



At-Risk Youth Grant

In 2017, New York State passed legislation increasing the age of criminal responsibility from 16 years of age to 18, known as Raise the Age (RTA). Prior to this, 16- and 17-year-olds charged with a crime were prosecuted as adults and could be held on Rikers Island pretrial or subject to custody in State prison if sentenced. Phased-in over two steps in 2018 and 2019, RTA legislation mandated the transfer of youth under 18 held in adult facilities and tasked the ACS with the care of these individuals. Only those accused of the most serious crimes would still be tried in adult criminal court, but in a designated “Youth Part” staffed with Family Court judges; most youth would be processed in Family Court.

The number of youth entering the juvenile justice system has increased since the law took effect, creating both fiscal and staffing pressures as local agencies involved adjust to the demand. While other counties across New York State have had access to State reimbursement funds for the increased costs associated with RTA since inception, the City is not eligible for reimbursement unless it submits a waiver demonstrating financial hardship (see [Spending on Raise the Age Programs in New York](#)). As of SFY 2027, the State has appropriated \$2.05 billion in local aid and \$160 million for capital for RTA. However, the State also included \$300 million in baselined funding for youth justice services specifically for the City in its SFY 2027 Enacted Budget which the City recorded in its Preliminary Budget in February 2026 (see Figure 1). However, the City must submit a plan to the State Division of Budget for approval which may change the current allocation of funds.

FIGURE 1
State Funding for Juvenile Justice in SFY 2027 Enacted Budget
(in thousands)

	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Admin. for Children’s Services	\$ 194,529	\$ 194,529	\$ 194,529	\$ 194,529	\$ 194,529
Department of Probation	18,837	18,837	18,837	18,837	18,837
Law Department	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Police Department	497	497	497	497	497
Citywide Fringe	65,137	65,137	65,137	65,137	65,137
Total State Funding	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000

Sources: NYC Financial Management System; OSC analysis

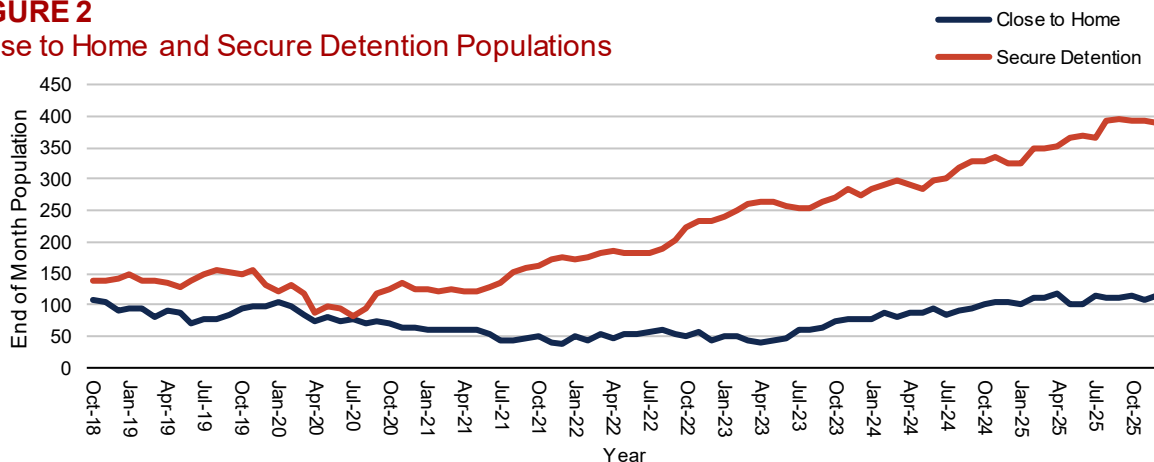
The City has allocated most of the annual funding to ACS (65 percent or \$195 million), which manages the most expansive portfolio of youth justice services. ACS is responsible for pretrial detention, alternatives to detention programs, and most post-sentencing placements, among other juvenile supports, spending \$248 million in FY 2025 across these functions. Placements, also known as the “Close to Home” program, account for almost half of juvenile justice costs at the agency; a proportion that has shrunk as secure detention costs have increased from

\$47 million in FY 2019 to \$93 million in FY 2025, exceeding the budget for it in that year by \$35 million.

Impact

While the Close to Home population has fluctuated, it remains roughly at 2018 levels, when Raise the Age was first implemented. Conversely, the population for those held in secure detention has nearly tripled over the same period (see Figure 2). The City used the State aid to swap \$98 million in City funds for Close to Home, in contrast to \$18 million for secure detention. Apart from \$11 million for non-secure detention, the remaining funds for ACS are being used to supplant existing funding for general administration costs (\$46 million) and juvenile justice support (\$21 million).

FIGURE 2
Close to Home and Secure Detention Populations



Sources: NYC Administration for Children's Services; OSC analysis

ACS provides budget and spending data at the functional level, enabling a more transparent view into how funds plan to be used. However, the Department of Probation and Law Department do not offer this level of detail despite having significant roles in the juvenile justice process. The Police Department, receiving the smallest portion of State funding with \$0.5 million annually for its detective bureau, is responsible for making arrests which cascade demand across the juvenile justice system. The Department of Probation, which conducts post-arrest interviews of youth to determine possible diversion from the justice system and monitors youth in probation, will receive \$19 million annually. The Law Department, who represents the City in most youth cases in court, will receive \$21 million annually. Lastly, State aid also includes \$65 million to offset centrally administered fringe benefits across the relevant juvenile justice agencies.

It is difficult to determine the number of youth that this funding could apply to considering the current ambiguity in how funds could be used and limited transparency into the budget and spending details at the agencies, excluding ACS. The City anticipates receiving additional guidance from the State prior to its proposed plan submission.