

# Missoula County Juvenile Detention Center

## Facility Overview

LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE  
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### SUMMARY

Juvenile detention centers are facilities that physically restrict youth to prevent them from leaving at will. These facilities are primarily funded and operated by counties and must comply with state and federal regulations. These include sight and sound separation from adults and providing secure housing that meets specific security, staff-to-youth ratios, and daily activities standards. Key regulations require the facility to maintain secure perimeters, limit the use of restrictive housing, and provide continuous visual supervision for youths being processed or held in non-secure areas. Additionally, facilities are regulated to ensure they provide essential services such as education and medical care. Each county must have a method for delivering and paying for youth detention services and must meet the education and medical care standards defined in the Montana Youth Court Act.

The Missoula County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDF) is a licensed youth detention facility operated by the Missoula County Sheriff's Office. It houses male and female juveniles aged 10 to 17 years who have been questioned and are suspected of committing a crime and, in the investigating officers' judgment, require detention. The unit has a level system that rewards good behavior by increasing privileges.

### KEY FACTS

- Unit Manager: Juvenile Detention Officer John Gottula
- Number of beds: 24
- The facility offers educational, religious, recreational, and mental health/treatment programs
  - Additionally, juveniles have an hour of recreation (choice of indoor or outdoor recreation, weather permitting), free telephone time, and 30 minutes of visitation daily.

### SOURCES

- [Title 7, Ch. 32, Part 22, MCA](#) – Local Government Detention Centers
- [Title 41, Ch. 5, MCA](#) – Montana Youth Court Act
- [Title 41, Ch. 5, Part 3, MCA](#) – Youth Court Act Custody and Detention
- [Title 41, Ch. 5, Part 18, MCA](#) – Youth Court Act Custodial Care
- [Title 20, Ch. 20, Subchapter 9, ARM](#) - Licensure of Youth Detention Facilities
- Missoula County Youth Court website, <https://missoulayouthcourt.mt.gov/>
- Missoula County Sheriff's Department Juvenile Detention website, <https://www.missoulacounty.gov/departments/sheriffs-office/detention-division/#Juvenile>
- Montana Judicial Branch [Youth Court At-A-Glance, January 2024 through December 2024](#)