MEMO

TO: Prof. Armstong
FROM: Margaret Head
DATE: April 17, 2026
RE: Lafayette Parish Juvenile Detention Home

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum focuses on addressing factors that make up statistics for the Lafayette Parish Juvenile Detention Home (JDH) located in Lafayette, Louisiana. Located at 1613 Surrey Street, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501, the facility is operated by the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG). This memo will go into the jail characteristics, evidence of any oversight if applicable, transparency, and notable cases or complaints over the course of the last 5 years regarding the jail conditions.[1]

NUMBER OF DEATHS SINCE 2015 AND TRENDS

Records attained through the Louisiana Public Records Act; requests have been made since 2019 to attain up-to-date records regarding any deaths in custody for JDH. A request was made requesting records from January 2014 – Present day through multiple requests of the years. Of the PRAs made, there were no deaths recorded from 2014-2022. This trend continued for a request made from January 1, 2020, to September 2, 2024. As recent as the present day, there are no recorded deaths in JDH for the time period of January 2024 to present, as email correspondence demonstrates that there are Zero Deaths. In conclusion, the trend of JDH is that there are no recorded deaths from January 2014 to the present day for this facility.

JAIL CHARACTERISTICS

Detailed above, JDH is located in Lafayette, Louisiana, and operated by the Lafayette Consolidated Government. Specifically, the JDH is state licensed to hold juveniles that have "broken juvenile laws and are awaiting further adjudication."[2] Built in 1971, according to an article, it is one of the oldest facilities in the state, and it looks it too.[3] The facility has 32 beds and, as in May 2024, housed 23 juveniles.[4] It is well documented that the facility no longer houses 17-year-olds due to state legislation, and the jail cites that this has increased morale and made it more manageable to manage the facility.[5] The facility uses tier systems based on behavior that guides how much time certain juveniles have access to outside or recreational time.[6] There is no more up to date information that can be found regarding incarceration status in

[1] https://www.lafayettela.gov/emergencies-public-safety/juvenile-detention-home-jdh/
[2] *Id*.
[3] https://thecurrentla.com/2025/lafayettes-youth-jail-lacks-space-with-no-relief-in-sight/
[4] *Id*.
[5] *Id*.
[6] *Id*.

2026. As JDH is run by the LCG, the Chief Administrative Officer operates the facility. The CAO for the LCG is Rachel Godeaux and was appointed in January 2024.[7] The specific JDH Administrator is Alonzo Thomas.[8] In 2019-2020, the makeup of the center was a mix of males and females.[9] There is no public data on the specific makeup of the detention home, but according to the confinement audit, a mixture of Black, Hispanic, and white juveniles were present in the center and confined. [10]

JDH's website is linked within the LCG's website, but multiple of the links take a user to a 404 Error page. Therefore, a user must follow this link: https://www.lafayettela.gov/emergencies-public-safety/juvenile-detention-home-jdh/, and is brought to a page with limited information. The website has limited information and speaks more on the Reformative Instruction and Skills Enhancement Program (R.I.S.E.) implemented within the facility. According to the website, the R.I.S.E. program provides a "comprehensive academic, emotional fluency, and mindfulness initiative designed to enhance the skills of LJDH youth."[11] The purpose, or hope, for the program is to enhance and prepare those individuals who are in a juvenile detention center to be better prepared to not reoffend and to be equipped with skills to create success in their lives. According to an article, the facility had around a 65% recidivism rate in 2024.[12] Though the program is for the entire facility, participation for the program is based solely on merit. Youth in the facility who show good behavior, interest in learning, and positively interact with others are allowed to participate and be selected. The core of the program is to be an incentive for the facility.[13] The program's data is reported through the Test of Adult Basic Education, which assesses the skills and knowledge of participants. According to the results, several students are "well-prepared and ready to take the HiSET."[14] There is no direct access to the TABE through the facility's website.

JDH, as stated above, is run by the LCG. As such, the JDH Administrator specifically oversees the facility. The names of both the LCG CAO and the JDH Administrator are not listed on the website, but their phone numbers are. To find who the department directors are, there is a link to such on the main website, but a Page Not Found error page appears when clicked. Based

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[7] *Id*.

[8] https://apps.lafayettela.gov/OBCouncil/api/Document/2526342/

[9] https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

[10] https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

[11] https://www.lafayettela.gov/emergencies-public-safety/juvenile-detention-home-jdh/rise-program/

[12] https://thecurrentla.com/2025/lafayettes-youth-jail-lacks-space-with-no-relief-in-sight/

[13] https://www.lafayettela.gov/emergencies-public-safety/juvenile-detention-home-jdh/rise-program/

[14] *Id*.

on a web search, Alonzo Thomas is the most recent administrator that can be tracked.[15] Previously, from 2017 to 2020, Robert Cormier was the JDH Administrator.[16]

The most recent financial report for the JDH comes from 2024. The budget is under the title of Juvenile Detention Home Maintenance, and the fund is applied to the operation, improving, and maintenance of JDH. The Original Budget given to the home ended with $4,667,210. The Final Budget ended with $4,394,486. The Actual Budget was $5,371,650 with a variance of $977,164 from the Final Budget to the Actual Budget.[17] The link to the 2025 Annual Report went to an Error Page.

EVIDENCE OF OVERSIGHT

According to the website, JDH is a state-licensed "holding facility" specifically for juveniles in Lafayette.[18] JDH is not accredited by the ACA and unclear if it is accredited by the NCCHC. The only accreditation that can be found is that the facility is state-licensed.

In 2022, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor released a detailed report to compile information for Use of Room Confinement/Isolation in Juvenile Detention Centers and Secure Care Facilities.[19] The information in the table is compiled from 2019-2020, which is around the time the Raise the Age Act, moving 17-year-olds into juvenile centers in phases to conclude in 2020, was being implemented. As of the present day, in 2026, the Raise the Age Act was reversed in 2024. According to the data in the audit, youths from the age of 13-18 are the age group confined.[20] In total, 367 incarcerated juveniles were confined. 17-year-olds had the most instances confined with 182 instances, while 18-year-olds had the least number of instances, with just 1. In Exhibit 1, the total average length of confinement for 2019-2020 was 66.3 hours, the median length is 72.0 hours, and the maximum length is 78.0 hours. [21] Another table provides more information on the length of the confinements. For example, in 2019, the average length of confinement was 1.0 hour while in 2020 it was 1.5 hours. [22] In 2019, the max length of

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[15] https://govsalaries.com/thomas-alonzo-d-184392529

[16] https://openpayrolls.com/employee/robert-g-cormier-143

[17] https://www.lafayettela.gov/media/nknnvwmw/annual-comprehensive-financial-report-2024.pdf?sfvrsn=dd1b6dbe_1

[18] https://www.lafayettela.gov/emergencies-public-safety/juvenile-detention-home-jdh/

[19] https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

[20] *Id*.

[21] https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

[22] https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

confinement was 4.0 hours, and in 2020 it was 3.0 hours. [23] Within the audit report is a specific instance that names JDH for assigning youth in back-to-back room confinements. In this instance, a youth was put into four different room confinements were each 72 hours for instances that occurred from June 15th, 16th, 17th, and 19th. [24] According to the report, this does not exactly violate detention standards but does violate "the intent of the standards." [25] Room confinements cannot exceed 72 hours, making these instances right at the maximum amount of time a youth may be confined.

EVIDENCE OF TRANSPARENCY

When researching for this facility, it is extremely difficult to find specific information regarding facility housing, administrators, up-to-date reports on audits, housing, and budgets, etc. This facility is difficult to find information for as it is run by the LSG, rather than being run by itself as its own entity. Therefore, the public must rely on the information published by the LSG. As the facility is not accredited by other means, there is no driving force to report findings or information that may be deemed "excess" of required information because there is no push to do so. The present administrators are not easily found, as well as previous ones. The current administrator was found from a PDF report linked from the LCG's annual report from 2024, rather than an active, up to date list. Searches from the internet revealed a previous administrator, Robert Comier, but that information is dated. As it is a juvenile center, "inmate locator" websites are not public. Juvenile records are confidential.

Requesting the data and public records from JDH was not an exhaustive or complicated process. I found the email to request the records from within the records on file for Incarceration Transparency and sent the first email requesting the records on January 20, 2026. On January 22, 2026, I received an email from Ramona LaLonde stating that the LCG did not have any records on deaths in custody because there had not been any. The LCG then considered the request closed. I requested a Zero Deaths Letter on January 23, 2026, and received a reply the same day stating that a Zero Deaths Letter does not have a record responsive to that request because there had been zero deaths in custody. The LCG quickly responded to each request made.

NOTABLE CASES OR COMPLAINTS ON PRISON/JAIL CONDITIONS IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

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23 https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

24 https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

25 https://app.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/68508947202a54458625882a0064c0bb/$file/000268d7a.pdf?openelement&.7773098

As stated above, the Louisiana legislature reversed the Raise the Age Act in 2024. By this reversal, facilities that housed 17-year-olds would no longer be allowed to do so. As such, in October 2024, JDH was cited twice because they were housing 17-year-olds.[26] An issue presented with the reversal is the federal law viewing 17-year-olds as minors and the state law forcing 17-year-olds into adult facilities. Due to this issue, JDH found itself in the middle of the line, but the 17-year-olds have since been transferred to another facility. [27]

In conclusion, Lafayette Juvenile Detention Home has implemented programs to help enhance its population for the betterment of life on the outside. JDH has been in the news recently due to citations regarding housing 17-year-olds, but this is mainly from the change of laws occurring to a judicial system that has long struggled to keep up. With the implementation of programs like R.I.S.E, hopefully, fewer youths will re-offend, and fewer youths will be incarcerated.

[26] https://thecurrentla.com/2024/lafayette-juvenile-detention-home-cited-for-housing-17-year-olds/

[27] https://thecurrentla.com/2024/lafayette-juvenile-detention-home-cited-for-housing-17-year-olds/