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Richard Dirk Matson
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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JUVENILE JUSTICE FRONTLINE WORKER TURNOVER IN A PRIVATE
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Richard Dirk Matson

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Sociology

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Richard Dirk Matson

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Dr. Kay A. Snyder, Ph.D.,
Professor of Sociology, Committee Chair

Dr. D. Alex Heckert, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology

Dr. Robert B. Heasley, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology

ACCEPTED

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
The School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: Juvenile Justice Frontline Worker Turnover in a Private Nonprofit Organization

Author: Richard Dirk Matson

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Kay A. Snyder

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. D. Alex Heckert
Dr. Robert B. Heasley

Private nonprofit juvenile justice organizations are facing a workforce crisis because of the high turnover of their frontline staff. Since frontline workers have a direct impact on youth and families in the juvenile justice system, their stability in agencies is critical for achieving good outcomes. Yet researchers have conducted few studies to understand turnover in the field of juvenile justice, particularly with private nonprofit agencies. This study provides a unique, in-depth, longitudinal, quantitative examination of a single private nonprofit agency's frontline worker turnover in the agency's units that work predominantly with juvenile justice youth. The study's key contribution is examining the complex factors affecting the dependent variable, the timing of exits from a single organization. Longitudinal data available from the organization were used to analyze secondary data for the entire population of 1,212 frontline juvenile justice staff who worked for Adelphoi Village over a nine-year period between 2001 and 2009. The study used logistic regression methods to explore the effects of individual, organizational, and external factors, as well as the interaction of characteristics, on the timing of employees' exits from the agency. Statistically significant effects on turnover were found with unemployment rates for the three categories of the dependent variable: employee exits at 90 days or less,

between 91 and 180 days, and between 181 and 365 days. The results of this study have implications for future research and policy.