

The State of Connecticut MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge Initiative

CJPAC Meeting: November 18, 2015

Project Goals:

To reduce the number of individuals held in jail detention, reduce the length of stay in jail detention, and create reforms that eliminate racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge DRAFT Strategies:

Cross Agency Training and Evaluation Initiative

Develop specialized training components to serve as a foundation for implementing street-level deflection strategies, pre-arraignment case processing improvements, and support efforts to reduce racial disparities.

- **Cross-Agency Training:** Provide “101” cross-agency training class on current criminal justice and mental health provider alternatives to arrest. Provide insight on the location, effectiveness, and eligibility requirements of local community service providers. Address roles and responsibilities of each criminal justice practitioner and the procedures for referral and communication among agencies. Introduce training on collateral consequences of arrest and the impact on families and communities.
- **Implicit Bias Training:** Expand Judicial Branch Implicit Bias training for police, prosecutors, public defenders, community providers and key decision makers in the cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven.
- **Assessment of Racial Disparities:** Conduct an evidence based analysis of racial disparities and disproportionality at key decision points within the criminal justice system.

Arrest Decision Point

*Deflect individuals from the arrest point and reduce arrest of low risk offenders via evidence-based community policing strategies such as **LEAD** (Seattle’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program that encourages police officers to direct low risk offenders of drug crimes and prostitution to community services) or another national model.*

- **Revise Police Protocol:** Collaboration between police, public defenders, and prosecutors to review policing protocols and create best practices for developing alternatives to arrest for low level incidents.
- **Community Local Task Force:** Use existing local level community task force or round-tables to dialogue on policies and practices that address alternatives to arrest, restorative justice practices, and implicit bias.
- **Restorative Justice Alternative:** Develop alternative sanctions for low level nuisance and public disturbance crimes in lieu of arrest. This can be in the form of a joint collaboration with the Local Police Department and Division of Criminal Justice.
- **Deflect from Arrest via MI/SA Services:** Expand treatment, case management, and wraparound services for mentally ill and/ or substance abuse offenders. May include supportive housing assistance, family support assistance, outpatient treatment, methadone treatment and other services to ensure stability and reduce risk of arrest. Explore option for accessing after-hours services to avoid arrest and reduce utilization of emergency rooms.

Arrest Decision Point

Reduce unnecessary pre-trial detention through the development of alternative interventions and case processing improvements to streamline the arrest process.

- **Court Early Case Conferencing (CORT):** Collaboration between the Division of Criminal Justice and Office of Chief Public Defender to identify low risk defendants who do not warrant pre-trial incarceration and who are likely to benefit from an alternative resolution model.
- **Jail Diversion Substance Abuse (JDSA) Program:** Expand JDSA contracts to increase the number of defendants in New Haven court that have access to court-based diversion detox and residential treatment. This will help to reduce the use of pre-trial detention for eligible applicants.
- **Rental Assistance Program (RAP):** Expand RAP program to provide rental subsidy, supportive housing, and case management services for homeless adults with severe mental illness. The housing and wrap-around services will provide clients with stability to help them avoid criminal behavior.
- **SOAR:** Expand the SOAR program to qualify homeless mentally ill individuals for SSI/SSDI. SOAR provides an expedited application and approval process to increase access to SSI/ SSDI federal income. This proactive outreach model can be piloted in the three major cities.

Release / Community Re-Entry Decision Point

Reduce risk of future re-arrest and incarceration for inmates re-entering the community.

- **Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT):** Expand MAT Pilot to provide methadone induction to opioid addicted inmates with sentences of one year or less prior to their release into the community. Will include follow-up with community-based treatment post release. Reduces “jail days” by helping offenders stay in the community without re-arrest and re-incarceration.

Project Next Steps November 2015 – December 2015:

- Prioritize and select final strategies.
- Finalize the budget proposal and prepare initial draft.
- Submit final proposal to the MacArthur Foundation on December 22nd 2015.