



HB25-1146 | Juvenile Detention Bed Cap

STATUS: Introduced in the Colorado State House and assigned to the Health & Human Services committee. The next committee hearing is [scheduled for March 26th](#).

SPONSORS: Rep. Shannon Bird (D), Rep. Dan Woog (R)

SUMMARY: This bill changes how funding and capacity for juvenile detention in Colorado are handled:

- **Funding for Alternatives to Detention:** Starting in the 2025-26 fiscal year, \$1,980,137 from the state's general fund will be allocated annually to the Department of Human Services for programs that place detained youth in environments other than detention.
- **Repeal of Emergency Detention Beds Requirement:** The current requirement that \$1,359,982 be used annually for temporary emergency juvenile detention beds is removed.
- For the 2025-26 fiscal year, the maximum number of juvenile detention beds statewide increases from **215 to 254**.
 - Starting in 2026-27, the cap will be set at 125% of the projected average daily population of juveniles in detention.

FISCAL NOTES: For FY 2025-26, the bill requires an appropriation of \$6.5 million to the Department of Human Services.

SUPPORT: Adams County, Arapahoe County, City of Colorado Springs, City of Aurora, Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, Colorado District Attorneys' Council, Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance

OPPOSITION: ACLU of Colorado, Colorado Criminal Defense Bar, Colorado Freedom Fund, Denver Public Schools, Healthier Colorado

PROS

- Increasing the emergency detention bed cap would alleviate some of the burden for county departments of human services that forecast an increasing population in youth detention centers across the state.
- More employment opportunities at youth detention facilities would open, as the increase of detention beds demands more DYS officers, supervisors, and medical staff.

CONS

- HB25-1146 is costly. This bill would lead to increased expenditures in CDHS, by \$6.5 million in FY 2025-26 and \$9.1 million in FY 2026-27. The costs would continue to increase based on DCJ's forecasts of increasing average daily populations in youth detention centers from 2025 to 2029.
- Funds that would be invested in more detention beds and facility staff would not be used for services such as mental health care, rehabilitation, and community-based services, which some argue are more effective means of keeping youth out of the justice system.