Washington State Institute for Public Policy
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February 22, 2019

Data Dissemination Committee
Administrative Office of the Courts
1112 Quince St. SE
P.O. Box 41170
Olympia, WA 98504-1170

Dear Members of the Committee:

We are writing to request access to court case (referral and detention) file data for Truancy (TRU), At-Risk Youth (ARY), and Child in Need of Services (CHINS) cases for integration into the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) Criminal History Database (CHD).

WSIPP currently receives referral, detention, and PACT data associated with Case Type 8 SCOMIS cases (i.e., juvenile offender cases). We obtain these data on a rolling basis from AOC and incorporate these data into our larger Criminal History Database. This comprehensive database allows us to conduct research projects at the behest of the legislature and other state agencies (e.g., Juvenile Rehabilitation), to evaluate program/policy effectiveness, and to provide information about overall trends in the criminal justice system over time.

In the last few years, the legislature and various state agencies have increasingly focused on Case Type 7 SCOMIS, now Odyssey cases, with particular emphasis on Truancy, ARY, and CHINS petitions. The general spotlight on these cases has resulted in several legislative assignments for WSIPP. For example, WSIPP recently received a legislative assignment to evaluate the 2016 and 2017 legislative changes to truancy petitions (Second Substitute House Bill 2449, Laws of 2016, Regular Session). With so many ongoing discussions around the state, it is possible that WSIPP will receive additional legislative requests for research concerning this population in the future.

In the past, WSIPP has requested one-off data requests from the AOC or the Research and Data Analysis center at DSHS to obtain the data necessary to complete our evaluations. These one-off data requests are time and resource intensive for all of the involved agencies and often limit WSIPP to a de-identified dataset that does not include any personal identifiers. This process limits WSIPP's oversight of the data processing and may, at times, extend the amount of time required for us to complete research assignments. This process can also limit the types of statistical methods and sensitivity testing we can use in our evaluations. Without these data, we are also limited in the type of information requests we can fulfill for legislators during the legislative session.

WSIPP requests a one-time transmission of all existing Type 7 juvenile case data with cause code 'TRU,' 'ARY,' and "CHINS' and an expansion of our ongoing SCOMIS/Odyssey case data transmissions to include new Type 7 juvenile cases with cause code 'TRU,' 'ARY,' and "CHINS'

each quarter. Specifically, we are asking for case files (referral data and detention data) for these cases. Consistent with our current data-sharing agreement, we request files for all of the aforementioned Type 7 cases, including those that are sealed and/or expunged. We have experience working with Type 7 SCOMIS records in the area of truancy, at-risk youth, and CHINS. We are sensitive to the confidential nature of these records. WSIPP maintains a secure data system and only authorized personnel will have access to these files. Enclosed is an email granting approval for this data request from the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA).

Sincerely,

Stephanie Lee
Director

Lauren Knoth, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate

Knoth, Lauren (WSIPP)

From: Lisa Tremblay <lisat@co.skagit.wa.us>
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 1:50 PM
To: Knoth, Lauren (WSIPP)
Subject: RE: Type 7 Case Data - WAJCA Approval

Hi Lauren,

The WAJCA approves your request for JCS case type 7 data. We ask that you vet the data and report with the WAJCA prior to dissemination.

Best regards,

Lisa Tremblay, Administrator
Skagit County Superior and Juvenile Court
Superior Court: 360-416-1206
Juvenile Court: 360-416-1225

From: Knoth, Lauren (WSIPP) <lauren.knoth@wsipp.wa.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 9:33 AM
To: Lisa Tremblay <lisat@co.skagit.wa.us>
Cc: Bell, John <john.bell@courts.wa.gov>
Subject: RE: Type 7 Case Data - WAJCA Approval

Hi Lisa,

It is helpful to know that we should not be requesting PACT data for Case Type 7s. I knew that truancy cases used different risk assessments (WARNS or similar), but was unsure about ARY and CHiNS cases.

I've reached out to AOC to get additional clarification on the social file. This was not something I had heard of before, so I unfortunately can't provide too many additional details at this point. I may have misunderstood my initial conversations with AOC, so for now, I'll put the social file request on hold. I may return to this when more information is available, but I don't think this would be something that WAJCA has oversight of or involvement with.

With that said, the focus of our request from WAJCA is on the JCS case type 7 data (for truancy, ARY, and CHiNS – not dependency and termination) for referral and detention. Please let me know if you need anything else from us (WSIPP). I've also cc'd John Bell at AOC who has been working with us on our quest to expand our juvenile data. If you have any additional questions about the JCS data that I cannot answer, I'm hopeful he'll be able to help out.

Best,

Lauren Knoth, PhD
Senior Research Associate | Washington State Institute for Public Policy
(W) (360) 664-9805 | lauren.knoth@wsipp.wa.gov

From: Lisa Tremblay [mailto:lisat@co.skagit.wa.us]
Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2019 11:25 AM
To: Knoth, Lauren (WSIPP)
Subject: RE: Type 7 Case Data - WAJCA Approval

Good morning Lauren,

Thank you for reaching out regarding this subject. I hope to provide some explanation and seek clarification as to your request.

As it relates to case type 7s, the Juvenile Courts do not track or associate these cases within our PACT data. The PACT data is specific to case type 8 cases. The AOC provides filing and other general data regarding case type 7s. Because we are not funded to allocate evidence based programs to case type 7s, we are not able to provide assessment or interventions on a State –wide level for these case types. Therefore, there is no "data bank" for lack of a better term regarding assessment or interventions.

As to your "social file" request – can you elaborate on what you are referring to specifically? We are not funded to provide case management so we need a bit more information as to exactly what you mean by this.

Thank you again for reaching out. We are happy to continue to support your efforts with the information we have available and are able to share.

Best always,

Lisa Tremblay, Administrator
WAJCA President
Skagit County Superior and Juvenile Court
Superior Court: 360-416-1206
Juvenile Court: 360-416-1225

From: Knoth, Lauren (WSIPP) <lauren.knoth@wsipp.wa.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 28, 2018 12:33 PM
To: Lisa Tremblay <lisat@co.skagit.wa.us>
Subject: Type 7 Case Data - WAJCA Approval

Dear Lisa Tremblay,

You and I recently met at the Block Grant Oversight Committee Meeting. My name is Lauren Knoth and I am the Senior Research Associate in Criminal Justice at the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP). As you're probably aware, WSIPP is a non-partisan agency that conducts policy research at the direction of the Legislature and our Board of Directors. We have a long history of conducting research related to the juvenile justice system in Washington.

I'm writing to discuss WSIPP's access to juvenile case information for type 7 cases – specifically for Truancy, ARY, and CHINS cases. WSIPP currently receives referral, detention, and PACT data associated with type 8 juvenile cases. We

obtain these data on a rolling basis from AOC and incorporate the data into our larger Criminal History Database. This comprehensive database allows us to conduct research projects at the behest of the legislature and other state agencies (such as CJAA), to evaluate program/policy effectiveness (such as our ART evaluation), and to provide information about overall trends in the criminal justice system over time.

In the last few years, the legislature and various state agencies have increasingly focused on type 7 juvenile cases, with particular emphasis on Truancy, ARY, and CHINS petitions. The general spotlight on these cases has resulted in several legislative assignments for WSIPP. For example, WSIPP has received a legislative assignment to evaluate the 2016 and 2017 legislative changes to truancy petitions (see legislation here). With so many ongoing discussions around the state, it is possible that we will receive additional legislative requests for research concerning this population in the future.

In the past, WSIPP has requested one-off data requests from the AOC or the Research and Data Analysis center at DSHS to obtain the data necessary to complete our evaluations. These one-off data requests are time and resource intensive for all of the involved agencies and often result in WSIPP receiving a stripped-down dataset that does not include any personal identifiers. This process limits WSIPP's oversight of the data processing and may, at times, extend the amount of time required for us to complete research assignments. This process can also limit the types of statistical methods and sensitivity testing we can complete for our evaluations. Without these data, we are also limited in the type of information requests we can fulfill for legislators during the legislative session.

I recently met with several representatives at AOC to discuss the possibility of expanding our data-sharing agreement (DSA) with AOC to include the referral, detention, and PACT data for type 7 cases. AOC agreed that this would be beneficial to their agency as it would reduce the amount of resources required to fulfill our data requests on a project-by-project basis. AOC explained that the referral, detention, and PACT information that we already receive for the type 8 cases would be the same information we would receive under an expanded DSA. In addition to these case files, they indicated there are separate "social files" for type 7 cases that may provide additional information on the youth and outcomes associated with their care. In order to obtain any of the case file information and/or social file information for type 7 cases, AOC requires approval by WAJCA to release the data to WSIPP, as WAJCA is the owner of these data.

As the President of WAJCA, I am hoping we (WSIPP) may receive your approval to obtain these data. If there is a larger committee within WAJCA that would need to review and approve of this request, please let me know what steps we need to take to submit our request. Our request will also need to be approved by the Data Dissemination Board (DDB) at AOC. We are hoping to submit our request to the AOC DDB for review at their meeting on February 22, 2019. A letter of approval/support from WAJCA is required before AOC will release these data. I would be happy to provide you with a copy of our current DSA covering type 8 cases that includes a description of our data security protocols. I can also put you in contact with our data manager to provide additional information about our data security policies at WSIPP that would cover this data request.

In sum, we are hoping to obtain WAJCA's approval and support to obtain, on a rolling basis, case file (referral, detention, and PACT) and social file data related to type 7 juvenile cases (only Truancy, ARY, and CHINS – excluding Dependency and Termination cases) from AOC for integration into our Criminal History Database. We would ask that this expansion mirror the data we already receive for type 8 cases such that we would obtain information related to all cases, including those that are sealed and expunged.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at lauren.knoth@wsipp.wa.gov or by phone at 360-664-9805. I would be happy to drive up to your office sometime to discuss this request or to arrange a conference call instead. I will be out of the office next Monday (Dec 31) – Wednesday (Jan 2), but am available through the rest of the month.

Sincerely,

Lauren Knoth, PhD
Senior Research Associate | Washington State Institute for Public Policy
(W) (360) 664-9805 | lauren.knoth@wsipp.wa.gov