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**The Financial Burden of Substance  
Abuse in West Virginia:  
Regional Jail Authority**



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*West Virginia's Governor-Appointed Substance Abuse  
Prevention & Intervention Planning Body*

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**Staff to the WV Partnership &  
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Prevention Efforts**

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The economic impact of drugs and alcohol to any society is astronomical. In West Virginia, not only is this cost high, it is increasing significantly. This is the first in a series of several reports that will attempt to estimate the cost of drugs and alcohol to the West Virginia Criminal Justice System, which includes the Regional Jail Authority, Division of Corrections, Parole Board, Prosecuting Attorneys Institute, Public Defender Program, Law Enforcement, the judicial system, and Division of Juvenile Services. This report will estimate the percentage of Regional Jail Authority (RJA) inmates that committed direct and indirect drug- and alcohol-involved crimes from 2005 to 2008. It is important to note at this stage that RJA provided their inmate data by calendar year but the data were used as estimates for the relevant fiscal year in this report. This report will also estimate the costs of drug and alcohol crimes to RJA from fiscal year (FY) 2005 to FY 2008, as well as the sources of these funds for each year.

### Cost of Drug- and Alcohol-involved Crimes in the Regional Jail Authority

The West Virginia RJA operates 10 jails, which houses offenders who have received a sentence of less than a year. In addition, offenders who receive a sentence of more than year are often housed in regional jails until bed space opens up for them at the Division of Corrections' facilities. RJA's facilities had 36,645, 38,653, 40,495, and 38,737 inmates from 2005 to 2008; this resulted in a 5.71% increase in inmates between 2005 and 2008 (Regional Jail Authority, 2008). Of the inmates in 2008, 12.63% were in the institutions for crimes directly involving drugs whereas 33.72% were there for crimes directly involving alcohol (Regional Jail Authority, 2008). Both percentages have recorded slight decline over the years due to increases in total number of inmates in 2006 and 2007 and also due to the decline in actual number of inmates who committed the two types of crimes. A total of 5,482, 5,112, 4,855, and 4,893 inmates had committed direct drug-involved crimes in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, respectively. Similarly, a total of 13,852, 16,147, 14,849, and 13,062 inmates had committed direct alcohol-involved crimes in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, respectively. Overall, these data resulted in 10.77%, 10.79%, 15.43%, and 8.39% of incarcerations being directly attributable to drugs and 28.71%, 30.13%, 29.11%, and 32.53% of incarcerations being directly attributable to alcohol in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, respectively.

Apart from these direct drug- and alcohol-involved crimes, other crimes are indirectly associated with drugs and alcohol. Using the 1996 Survey of Inmates in Local Jails and the 1995 Survey of Adults on Probation, Miller, Levy, Cohen, and Cox (2006) estimated the percentage of other crimes that are indirectly drug- and alcohol-involved. They defined a crime as being indirectly drug-involved if an inmate reported being under the influence of drugs or if the inmate committed the crime to pay for drugs. The percentages of homicide, assault, rape, robbery, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, child sexual abuse, and child physical abuse/neglect which were attributed to drugs by Miller et al. (2006) are reported in Table 1. Further, they defined a crime as being indirectly alcohol-involved if an inmate reported consuming at least one drink of alcohol shortly before the offense was committed. The percentages of homicide, assault, rape, robbery, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, child sexual abuse, and child physical abuse/neglect which were attributed to alcohol by Miller et al. (2006) are reported in Table 2. For example, 0.61% of RJA inmates committed homicide and Miller et al. (2006) would argue that 25% of these homicides were indirectly due to drugs.

**Table 1: Percent of Crimes Directly and Indirectly Attributable to Drugs from FY 2005 to FY 2008 in the Regional Jail Authority Facilities**

CATEGORY	Miller et al.'s %Attributable	2005		2006		2007		2008	
		Total <sup>1</sup>	Due to Drugs <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	Due to Drugs <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	Due to Drugs <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	Due to Drugs <sup>2</sup>
Homicide	25.00	0.61	0.15	0.27	0.07	0.47	0.12	0.46	0.11
Assault	13.00	6.32	0.82	5.51	0.72	18.13	2.36	18.93	2.46
Rape	18.00	0.10	0.02	0.08	0.01	0.11	0.02	0.11	0.02
Robbery	39.00	1.15	0.45	1.09	0.43	1.24	0.48	1.24	0.48
Burglary	36.00	3.89	1.40	3.74	1.35	2.40	0.86	2.78	1.00
Larceny-Theft	23.00	9.74	2.24	8.96	2.06	2.12	0.49	9.86	2.27
Motor Vehicle Theft	23.00	0.04	0.01	0.18	0.04	0.87	0.20	0.20	0.05
Child Sexual Abuse & Sexual Abuse/1st & 2nd degrees	4.00	0.28	0.01	0.37	0.01	0.38	0.02	0.35	0.01
Child Physical Abuse/Neglect	3.00	0.59	0.02	0.39	0.01	0.99	0.03	0.88	0.03
<b>Indirect Drug-involved</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5.12</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4.70</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6.43</b>
<b>Direct Drug Offenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>14.96</b>	<b>14.96</b>	<b>13.23</b>	<b>13.23</b>	<b>11.99</b>	<b>11.99</b>	<b>12.63</b>	<b>12.63</b>
<b>Overall Drug Offenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>20.08</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>17.93</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>16.57</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19.06</b>

Miller et al.'s (2006) attribution percentages were multiplied by the percentage of inmates in RJA facilities who had committed the crimes that they classified as indirectly drug- and alcohol-involved and the results were divided by 100. The results provided the percentages of RJA inmates who had committed indirect drug- and alcohol-involved crimes. For example, the percentage of inmates who committed homicide crimes that were indirectly drug-involved in 2005 is  $(25 \times 0.61) / 100 = 0.15\%$ . The resulting estimates were summed and then added to the 14.96% and 37.80% direct drug- and alcohol-involved crimes, respectively. The results suggested that approximately 20.08% of crimes in 2005 were either directly or indirectly related to drugs (Table 1) and approximately 44.43% of crimes were either directly or indirectly related to alcohol (Table 2). Thus, 64.51% of inmates of RJA's inmate in 2005 had committed drug- and alcohol-involved crimes! And, the estimates were pretty much the same in subsequent years.

**Table 2: Percent of Crimes Directly and Indirectly Attributable to Alcohol from FY 2005 to FY 2008 in the Regional Jail Authority Facilities**

CATEGORY	Miller et al.'s %Attributable	2005		2006		2007		2008	
		Total <sup>3</sup>	Due to Alcohol <sup>4</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>	Due to Alcohol <sup>4</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>	Due to Alcohol <sup>4</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>	Due to Alcohol <sup>4</sup>
Homicide	42.00	0.61	0.26	0.27	0.11	0.47	0.20	0.46	0.19
Assault	41.00	6.32	2.59	5.51	2.26	18.13	7.43	18.93	7.76
Rape	39.00	0.10	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.11	0.04	0.11	0.04
Robbery	33.00	1.15	0.38	1.09	0.36	1.24	0.41	1.24	0.41
Burglary	36.00	3.89	1.40	3.74	1.35	2.40	0.86	2.78	1.00
Larceny-Theft	19.00	9.74	1.85	8.96	1.70	2.12	0.40	9.86	1.87
Motor Vehicle Theft	26.00	0.04	0.01	0.18	0.05	0.87	0.23	0.20	0.05
Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Abuse in the First and Second Degree	17.00	0.28	0.05	0.37	0.06	0.38	0.06	0.35	0.06
Child Physical Abuse/Neglect	9.00	0.59	0.05	0.39	0.04	0.99	0.09	0.88	0.08
<b>Indirect Alcohol involved</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6.63</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5.96</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>9.72</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>11.46</b>
<b>Direct Alcohol Offenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>37.80</b>	<b>37.80</b>	<b>41.77</b>	<b>41.77</b>	<b>36.67</b>	<b>36.67</b>	<b>33.72</b>	<b>33.72</b>
<b>Overall Alcohol Offenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>44.43</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>47.73</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>46.39</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>45.18</b>

<sup>1</sup> These are the percentages of inmates who committed each crime as reported by DOC

<sup>2</sup> These are percentages of inmates whose crimes are indirectly due to drugs using Miller et al.'s (2006) fractions

<sup>3</sup> These are the percentages of inmates who committed each crime as reported by DOC

<sup>4</sup> These are percentages of inmates whose crimes are indirectly due to alcohol using Miller et al.'s (2006) fractions

Tables 1 and 2 also provide the trend in the percentage of crimes directly and indirectly attributable to drugs and alcohol. The percentage of drug-involved crimes declined slightly between 2005 and 2007 but it increased recently in 2008. The decline was due to reduction in both the number of inmates incarcerated for direct and indirect drug crimes. For alcohol-involved crimes, the decline was more recent in the last two fiscal years and most of the decline was due to reduction in number of inmates incarcerated for direct alcohol crimes.

However, in spite of the decline in the percentages of crimes that were drug- and alcohol-involved, the cost of drugs and alcohol to RJA increased significantly in FY 2007. Table 3 shows that over \$15 million of RJA's budget was consumed by drug-involved crimes in FY 2008; this was a 13.76% increase from FY 2005. Table 3 also shows that over \$36 million of RJA's budget was consumed by alcohol-involved crimes in FY 2008; this was a 21.87% increase from fiscal year 2005. In total, over half of RJA's budget goes towards providing services to inmates who commit drug- and alcohol-involved crimes!

**Table 3: Estimates of Drugs and Alcohol Cost to the Regional Jail Authority from FY 2005 to FY 2008**

YEAR	Total Budget	% Crime Due to Drugs	Estimated Cost of Drugs Crimes <sup>5</sup>	% Crime Due to Alcohol	Estimated Cost of Alcohol Crimes <sup>5</sup>	Estimated Cost of Drug and Alcohol Crimes <sup>5</sup>
2005	\$66,839,760	20.08	\$13,421,424	44.43	\$29,696,905	\$43,118,329
2006	\$72,811,005	17.93	\$13,055,013	47.73	\$34,752,693	\$47,807,706
2007	\$74,144,774	16.57	\$12,285,789	46.39	\$34,395,761	\$46,681,550
2008	\$80,108,108	19.06	\$15,268,605	45.18	\$36,192,843	\$51,461,448

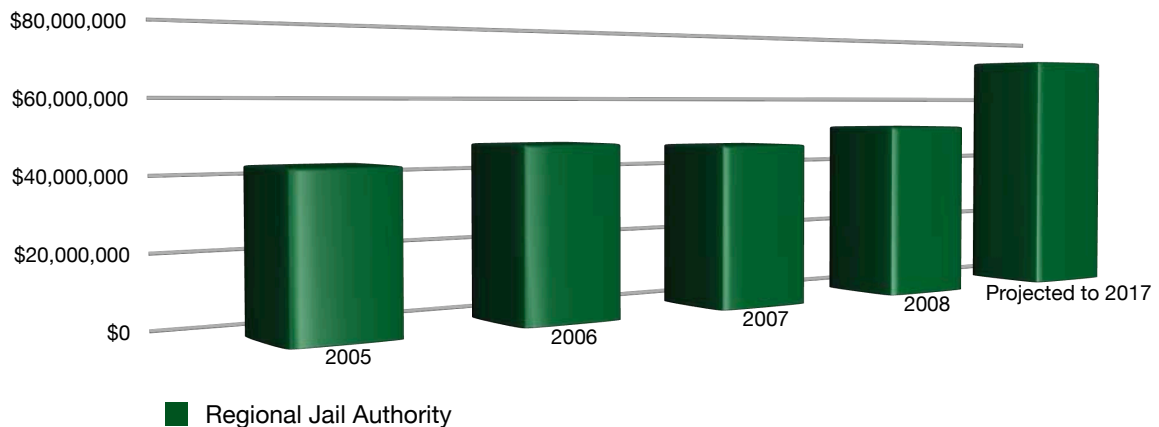
West Virginia Budget Office provided data on the different sources of RJA budget. The resulting distribution was applied to the amount consumed by drug- and alcohol-involved crimes in Table 4. Table 4 presents estimates of the different sources of funds for RJA's budget. RJA's budget comes mainly from appropriated and non-appropriated special funds. Appropriated special funds are all state funds and most of unappropriated special funds are also state funds. However, in cases of emergency disaster, the federal government may provide unappropriated funds but it is not expected that such funds would go towards correctional programs. Thus, drugs and alcohol crimes place a significant burden on the State of West Virginia!

<sup>5</sup> Rounded up to the nearest dollar

**Table 4: Cost of Drugs and Alcohol to the Regional Jail Authority by Source of Fund**

SOURCES	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Drugs Cost by Source</b>				
General fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Federal fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Appropriated Special Fund	\$2,270,847.00	\$2,004,933.00	\$1,857,792.00	\$2,145,415.00
Unappropriated special fund	\$11,150,577.00	\$11,050,080.00	\$10,427,997.00	\$13,123,190.00
<b>Total<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>\$13,421,424.00</b>	<b>\$13,055,013.00</b>	<b>\$12,285,789.00</b>	<b>\$15,268,605.00</b>
<b>Alcohol Cost by Source</b>				
General fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Federal fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Appropriated Special Fund	\$5,024,589.00	\$5,337,171.00	\$5,201,144.00	\$5,085,512.00
Unappropriated special fund	\$24,672,316.00	\$29,415,522.00	\$29,194,617.00	\$31,107,331.00
<b>Total<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>\$29,696,905.00</b>	<b>\$34,752,693.00</b>	<b>\$34,395,761.00</b>	<b>\$36,192,843.00</b>

**Total Cost of Drugs and Alcohol Use: Regional Jail Authority**



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<sup>6</sup> Clarification provided by WV Budget Office's Official