

# **National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA)**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

### **DETENTION ISSUES**

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#### **What is the Annual Cost of a Juvenile Detention Bed?**

The annual cost for a juvenile detention bed will vary significantly from state to state and region to region throughout the country.

Arriving at a cost for a detention bed is much more convoluted than what one might expect. Generally speaking, the cost can be calculated by obtaining a facility budget's annual expenditure and then dividing the actual annual number of youth care days for that year into that number. However, there are some jurisdictions that do not include all real costs for detention in the facility budget, rather bury it somewhere in central office.

For example in states where detention is a state-operated function, it becomes even more convoluted and one would have to wonder if things like medical, mental health services, educational services, physical plant upkeep, administrative cost are even included in facility budgets.

Other issues that should be factored into the equation that create a variation in per diem are issues such as state regulations related to the required resident-to-staff ratio for direct and continuous supervision, recreation, case management systems, etc.

On average, if states are providing "legitimate" figures, the per diem rate should be near the \$200,000 range.