County Moving Forward to Seek Additional Options for Juvenile Detention

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald today announced that the county will move forward to find a solution to provide additional options for juvenile detention in the county. County Manager Jennifer Liptak will lead the effort with the Courts to reestablish a county-run facility, or to create a public-private partnership, preferably with a not-for-profit 501c3 provider, for this needed resource.

Since the closing of the Shuman Juvenile Detention Center in September 2021, the county has worked with local, regional and state stakeholders to identify a regional solution that would meet the needs of the Allegheny County Courts, as well as those of surrounding counties. While those discussions have continued, this region has also seen an increased urgency to have additional facilities available for the placement of juveniles.

The former Shuman Juvenile Detention Facility was built to hold up to 120 youth, but in the decade prior to its closing, it saw fewer and fewer youth committed there. In September 2021, that number was just 20, with 16 being the average age of the juveniles being committed. At that time, the average stay was less than 12 days. With changes in the juvenile justice system, the Courts moved away from commitment to a detention facility and instead chose other options for youth in the system. As a result, juveniles committed to the facility had been held on a significant offense.

Whatever the solution, a facility for juveniles will need to include education, health services, social services, religious services, and recreation.

Over the last decade, many counties have closed their facilities. Of the 67 counties, there are only a small handful of remaining facilities run by the county. These include Bucks, Butler, Centre, Chester, Delaware, Erie, Lancaster, Montgomery, Northampton Philadelphia, and Westmoreland counties.

# # #

Office of County Executive Rich Fitzgerald
101 Courthouse │ 436 Grant Street │ Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone: 412-350-6500 │ Fax: 412-350-6512
www.alleghenycounty.us

Follow us: allegheny alerts │ facebook │ instagram │ linkedin │ twitter │ youtube