

Right now, taxpayers spend hundreds of dollars a day—in some places, hundreds of thousands of dollars a year—to confine a young person. Because every state (and local) juvenile justice system is different, it is a challenge to come up with a consistent way to describe these direct costs from state to state. These costs also change over time.

To advance the understanding of the direct costs of confinement, JPI collected information from 47 states and jurisdictions in the summer and fall of 2014 on what they said they pay on a per-day or per-year basis to confine a young person in their most expensive confinement option. These 47 states or jurisdictions represent 94 percent of the population of the United States in 2013<sup>1</sup> and 87 percent of committed youth in secure placements in 2011.<sup>2</sup>

The information contained in the following table represents fiscal information provided directly from state juvenile corrections departments, agency annual reports, or legislative documents. When a state or juvenile correctional system provided more than one cost of confinement, the most expensive one is listed, reflecting the reality that it can cost hundreds of dollars a day, and hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, to incarcerate a single youth. When available, costs of other types of placements, which range from large, secure facilities to smaller group homes are included in the endnotes, along with details about each cost figure in the endnotes. To account for varying lengths of stay across different jurisdictions and recent research that indicates that longer stays in secure confinement do not reduce recidivism,<sup>3</sup> JPI calculated the estimated cost of placing a young person out of his or her home for three months, six months,

and a full year.<sup>4</sup> These estimates—per day, 90 days (three months), 180 days (six months), and a year (365 days)—vary to reflect the growing consensus from research and operations of juvenile justice systems that acknowledges that in the rare instances where secure care is appropriate, confinement should be for the shortest period of time possible to reduce harm to the youth and save money.

For these 47 states or jurisdictions that reported to JPI, the average costs of the most expensive confinement option for a young person out of his or her home are \$401 per day, \$36,074 per three months, \$72,149 per six months, and \$146,302 per year. Thirty-four states and jurisdictions reported spending \$100,000 or more on the most expensive confinement option for a young person.

The reasons states incur different per diem and annual costs vary, and they reflect various opportunities, challenges, and choices in how juvenile justice systems are designed. The reasons for these varied costs include the availability of treatment and rehabilitation services, privatization or lack of unions, and the extent to which every bed in a facility is used.

Depending on the state and the kind of facility or placement, a number of different funding streams may pay for these placements. Per-day or per-year expenditures can include a mixture of county dollars, state dollars, and federal dollars—something that is different from state to state.

*Regardless of how the costs of confinement are shared, taxpayers pay these direct costs.*

### Costs of confinement: Forty-seven states and jurisdictions reporting

State	Per day	Per 3 months	Per 6 months	Per year
Louisiana <sup>5</sup>	\$127.84	\$11,506	\$23,011	\$46,662
Florida <sup>6</sup>	\$151.80	\$13,662	\$27,324	\$55,407
Alabama <sup>7</sup>	\$159.00	\$14,310	\$28,620	\$58,035
South Dakota <sup>8</sup>	\$207.43	\$18,669	\$37,337	\$75,712
Indiana <sup>9</sup>	\$212.13	\$19,092	\$38,183	\$77,427
Idaho <sup>10</sup>	\$213.57	\$19,221	\$38,443	\$77,953
Utah <sup>11</sup>	\$214.12	\$19,271	\$38,542	\$78,154
Missouri <sup>12</sup>	\$244.30	\$21,987	\$43,974	\$89,170
Georgia <sup>13</sup>	\$249.66	\$22,469	\$44,939	\$91,126
Kansas <sup>14</sup>	\$250.50	\$22,545	\$45,090	\$91,433
Wyoming <sup>15</sup>	\$261.00	\$23,490	\$46,980	\$95,265
Washington <sup>16</sup>	\$262.48	\$23,623	\$47,246	\$95,805
Oregon <sup>17</sup>	\$263.00	\$23,670	\$47,340	\$95,995
Kentucky <sup>18</sup>	\$276.00	\$24,840	\$49,680	\$100,740
Minnesota <sup>19</sup>	\$287.23	\$25,851	\$51,701	\$104,839
Colorado <sup>20</sup>	\$287.63	\$25,887	\$51,773	\$104,985
Arizona <sup>21</sup>	\$290.68	\$26,161	\$52,322	\$106,098
Wisconsin <sup>22</sup>	\$291.00	\$26,190	\$52,380	\$106,215
Tennessee <sup>23</sup>	\$301.29	\$27,116	\$54,232	\$109,971
Illinois <sup>24</sup>	\$304.11	\$27,370	\$54,740	\$111,000
Arkansas <sup>25</sup>	\$317.08	\$28,537	\$57,074	\$115,734
North Dakota <sup>26</sup>	\$342.58	\$30,832	\$61,664	\$125,042
Nebraska <sup>27</sup>	\$347.55	\$31,280	\$62,559	\$126,856
Nevada <sup>28</sup>	\$356.44	\$32,080	\$64,159	\$130,101
West Virginia <sup>29</sup>	\$387.58	\$34,882	\$69,764	\$141,467
Delaware <sup>30</sup>	\$393.85	\$35,447	\$70,893	\$143,755
Virginia <sup>31</sup>	\$413.63	\$37,226	\$74,453	\$150,974
Mississippi <sup>32</sup>	\$420.00	\$37,800	\$75,600	\$153,300
South Carolina <sup>33</sup>	\$426.00	\$38,340	\$76,680	\$155,490
Texas <sup>34</sup>	\$437.11	\$39,340	\$78,680	\$159,545
North Carolina <sup>35</sup>	\$437.67	\$39,390	\$78,781	\$159,750
Massachusetts <sup>36</sup>	\$473.49	\$42,614	\$85,228	\$172,824
Michigan <sup>37</sup>	\$475.22	\$42,770	\$85,540	\$173,455
Montana <sup>38</sup>	\$481.67	\$43,350	\$86,701	\$175,810
New Mexico <sup>39</sup>	\$487.87	\$43,908	\$87,817	\$178,073
Rhode Island <sup>40</sup>	\$510.63	\$45,957	\$91,913	\$186,380
New Jersey <sup>41</sup>	\$537.35	\$48,362	\$96,723	\$196,133
Hawaii <sup>42</sup>	\$546.08	\$49,147	\$98,294	\$199,319
Ohio <sup>43</sup>	\$554.80	\$49,932	\$99,864	\$202,502
New Hampshire <sup>44</sup>	\$588.00	\$52,920	\$105,840	\$214,620
Connecticut <sup>45</sup>	\$607.41	\$54,667	\$109,334	\$221,705
Vermont <sup>46</sup>	\$615.00	\$55,350	\$110,700	\$224,475
Maine <sup>47</sup>	\$616.33	\$55,470	\$110,939	\$224,960
California <sup>48</sup>	\$674.55	\$60,709	\$121,419	\$246,210
District of Columbia <sup>49</sup>	\$761.00	\$68,490	\$136,980	\$277,765
Maryland <sup>50</sup>	\$809.00	\$72,810	\$145,620	\$295,285
New York <sup>51</sup>	\$966.20	\$86,958	\$173,916	\$352,663
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$401.00</b>	<b>\$36,074</b>	<b>\$72,149</b>	<b>\$146,302</b>

Note: States reported per-day or annual costs. Three-month and six-month calculations are estimated by multiplying per-day costs by 90 and 180 days or dividing the annual costs by these units. The costs reflect the highest cost confinement option provided to the researchers by states in the summer and fall of 2014, and each endnote in the full report lists other cost options that were provided to researchers as part of the request. This chart will be updated to reflect new information and posted at [www.justicepolicy.org](http://www.justicepolicy.org).