



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commission on Youth

Senator Barbara A. Favola, *Chair*
Delegate Carrie E. Coyner, *Vice Chair*

821 E. Broad St., Ste. 140
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Executive Director
Amy M. Atkinson

804-371-2481
<https://vcoy.virginia.gov>

February 28, 2025

Ms. Amy Floriano
Director
Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
P.O. Box 1110
Richmond, Virginia 23218-1110

Subject: Requesting Presentation on Safety and Staffing Issues at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center

Dear Director Floriano:

I am writing in regards to recent stories in the news media about the safety and staffing issues of juveniles at the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. A recent article in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* indicates that on February 9, 2025 juveniles had taken over a unit and held staff hostage. This same article states that Bon Air “had 23 calls to outside police agencies in 2024, more than double the number of 911 calls made the year prior.”¹ News reports regarding safety and staffing issues were also reported in a WTVR story from last year that discussed a January 2024 audit, which found violations of several state regulations at Bon Air.

As you know, the Virginia Commission on Youth is a standing bipartisan legislative commission of the General Assembly, which, by mandate, provides a legislative forum for exploring and resolving complex issues related to youth and their families. With the Commission’s mandate and the context described above I, as Chair of the Commission, am calling a special meeting regarding the current situation at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. I am asking you or a representative of your Department to make a presentation on the safety, staffing and program offerings at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center on April 1, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the General Assembly Building in Richmond.

In order to understand the complexity and challenges facing the DJJ in the administration of Bon Air, it would be helpful to include the following information in the DJJ presentation:

- Juvenile justice system overview,
- Types of offenses for juveniles committed to DJJ at Bon Air,

- Current staffing levels at Bon Air,
- Rates and nature of serious incidents at Bon Air over the last two years including injuries to staff and youth,
- Populations of youth committed to state custody,
- Population per residential unit,
- Rates of family visitation,
- Nature of programming at Bon Air and extent to which youth can participate,
- Numbers of youth committed and awaiting placement at Bon Air,
- Information regarding current probation and pre-dispositional practices, and
- The Department's current plans for mitigating the concerns.

The requested presentation will be helpful for the Commission to learn more about these complex issues and recommend improvements to the Department of Juvenile Justice to improve the life and safety of youth and staff at Bon Air.

Please work with Ms. Amy Atkinson, Executive Director (804-371-2481 or aatkinson@vcoy.virginia.gov), on the planning and execution of your presentation at the meeting on April 1, 2025 at 2:00p.m.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Favola

Cc: Amy M. Atkinson

ⁱ 911 call shows chaos at Bon Air youth jail. *Richmond Times Dispatch*. https://richmond.com/news/local/crime-courts/article_09186926-f469-11ef-8616-ebb7da23cbaf.html
Reports cite staffing shortages, safety issues, and violations at Bon Air youth correctional facility. WTVR. <https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/reports-bon-air-youth-facility-oct-22-2024>.