

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER POPULATION PROJECTIONS: FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO FISCAL YEAR 2026

INTRODUCTION

North Carolina General Statutes §§ 164-40(b) and 164-42.1(b) direct the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission to develop a computerized simulation model to be used to prepare Youth Development Center (YDC) population¹ projections and to help assess North Carolina’s long-term resource needs for juvenile dispositions. The projections are prepared in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety’s Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (DACJJ). The computer simulation model used to project the juvenile population relies on empirical information about how juveniles are processed through the juvenile justice system using data extracted from the North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network (NC-JOIN), DACJJ’s juvenile management information system.

RAISE THE AGE AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC

For the current projection, the two factors discussed in last year’s projection published in January 2021 – the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (JJRA)² and the COVID-19 pandemic – continue to impact this year’s projection. In 2021, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that also impacted the current projection.

Beginning with offenses committed on or after December 1, 2019, the JJRA increased the age of juvenile jurisdiction so that most juveniles aged 16 and 17 (hereinafter RtA population) facing criminal charges may have their cases disposed through the juvenile justice system rather than the adult criminal justice system.³ FY 2021 represents the first full year of data after the JJRA implementation. Key legislative changes to the juvenile code (effective December 1, 2021) are anticipated to impact the YDC projections as follows:

- **Minimum Age for Juvenile Delinquency Increased:** The age was increased to 10 years with certain exceptions for juveniles aged 8 and 9 years to continue under juvenile jurisdiction as a delinquent. Juveniles aged 6 and 7 will no longer be subject to delinquency disposition.⁴ Since juveniles must be

¹ Throughout this document, any reference to the YDC population includes juveniles on-campus and off-campus (e.g., home visit, community commitment, hospitalization, escape).

² North Carolina Session Law (hereinafter S.L.) 2017-57, s. 16D.4. Additional information can be found at: https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/inline-files/JuvenileReinvestmentFactSheet_05012017.pdf.

³ In addition, the JJRA included other provisions intended to affect who comes in contact with the juvenile justice system, such as school-justice partnerships designed to reduce school-based referrals to juvenile courts and juvenile justice training for law enforcement officers. S.L. 2017-57, s. 16D.4.(aa) and (bb).

⁴ G.S. 7B-1501(7) and (27b).

10 years old at disposition to be committed to a YDC,⁵ the impact of this legislation on the projections is minimal; therefore, no adjustments were made to the current projection.

- **Extended Jurisdiction for RtA Juveniles with a YDC Commitment:** Depending on the type of offense, jurisdiction increased to age 21 for juveniles aged 16 and 17 for the most serious offenses (e.g., first degree murder, first-degree forcible rape), and increased to age 20 for juveniles aged 16 and age 21 for juveniles aged 17 for other B1 – E offenses.⁶ Since most juveniles aged 16 and 17 were required to be transferred to adult court for Class A – E offenses prior to December 1, 2021, the impact of this legislation on the projections is unknown, but is anticipated to be minimal. Impact on the projections would occur if enough juveniles with a Class D – E offense remained in the juvenile system due to the prosecutorial discretion with transfers to the adult court described in the next bullet. No adjustments were made to the current projection for this legislative change.
- **Prosecutorial Discretion for Transfers and Reverse Waiver:** When the JJRA was enacted in 2019, prosecutors were required to transfer juveniles aged 16 and 17 who committed Class A – G felonies to adult court; however, superior court judges were given the authority to remand the case to juvenile court upon a joint motion of the prosecutor and the juvenile’s attorney.⁷ Beginning December 1, 2021, the prosecutor was given the discretion to decline to prosecute in adult court juveniles aged 16 and 17 with a Class D – G felony.⁸ The current projection includes an estimation of these populations of juveniles.

The changes to the juvenile justice system due to the JJRA and the new legislation will continue to have an impact on YDC admissions, YDC releases, and length of stay (LOS) – all critical factors in projecting the YDC population. While it was anticipated that raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction would increase the number of youth in the system, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact the juvenile justice system as shown in Figure 1. As a result of the pandemic, the YDC population decreased 25% in FY 2020 and had a lower average population for each month compared to FY 2019. The population increased 7% over the course of FY 2021. During the first half of FY 2022, the population increased another 8% mirroring levels of the YDC population in early FY 2020 (pre-JJRA implementation and pre-COVID-19 pandemic), but still below the average monthly population in FY 2019.

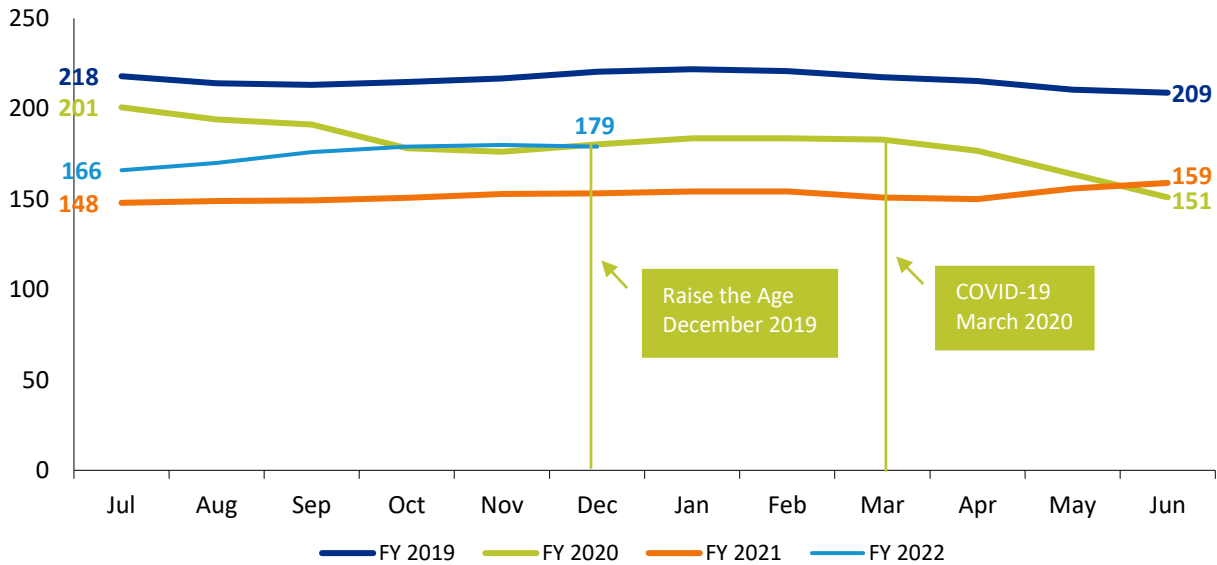
⁵ Pursuant to G.S. 7B-2513(a), a court exercising jurisdiction over a juvenile for whom a Level 3 disposition is authorized may not commit the juvenile to DACJJ for placement in a YDC unless the youth is 10 years old or older.

⁶ G.S. 7B-2513(a2) and (a3).

⁷ G.S. 7B-2200.5(d).

⁸ G.S. 7B-2200.5(a1).

Figure 1
Average Monthly YDC Population by Fiscal Year



SOURCE: NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

YDC POPULATION PROJECTIONS AND CAPACITY

The Sentencing Commission prepared YDC population projections for all juveniles adjudicated delinquent and disposed on or after July 1, 2021 (new population) and for all juveniles committed to a YDC as of June 30, 2021 (YDC stock population), the beginning of the current projection period. The combined projections account for the increase of the stock population and the increase in the new YDC population (new YDC commitments that occur through the imposition of a Level 3 disposition or as a result of a probation violation or a revocation of post-release supervision (PRS)).

Table 1 shows the projected YDC population and capacity over the five-year projection period. YDC capacity was provided by the DACJJ. Table 1 also provides the projected populations for juveniles 15 years or younger (hereinafter non-RtA) and the RtA juveniles. The total YDC population is projected to be 183 for FY 2022 and 217 for FY 2026.⁹ A comparison of the projections with YDC capacity indicates that the projected YDC population will be within available YDC capacity during all projection years. The YDC stock population was 159 on June 30, 2021, and 168 on January 31, 2022.¹⁰

The current projection is lower than the previous projection due to the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Substantial changes (e.g., the pandemic) from year to year on key components of the projections (e.g., admissions, releases, and LOS) can affect their accuracy.

⁹ Separate housing units are required for male and female juveniles. Of the projected YDC beds needed for each year of the five-year projections, 91% are for males.

¹⁰ NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice’s *Committed Youth Report*.

Table 1
Youth Development Center (YDC) Population Projections and Capacity

Fiscal Year	YDC Population as of June 30 ¹¹				YDC Capacity ^{12,13,14}	Difference between Projection and Capacity ¹⁵
	Previous Combined Projection	Non-RtA Juvenile Justice Population	RtA Juvenile Justice Population	Combined Projection		
2022	205	107	76	183	194 ¹⁶	11
2023	230	120	90	210	226	16
2024	231	120	94	214	321	107
2025	235	121	94	215	321	106
2026	N/A	119	98	217	321	104

Note: Prepared in conjunction with the Department of Public Safety's Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

¹¹ Juveniles on-campus and off-campus (e.g., home visit, community commitment, hospitalization, escape) are included in the projections.

¹² YDC capacity is contingent on staffing patterns to meet required ratios. It does not include community commitment placements or transition step-down beds, which are alternatives to YDC placement for some juveniles in this population, for all or part of commitment.

¹³ Thirty-five (35) renovated beds are scheduled to open on the C.A. Dillon campus in July 2023, representing only 6 months of availability during FY 2023, to be used either for detention or commitment purposes.

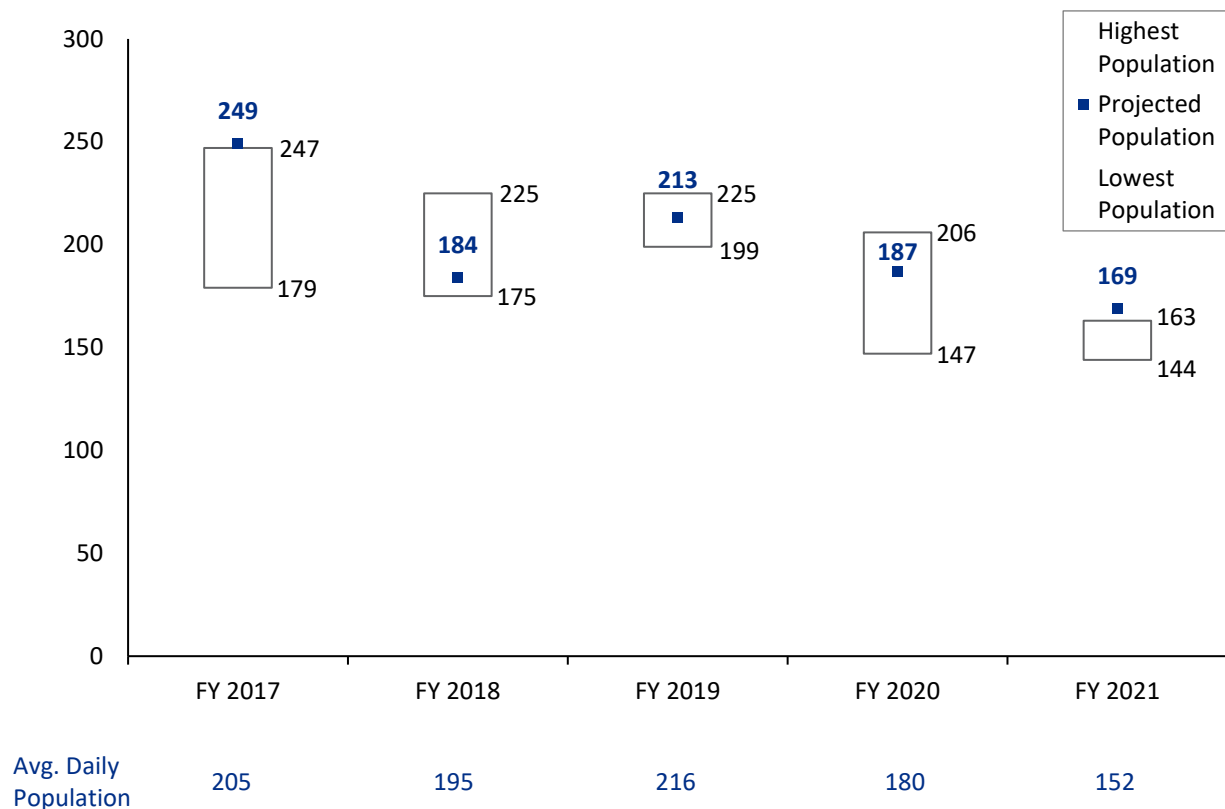
¹⁴ Per S.L. 2017-57, a new YDC will be constructed (Section 36.2 (d)) and is expected to open in August 2023. This 60-bed facility is designed to allow for flexible use of housing units, either for detention or commitment purposes.

¹⁵ Positive numbers indicate that the current projected population is lower than capacity, while negative numbers indicate that the current projected population is higher than capacity.

¹⁶ Thirty-two (32) beds at the Cabarrus YDC transitioned temporarily to detention beds on February 14, 2022, and will transition back to YDC beds in FY 2023.

Figure 2 illustrates the historical accuracy of the first year of the YDC projections for the previous five projections in relation to the actual minimum and maximum YDC populations for each fiscal year. Given the small population of juveniles in YDCs and the substantial fluctuations in the population over the course of the year, the accuracy of the juvenile projections is assessed by examining the projected population within the context of the lowest and highest YDC populations over the fiscal year. Ideally, the projection should be closer to the highest population of the fiscal year. In examining the projections since FY 2017, the projected YDC population was typically within the range of the lowest and highest YDC populations for any given fiscal year.

Figure 2
A Comparison of the Actual Minimum and Maximum Population with the Projected YDC Population
FY 2017 to FY 2021 Projections



Note: YDC population figures (projected and actual) include juveniles on-campus and off-campus (e.g., home visit, community commitment, hospitalization, escape).

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission; NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

ASSUMPTIONS

The projections are based on the assumptions provided in Table 2 that were determined using empirical data from the most recent fiscal year (FY 2021) and are assumed to remain throughout the five-year

projection. The growth rates are based on census projections for North Carolina’s youth population,¹⁷ juvenile justice indicators,¹⁸ and the implementation of the JJRA beginning in 2019.

**Table 2
Assumptions for the FY 2022 to FY 2026 Projections**

	Non-RtA Juvenile Justice Population	RtA Juvenile Justice Population
Growth Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0% in Year 1 • 0% in Year 2 • 0% in Year 3 • 0% in Year 4 • 0% in Year 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1% in Year 1 • 1% in Year 2 • 2% in Year 3 • 2% in Year 4 • 2% in Year 5
YDC Admission Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55% of all YDC admissions resulted from a delinquent complaint • 27% from a probation violation • 18% from a revocation of PRS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 78% of all YDC admissions resulted from a delinquent complaint • 19% from a probation violation • 3% from a revocation of PRS
Lag-time¹⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 months for probation violations • 4 months for PRS revocations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months for probation violations • 4 months for PRS revocations
Level 3 Dispositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5%
YDC Length of Stay²⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 months (combined non-RtA and RtA)
Legislative Changes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum Age Increased • Extended Jurisdiction • Non-Transfer and Reverse Waiver Population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adjustment needed • N/A • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adjustment needed • No adjustment needed • Number of juveniles remanded to the JJS who were adjudicated of a felony in FY 2021

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission; NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

The five-year projections account for the increase in the age of juvenile jurisdiction and assume no other changes in judicial or prosecutorial behavior. In addition, the projections do not incorporate any potential increases or decreases in the YDC population due to budgetary or policy-driven changes implemented by DACJJ and/or other agencies that provide services for juveniles.

¹⁷ www.demog.state.nc.us (2021).

¹⁸ For **non-RtA juveniles**, the rate of delinquent complaints was 15 per 1,000 juveniles in FY 2020 and 9 per 1,000 juveniles in FY 2021, with overall declines noted since the late 1990s (DACJJ). From CY 2016 to CY 2020, overall arrests for index crimes committed by non-RtA juveniles decreased 50% (*Crime in North Carolina – 2020*, State Bureau of Investigation, <http://crimereporting.ncsbi.gov>). Delinquent complaints for non-RtA juveniles decreased 38% from FY 2020 to FY 2021 (DACJJ). Following JJRA implementation, the rate of delinquent complaints for **RtA juveniles** was 44 per 1,000 juveniles in FY 2020 compared to 43 per 1,000 juveniles in FY 2021 (DACJJ). The overall arrest rates for index crimes committed by RtA juveniles decreased 48% from CY 2019 to CY 2020 (*Crime in North Carolina – 2020*, State Bureau of Investigation, <http://crimereporting.ncsbi.gov>). RtA juveniles had a 65% increase in delinquent complaints from FY 2020 to FY 2021 (DACJJ).

¹⁹ Median values were used to account for the time between probation violation or PRS revocation and commitment to a YDC.

²⁰ Average YDC LOS was used for juveniles committed to a YDC for a new adjudication, a probation violation, or a revocation of PRS.

COMPONENTS OF YDC POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The Juvenile Disposition Chart (see Table 3), the empirical data from the latest available fiscal year (for non-RtA and RtA juveniles), and the June 30, 2021 YDC stock population form the basis of the five-year projections and are detailed in the following sections.

FY 2021 Juvenile Delinquent Dispositions

This section highlights the information on the 2,839 delinquent dispositions in FY 2021,²¹ including offense classification, delinquency history level, and disposition level.²² The court’s selection of dispositional alternatives is governed by statute through a graduated sanctions chart that classifies juvenile offenders according to the seriousness of their adjudicated offense (i.e., offense classification) and the degree and extent of their delinquent history (i.e., delinquency history level). A Level 1 or community disposition offers the court less restrictive dispositional alternatives (e.g., probation, community-based programs). A Level 2 or intermediate disposition is generally more restrictive than a Level 1 disposition and includes options such as intensive probation, group home placements (e.g., multipurpose group homes), regimented training programs, and house arrest. A Level 3 or commitment disposition provides the most restrictive sanction available to be imposed by a juvenile court judge – commitment to the DACJJ for placement in a YDC.

Table 3
Juvenile Disposition Chart

Offense Classification	Delinquency History Level		
	Low 0-1 Points	Medium 2-3 Points	High 4 or More Points
Violent Class A-E Felonies	Level 2 or 3	Level 3	Level 3
Serious Class F-I Felonies Class A1 Misdemeanors	Level 1 or 2	Level 2	Level 2 or 3
Minor Class 1, 2, 3 Misdemeanors	Level 1	Level 1 or 2	Level 2

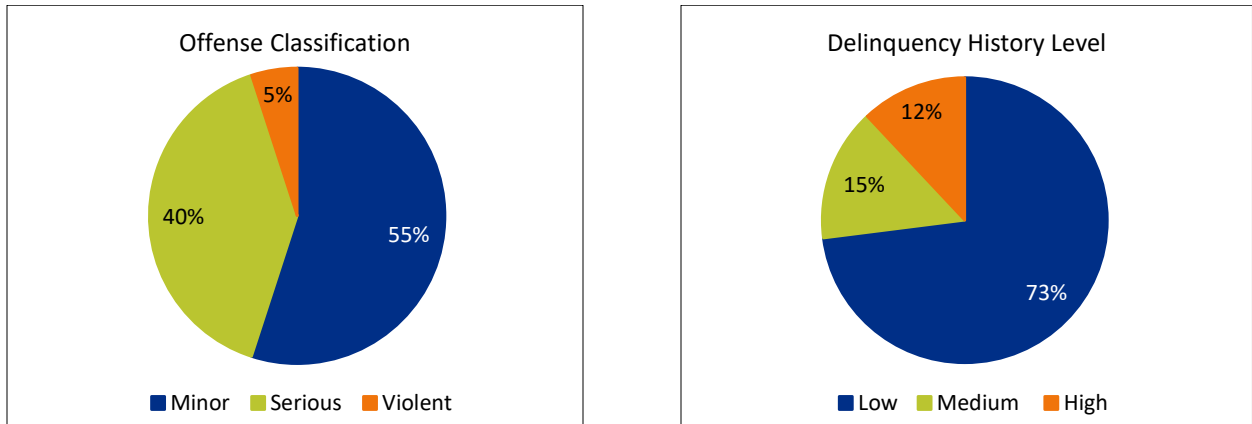
Figure 3 shows the distribution of the 2,839 delinquent dispositions by offense classification and delinquency history level. Of the juveniles adjudicated delinquent in FY 2021, 5% were adjudicated for a violent offense, 40% for a serious offense, and 55% for a minor offense.²³ The majority (73%) of the dispositions involved a juvenile with a low delinquency history level, 15% involved a juvenile with a medium delinquency history level, and 12% involved a juvenile with a high delinquency history level.

²¹ The 2,839 delinquent dispositions highlighted in this section include both non-RtA (1,753) and RtA (1,086) juveniles.

²² A delinquent disposition is identified from NC-JOIN records as the disposition imposed for the most serious adjudicated offense for a given disposition hearing date during a fiscal year.

²³ Overall, 62% (or 1,766) of the 2,839 dispositions were for misdemeanor offenses. Of the 1,141 adjudications for a serious offense, 19% (or 219) were for Class A1 misdemeanor offenses. The remainder were for Class F-I felony offenses.

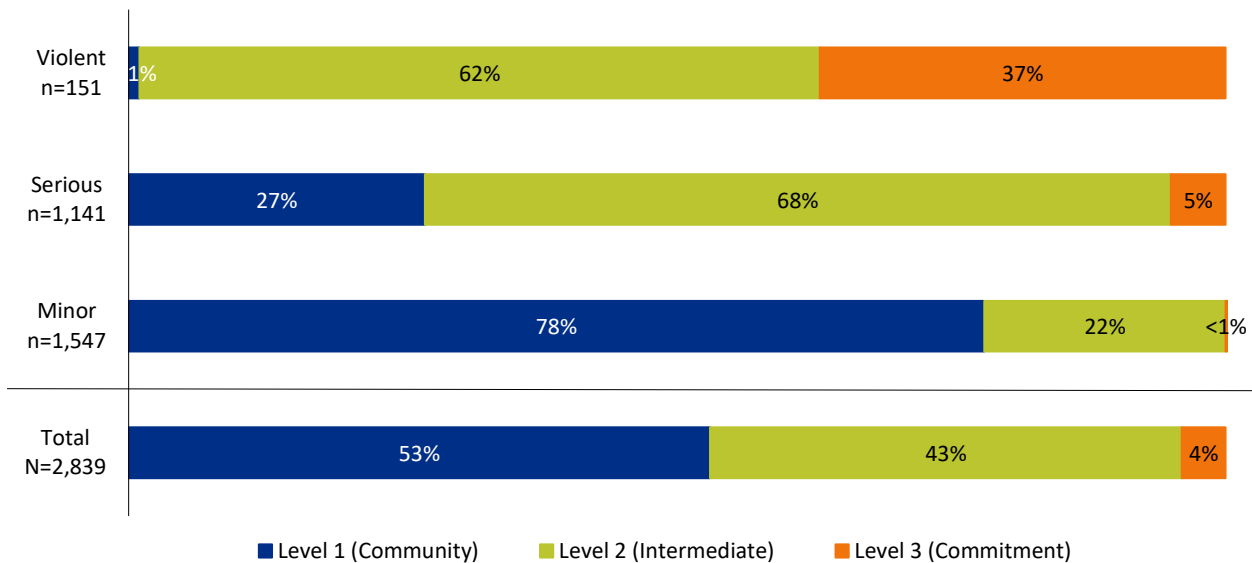
Figure 3
Dispositions by Offense Classification and Delinquency History Level
Juveniles Adjudicated Delinquent



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

Figure 4 summarizes dispositions imposed in FY 2021 by offense classification and disposition level. Overall, the court ordered Level 1 dispositions for 53% of the juveniles adjudicated delinquent, Level 2 dispositions for 43% of the juveniles adjudicated delinquent, and Level 3 dispositions for 4% of the juveniles adjudicated delinquent. Juveniles adjudicated for a Minor offense were most likely to receive a Level 1 disposition (78%). Juveniles adjudicated delinquent for a Violent or serious offense were more likely to receive a Level 2 disposition (62% and 68% respectively). Of the 115 Level 3 dispositions in FY 2021, 56 (or 49%) were the result of an adjudication for a Violent offense, 55 (or 48%) for a Serious offense, and 4 (or 3%) for a Minor offense.

Figure 4
Dispositions by Offense Classification and Disposition Level
Juveniles Adjudicated Delinquent



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

Table 4 shows how judges used dispositional resources given each combination of offense classification and delinquency history level. As indicated by the vertical “Total” column, the likelihood of the imposition of a Level 3 disposition increased as the seriousness of the offense classification increased (also see Figure 4). Similarly, the likelihood of the imposition of a Level 3 disposition increased as the delinquency history level increased. Dispositions for juveniles with Low delinquency history levels who were adjudicated for Minor offenses (Class 1-3 misdemeanors) comprised the largest group – 1,219 (or 43%) of the 2,839.

Table 4
Dispositions by the Dispositional Chart for Juveniles Adjudicated Delinquent

Offense Classification	Delinquency History Level			Total
	Low 0-1 Point	Medium 2-3 Points	High 4+ Points	
Violent A-E Felonies	Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 2 (2%) Level 2: 75 (70%) Level 3: 30 (28%) n = 107	Level 3 Level 2: 8 (36%) Level 3: 14 (64%) n = 22	Level 3 Level 2: 10 (45%) Level 3: 12 (55%) n = 22	Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 2 (1%) Level 2: 93 (62%) Level 3: 56 (37%) n = 151 (5%)
Serious F-I Felonies A1 Misd.	Level 1/Level 2 Level 1: 296 (40%) Level 2: 450 (60%) n = 746	Level 2 Level 1: 11 (6%) Level 2: 168 (91%) Level 3: 5 (3%) n = 184	Level 2/Level 3 Level 2: 161 (76%) Level 3: 50 (24%) n = 211	Level 1/Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 307 (27%) Level 2: 779 (68%) Level 3: 55 (5%) n = 1,141 (40%)
Minor 1-3 Misd.	Level 1 Level 1: 1,174 (96%) Level 2: 45 (4%) n = 1,219	Level 1/Level 2 Level 1: 27 (13%) Level 2: 181 (87%) n = 208	Level 2 Level 1: 2 (2%) Level 2: 114 (95%) Level 3: 4 (3%) n = 120	Level 1/Level 2 Level 1: 1,203 (78%) Level 2: 340 (22%) Level 3: 4 (<1%) n = 1,547 (54%)
Total	Level 1/Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 1,472 (71%) Level 2: 570 (28%) Level 3: 30 (1%) n = 2,072 (73%)	Level 1/Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 38 (9%) Level 2: 357 (86%) Level 3: 19 (5%) n = 414 (15%)	Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 2 (<1%) Level 2: 285 (81%) Level 3: 66 (19%) n = 353 (12%)	Level 1/Level 2/Level 3 Level 1: 1,512 (53%) Level 2: 1,212 (43%) Level 3: 115 (4%) N = 2,839 (100%)

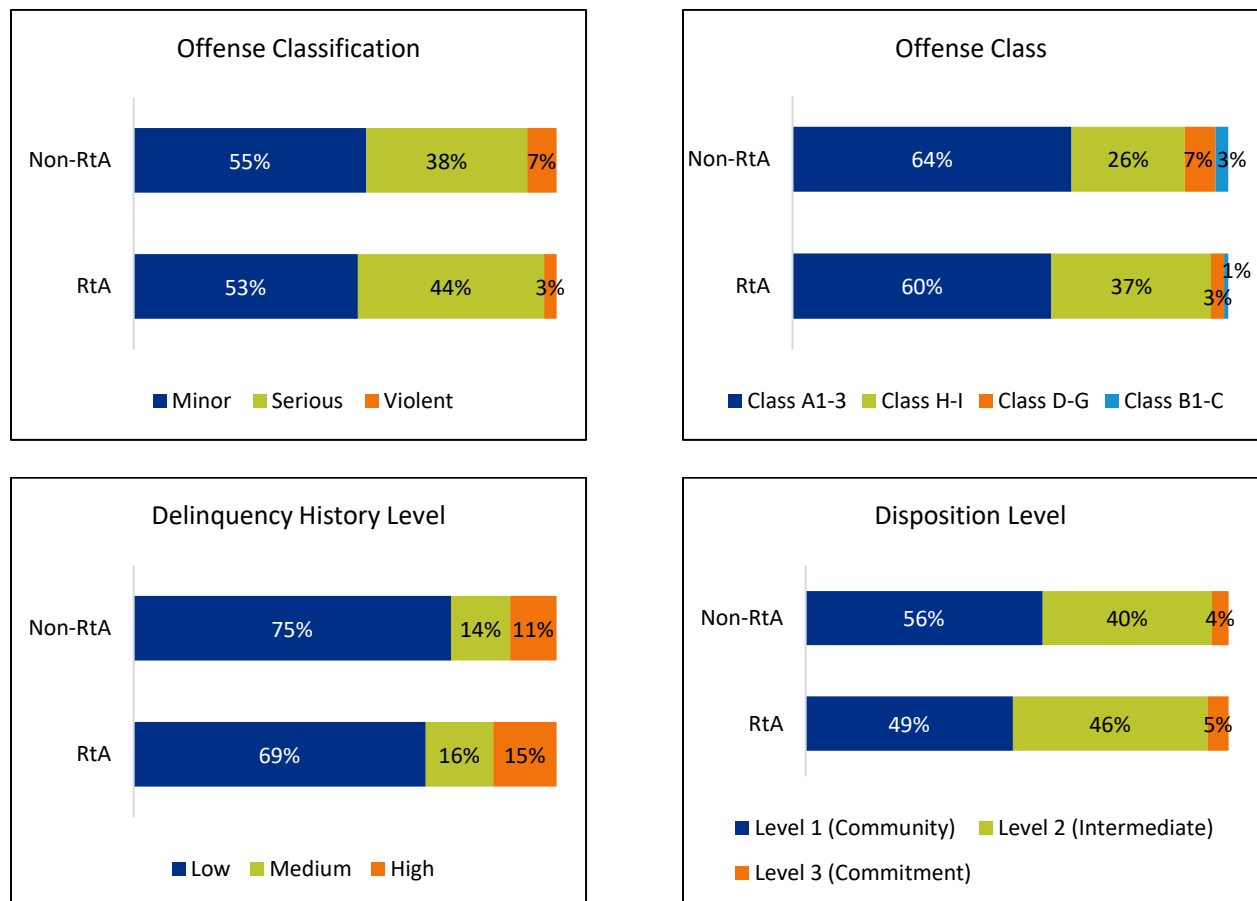
Note: In FY 2021, there were 87 dispositions (or 3%) with a disposition not specified by the dispositional chart. However, it must be noted that certain provisions of the juvenile code allow a judge to impose a disposition other than those specified by the chart. Under G.S. 7B-2508(e), judges may find “extraordinary needs” and impose a lower level disposition. Under G.S. 7B-2508(d), juveniles adjudicated delinquent for an offense with a previous Level 3 disposition may be committed to a YDC. Under G.S. 7B-2508(g), juveniles adjudicated delinquent for a minor offense with four or more prior adjudications may be committed to a YDC. Finally, under G.S. 7B-2508(g1), juveniles adjudicated for an offense that the court finds beyond a reasonable doubt was committed as part of criminal gang activity as defined in G.S. 7B-2508.1 shall receive a disposition one level higher than would otherwise be provided for the class of offense and delinquency history level.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

Comparison of Non-RtA and RtA Juveniles

As noted previously, a full year of data was available for RtA juveniles adjudicated and disposed in FY 2021. Figure 5 examines the differences between the non-RtA and RtA juveniles (62% and 38% of the dispositions respectively). Overall, RtA juveniles were adjudicated of a higher percentage of offenses in the Serious classification, had more contact with the JJS (i.e., higher delinquency history levels), and had more serious dispositions imposed when compared to the younger, non-RtA juveniles.

Figure 5
Dispositions by Offense Classification and Class, Delinquency History, and Disposition Level:
A Comparison of Non-RtA (1,753) and RtA (1,086) Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

YDC Stock Population on June 30, 2021

The committed population or stock population – which represents the starting point of the projection – is the number of juveniles committed to a YDC as of June 30, 2021, the beginning of the current projection period. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the 159 juveniles committed to a YDC on June 30, 2021, by offense classification and delinquency history level for the YDC population as a whole, as well as by age at offense (i.e., non-RtA and RtA). Thirty-six percent (36% or 58) of the YDC population on June 30, 2021, were RtA juveniles. Most committed juveniles (95%) were adjudicated with a felony as their

most serious offense; 39% were adjudicated for a Violent offense, 60% for a Serious offense, and 1% for a Minor offense. Three-fourths of RtA juveniles (74%) had committed a Serious offense, while non-RtA juveniles were more evenly split between Serious and Violent (52% and 47% respectively). Fifty-three percent (53%) of juveniles had a High delinquency history level, 18% had a Medium delinquency history level, and 29% had a Low delinquency history level. RtA juveniles had a greater percentage with a High delinquency history compared to non-RtA juveniles. Overall, 65% were committed to a YDC due to a new crime (i.e., new delinquent complaint), 24% for a probation violation, and 11% for a revocation of PRS. RtA juveniles had a greater percentage entering a YDC due to a new crime compared to non-RtA juveniles.

Figure 6
YDC Stock Population



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

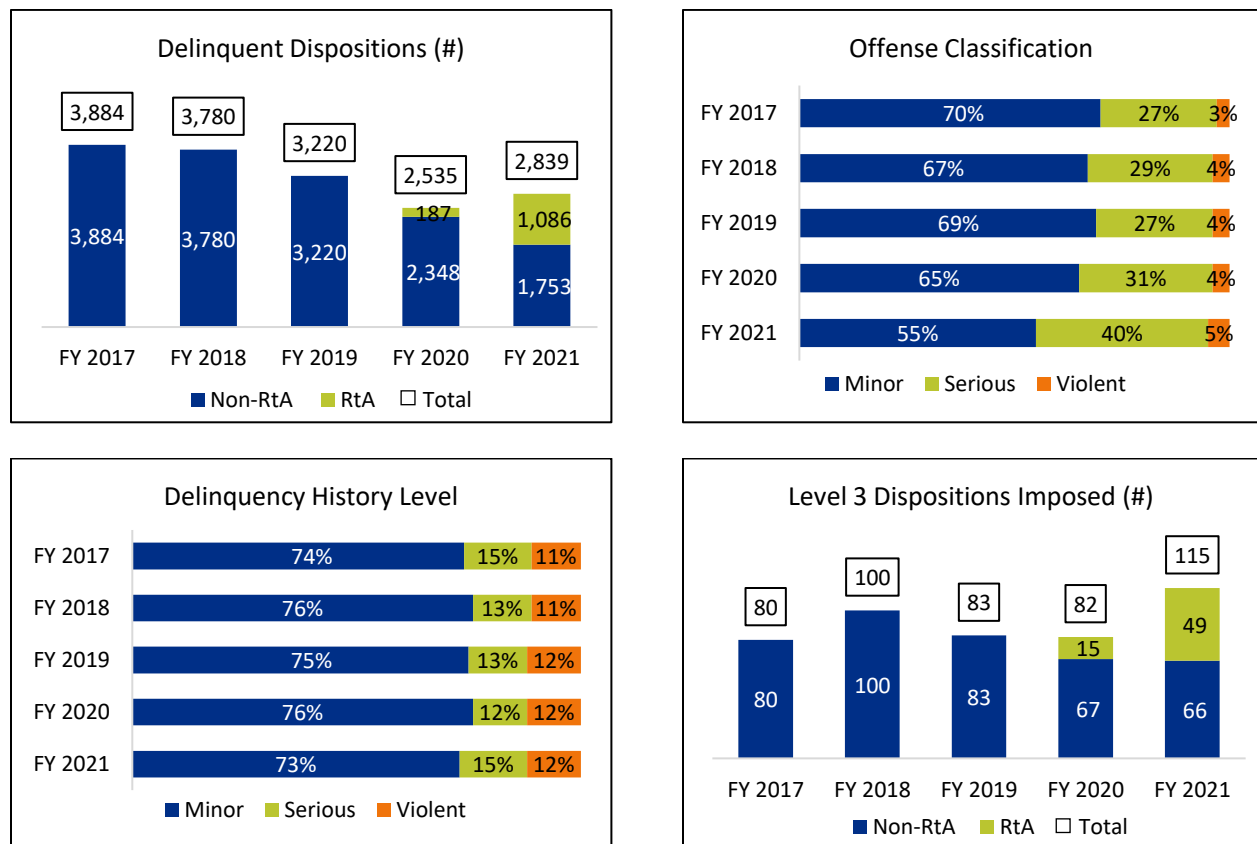
Juvenile Justice Trends

Changes in the juvenile justice system that affect the number of YDC admissions, the number of YDC releases, or the YDC LOS directly impact the accuracy of the projections. This section highlights juvenile justice statistics showing the year-to-year variations in several key components used to produce the projections.

Over the past five fiscal years (FY 2017 to FY 2021), the number of delinquent dispositions has decreased 27% (see Figure 7). The 21% decrease from FY 2019 to FY 2020 can be attributed to the pandemic. Driven primarily by the addition of the RtA juvenile population, delinquent dispositions increased by 12% from FY 2020 to FY 2021. Dispositions for non-RtA juveniles decreased 25% from FY 2020 to FY 2021. RtA juveniles accounted for 7% of dispositions following the JJRA implementation in FY 2020; however, RtA juveniles accounted for 38% of dispositions in FY 2021.

From FY 2017 to FY 2019, the distribution by offense classification remained stable. Slight shifts occurred in FY 2020 with more juveniles adjudicated of a Serious offense and fewer adjudicated of a Minor offense. That trend continued into FY 2021 with 40% of the juveniles having a Serious offense and 55% of juveniles having a Minor offense; these shifts occurred for both non-RtA and RtA juveniles. The number of Violent offenses remained stable for the time period examined.

Figure 7
Juvenile Disposition Trends



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2017 - FY 2021 Disposition Simulation Data

From FY 2017 to FY 2020, delinquency history trends were fairly stable (see Figure 7). In FY 2021, there were slight shifts with more juveniles in the Medium delinquency history level and fewer juveniles in the Low delinquency history level. This difference can be primarily attributed to raising the juvenile age – juveniles simply have a longer time period to accrue delinquency history points. In FY 2021, the

delinquency history of RtA juveniles was 69% Low, 16% Medium, and 15% High compared to non-RtA juveniles at 75% Low, 14% Medium, and 11% High.

The number of Level 3 dispositions fluctuated between a low of 80 in FY 2017 and a high of 115 in FY 2021, with a 40% increase in the number of Level 3 dispositions from FY 2020 to FY 2021 (see Figure 7). Level 3 dispositions remained stable for non-RtA juveniles between FY 2020 and FY 2021, while Level 3 dispositions increased from 15 to 49 juveniles during the same time period.

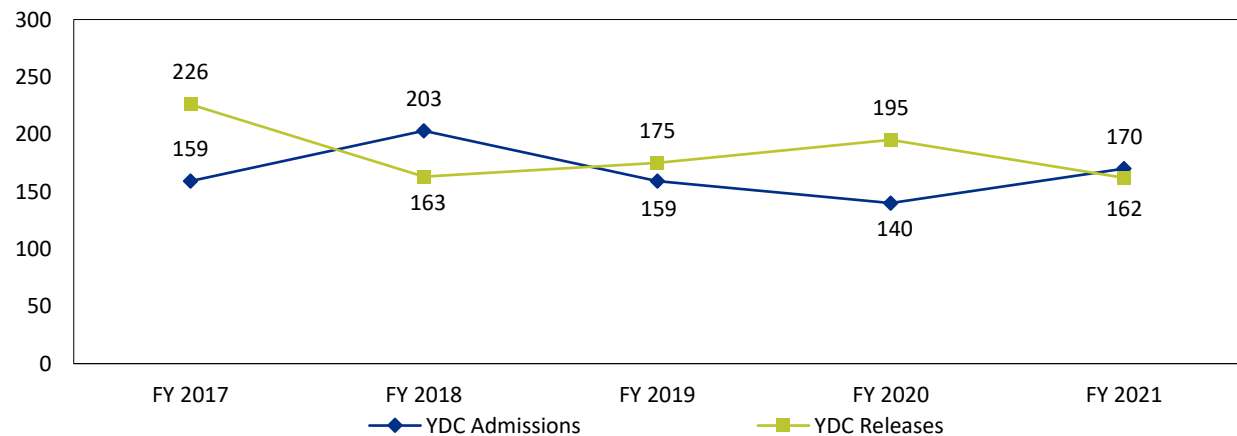
Over the past five years, YDC admissions and releases have fluctuated widely (see Table 5 and Figure 8). Generally, YDC admissions and releases alternate each year with increases and decreases except for FY 2020, the beginning of the pandemic. For both FY 2019 and FY 2020, YDC admissions decreased while releases increased. In FY 2021, admissions increased by 21% primarily due to the increase in RtA juveniles and releases decreased by 17%; the average number of YDC admissions and releases per month was 14 for each.²⁴

Table 5
YDC Admissions and Releases

Fiscal Year	YDC Admissions			YDC Releases		
	Total Number	Percent Change	Average Number Per Month	Total Number	Percent Change	Average Number Per Month
2017	159	-31	13	226	11	19
2018	203	28	17	163	-28	14
2019	159	-22	13	175	7	15
2020	140	-12	12	195	11	16
2021	170	21	14	162	-17	14

SOURCE: NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

Figure 8
YDC Admissions and Releases



SOURCE: NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

²⁴ RtA juveniles accounted for 37% of YDC admissions and 13% of YDC releases in FY 2021 compared to 11% YDC admissions and no YDC releases in FY 2020.

The overall LOS for committed juveniles has remained fairly stable compared to the declines in delinquent dispositions and the fluctuations in Level 3 dispositions, YDC admissions, and YDC releases. In FY 2021, the overall average LOS was 13 months, with little variation over the past five fiscal years (see Table 6). The average LOS for juveniles adjudicated for a violent offense was 14 months, the average LOS for juveniles adjudicated for a serious offense was 12 months, and the average LOS for juveniles adjudicated for a minor offense was 9 months.²⁵

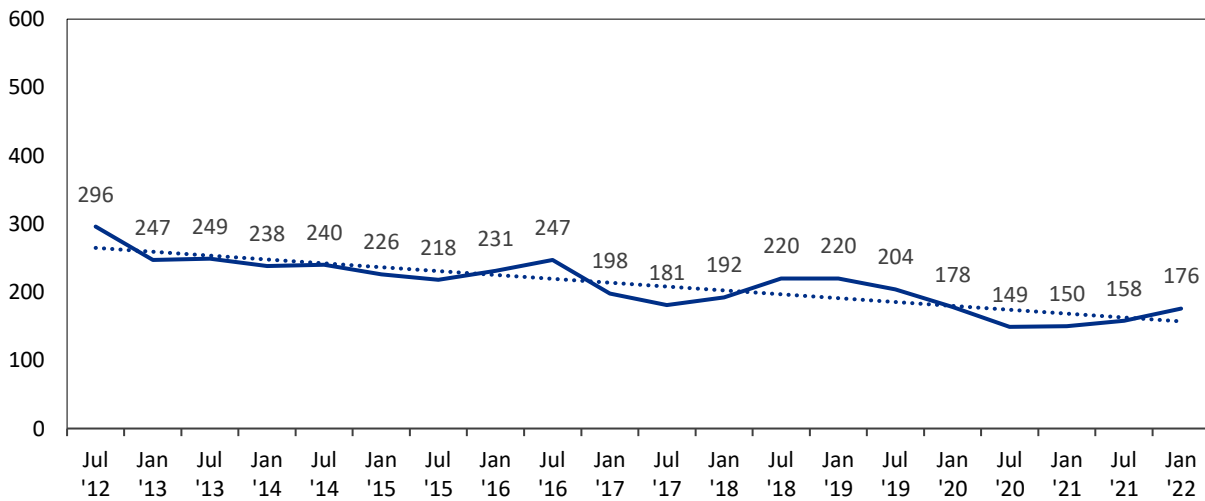
Table 6
Average Length of Stay for YDC Releases

Juveniles Adjudicated of a:	Length of Stay (in months) by Fiscal Year					% Change	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	FY 2020 to FY 2021	FY 2017 to FY 2021
Violent Offense	16	16	16	17	14	-18	-13
Serious Offense	14	12	12	14	12	-14	-14
Minor Offense	8	7	7	9	9	0	13
Overall	13	13	14	14	13	-7	0

SOURCE: NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice

Figure 9 provides an examination of North Carolina’s YDC population on the first day of each month over the past ten years. Overall, the YDC population has decreased 47%. The leveling of the population between FY 2013 and FY 2016 was followed by another period of decline in population in FY 2017. FY 2018 showed an uptick in the population with declines beginning again at the end of FY 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most recent fiscal year showed an increase in the YDC Population.

Figure 9
YDC Population Trends: July 2012 to January 2022



SOURCE: NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice, *Committed Youth Report*

²⁵ The average length of stay is based on YDC releases. While 13% of the YDC releases were RtA juveniles in FY 2021, there were not enough observations in each of the offense classifications to compare the average LOS for non-RtA and RtA juveniles.