential that new volunteers are taught how to respond properly to the variety of situations that may occur while they are on duty. The training sessions thus include listening and communication skills, family assessment, theory of adolescence, substance abuse, teen-age depression and suicide, self-defense and restraint training, and guidelines on how to transport a youth. New recruits

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attending these sessions are paid \$10 per day for each day of training, plus mileage and meals during travel. Lodging and meals during the sessions are provided without cost to the workers as well.

In addition to these initial training sessions, one-day meetings are held with local court officials and Regional Detention Services staff on a quarterly basis to discuss any problems that the workers might be having with the program. Since workers from several counties attend these sessions, the day provides ample opportunity for workers to exchange tips and share experiences. As with the initial four training sessions, meals during the workshops are provided without cost to the workers, and the attendees receive \$10 per day plus mileage for attending the sessions. These arrangements apply to any additional ongoing training workshops local courts may wish to schedule as well.

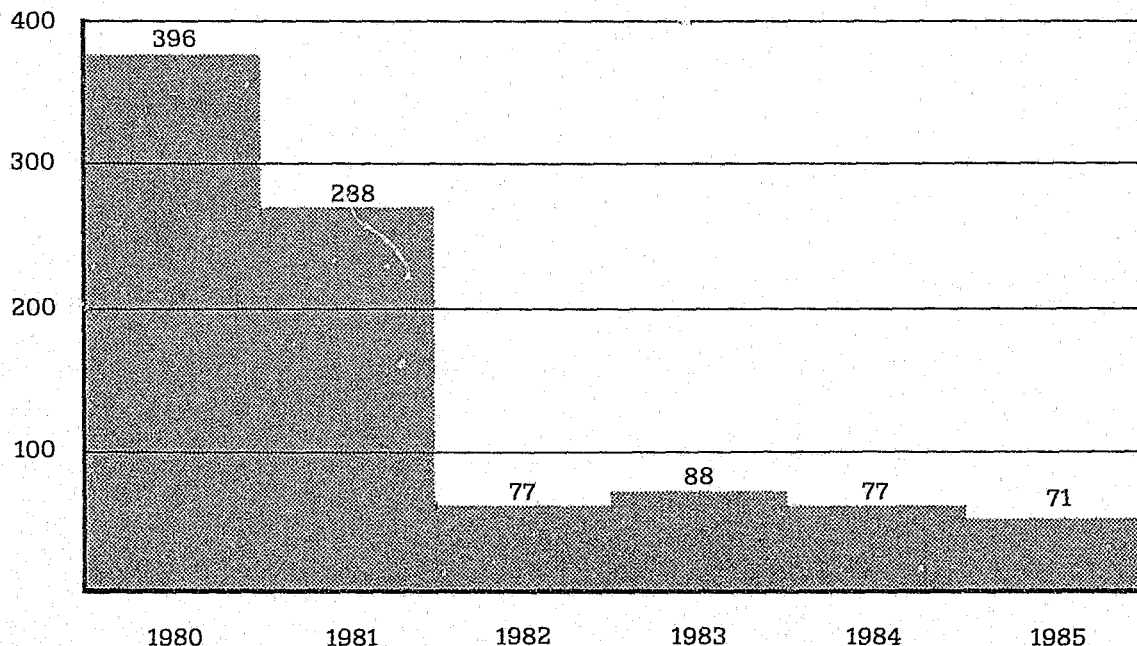
**Twenty-four Hour Clearinghouse of Available Detention Bedspace.** In order to help make their member facilities available as alternatives to jail for non-resident offenders, the Michigan Juvenile Detention Association (MJDA) has agreed to support efforts to establish a statewide clearinghouse for information on available detention bedspaces. Each week the intake staff at the Flint Regional Detention Center contacts participating MJDA facilities and asks them for the number of bedspaces they can make available

on a courtesy basis to rural counties without a secure juvenile detention center. If during the week this number changes, the facility staff will notify Flint as to know how many available beds they still have (or how many more they have). Rural counties needing these bedspaces can telephone Flint to find out what is available, but they are responsible for negotiating its use directly with the MJDA facility.

## THE TRACK RECORD

As the chart below illustrates, jailing rates in the Upper Peninsula over the past four years have not risen substantially since the dramatic 74 percent reduction achieved in 1982. Between 1981 and 1982 jailings in Upper Peninsula counties dropped from an average of 20.9 per month to 5.4 per month; since 1982 the rate has remained at about 6.4 jailings per month. Furthermore, of all the jailings reported during the past three years, the majority occurred in counties which are not yet participating in Regional Detention Services alternative programs. In 1984, for example, 58 percent of the jailing total (or 45 jailings) occurred in two nonparticipating Upper Peninsula counties, while the other 13 participating counties recorded only 32 jailings.

THE DROP IN JUVENILE JAILINGS IN THE UPPER PENINSULA  
(INCLUDES ALL 15 COUNTIES)





## RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

One of the keys to the Upper Peninsula's success with an alternative service network is its ability to recruit a steady supply of highly-qualified volunteers. Keeping volunteers active in a program is not a simple task; communities who depend upon them to run their services must develop procedures for drawing in new recruits as well as periodic in-service training workshops to improve skills and help build morale. A number of Upper Peninsula communities are fortunate in that they can make use of college students in their programs. Houghton County, for example, has about 12 volunteers in its holdover/home detention program at present, most of whom are college students majoring in criminal justice or other social service programs at a nearby college. "College students tend to be dependable and they don't mind sitting up all night in a holdover," commented James Kurtti, Juvenile Officer for the county. "They're not as tied down as someone with a regular eight-to-five job, and they like the work because it gives them valuable on-the-job experience." Originally Houghton County recruited most of its volunteers from a local Big Brother program. This gave them a core of people to draw upon while they experimented with other sources for community volunteers.

Since Houghton County operates both a home detention and a holdover program, many of the volunteers who are assigned to a holdover will be able to continue working with a particular youth when the judge puts him on home detention. "The volunteers can really get to know a youth this way," said Kurtti, "and make some good recommendations to the judge as to how the court should handle his problems."

Wayne Gamelin, Probation Officer for Chippewa County, also said that his community drew heavily on a local college through its "Volunteers in Prevention" program. Like Houghton County, Chippewa County's home detention program was a "spin off" of local community service projects. Now, however, about 60 percent of the program's volunteers are college students, though the court still recruits actively from community service organizations and by word of mouth as well. Working closely with a local college provides a steady supply of volunteers who have a professional interest in the program. County representatives are invited once a semester to speak to students in criminal justice and social work courses about the county's alternative services network. Students can volunteer to work in the program for college credit; it serves as a practicum in their field, and at the end of the semester they turn in a paper describing their experiences. By working closely with a local college in this manner, Gamelin said that court officials not only are able to keep highly-qualified volunteers on hand, but they also have an excellent opportunity to make other sectors of the community aware of their work. "These college students bring a lot of

idealism to the program," said Gamelin. "If they can 'save' one youth, they feel they've contributed something positive to society—and at the same time they are working on their career goals too."

The Volunteers in Prevention Program is set up like a Big Brother or Big Sister program, in that it attempts to provide underprivileged youths in the community with positive role models. This is especially important for youths who do not come from effectively functioning family units. When the "match" is right between a youth and the VIP home detention worker, there is a chance that the youth will want to continue meeting with the volunteer after the home detention contract is finished, and that their relationship will develop into a meaningful friendship for both of them. This can be especially exciting for the college students, who tend to be closer in age to the youth, and consequently may be easier for the youth to trust than older adults. Of course, this is not always the case, but either way the youth has an opportunity to receive valuable one-on-one counseling and advice from adults who are in a position to be trusted advisors and friends.

Lynn MacGregor, on the other hand, said that her county doesn't have a local college to draw from, and consequently they generally use college students only during the summertime, when they are at home for summer vacation. "Right now we have about 21 volunteers working in the program," she said, "and we use only ten of them on a regular basis. The others have heavy work schedules. They can't stay up all night in a holdover when they have to work the next day." According to MacGregor, a majority of their volunteers are established community members. "We have one person older than 50, a retired police officer," she said. "But most of our volunteers are in their 30's and 40's. Some are foster parents, some are housewives who want to keep up their degrees in social work or criminal justice, and some just want to become active in local community service projects. We always seem to end up with quite a variety of people, though the one thing that most of them have in common is that they are parents."

The volunteers themselves tend to be the program's best recruiters, according to MacGregor. "Whenever we've advertised for volunteers," she said, "we seem to get a lot of people we can't use. But our own volunteers know the kind of person we're looking for, and consequently we rely on them to do most of our recruiting for us."

## THE COST

That this program is a cost-effective solution to the Upper Peninsula's jailing problems has been clear right from the start. In 1984, total costs for direct care services in the Upper Peninsula were \$50,412, a figure which included \$5,594 for the holdovers, \$22,124 for home detention, and \$22,739 for home detention and holdover worker training.

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Table Two

## COST OF DIRECT CARE SERVICES IN THE UPPER PENINSULA FY 1983-84 (Does not include cost of Transportation Service)

Service	Total Year's Cost	Total Admission	Cost per Admission	Daily Cost of Service	Average Length of Care	Total Length of Care
Holdovers	\$5,549	74	\$75.00	\$5.70/hour	13 hours*	972 hours
Home Detention	\$22,124	72	\$307.28	\$16.21	19 days	1,365 days
Total Direct Service	\$27,674	146	\$192.18	\$19.68	9.6 days	1,405 days
Training	\$22,739	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Alternative Services	\$50,412	146	\$345.00	\$35.87	9 days	1,405 days
Secure RDC	\$121,090	29	\$4,175.00	\$136.98	30 days	884 days

\*Maximum time allowed in a secure holdover per admission is 6 hours (secure holdovers are limited to violent offenders). Maximum time allowed in a nonsecure holdover is 16 hours.

N/A = not applicable.

In other words, in 1984 the average daily cost of basic alternative services in the Upper Peninsula was \$35.87 per youth, as compared with the \$136.98 daily rate at the State detention center in Flint.

When we calculate these figures on a per child rather than a per diem basis, the Upper Peninsula's cost savings becomes even more startling. As noted in Table Two, the average cost of care per child for direct alternative services in 1984 was \$345 (\$50,412 divided by 146 juveniles). Also, as noted in Table Two, the Upper Peninsula counties paid an average of \$4,175 per child for the 29 youths sent to secure detention in Flint, where the average length of stay was 30 days. This cost was about *twelve times higher* than the cost of alternative service care.\* Because of the drastic cost savings these alternative programs provide, the Department of Social Services has designed its programs to offer several built-in financial incentives for counties using Regional Detention Services. Consequently, the home detention program and the secure and nonsecure holdover network is virtually cost-free for the county, making it extremely difficult for other areas of the State to argue that economic factors make it impossible to keep juveniles out of jail.

\*Actually the cost of care per child at Flint was much higher, since the per diem figure does not include the cost of transportation services to and from Flint (58 trips for the Upper Peninsula). Because the vehicle traveling between the Mackinac Bridge and Flint would have picked up youths at Northern Lower Michigan sites as well, transportation costs are extremely difficult to calculate on a per region basis. In 1984 there were a total of 223 trips to Flint from the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Michigan, at a total cost of \$38,838 for the year, or \$174.15 per trip.

## COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Yet no matter how successful a program is at its inception, or how economically feasible it is, the real test of a regional alternative services network is the local response to it. State officials may like how it looks on paper, but if a community resents it as another instance of the state government's interference in local affairs, or if parents and other community leaders are suspicious of it, the program is not likely to survive.

***Local law enforcement officials appreciate the options they now have when they handle runaways. The holdover network gives police officers a choice between putting them in jail or letting them go.***

Most communities in the Upper Peninsula are enthusiastic about their alternative services programs. Local law enforcement officials, for example, appreciate the options they now have when they handle a runaway. In the past, when they picked up a runaway whose parents lived in the area, the usual procedure was to drop the youth off at the parent's doorstep. But the minute the youth was out of sight, the police would worry over whether the youth would take off again when the coast was clear. Now that they can bring such youths to a holdover, local law enforcement have a choice between putting runaways in jail or letting them go. Also, once they drop a juvenile off at a holdover, they no longer have liability for the youth's actions. This is of particular concern to law enforcement

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*Having a locally-based and run program for youthful offenders means that a youth's problems are not likely to be overlooked. Those working most closely with the youth generally know him or her personally—something that parents in the long run appreciate. And local taxpayers and the administrators of adult justice programs are happy as well.*

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when they have a felony offender on their hands. As James Kurtti put it, "We're saving the local sheriff a lot of trouble!"

Parents for the most part are enthusiastic about the program as well. They are relieved that the county doesn't have to send their children downstate to detain them. As Lynn MacGregor explained, "We may think that a youth's problems are pretty serious, but in one of the big cities downstate, detention officials might not even have time to pay attention to them. They have much more serious problems to deal with."

The key to the general enthusiasm for the program is the fact that it enables local officials to respond to a youth's problems appropriately without endangering the commu-

nity's security—and at the same time, without disrupting or overburdening programs meant only for adults. Smaller communities have certain unique characteristics that can work for local justice officials more than one realizes. In Houghton, for example, local law enforcement officials, the clergy, school administrators, and many of the teachers in the public schools are on a first name basis with each other. When a youth gets in trouble, they are all concerned, and are generally willing to work together to see to it that the youth and his or her family can get some help. Consequently, having a locally-based and run program for youthful offenders means that a youth's problems are not likely to be overlooked. Those working most closely with the youth generally know him or her personally—something that parents in the long run appreciate. And local taxpayers and the administrators of adult justice programs are happy as well.

Ultimately, of course, any juvenile justice program's success depends not upon its economic feasibility or its acceptability to the community, but upon its effect on local youths and their families. Yet even if it fails to keep any one particular youth out of further trouble, everyone concerned agrees that an alternative services program such as the one in Michigan's Upper Peninsula is a far more humane and economical way to try to solve a youth's problems.