



CHARLESTON COUNTY
CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLAN

FISCAL YEARS 2021-2023

Report issued August 3, 2020.

Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



STAN GRAGG
Chairman

It is my honor as Chairman of the Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) to issue the CJCC's 2020 strategic plan. As the Deputy Police Chief in Mount Pleasant and a founding member of the CJCC, I am encouraged by the direction the plan provides for the future of our local criminal justice system. It includes concrete and attainable goals as well as more challenging aspirations that will require continuing community engagement and support.

The CJCC has been working to help improve safety and justice in our community since 2015. We studied the local justice system and launched an initial strategic plan that led to impressive results. The utilization of our local jail for lower level non-violent offenses was reduced, increased use of cite and release in lieu of jail, more diversions from jail and deflections into treatment, and fewer familiar faces cycling through the jail repeatedly. An exhaustive examination into the setting of bonds led to the development of a risk instrument which in turn allowed for bond setting to become more just and informed. Efficiencies improved in the early stages of a case processing – from public defenders starting representation in bond court to faster transfers of evidence. Along the way an increased data capacity provided an increased level of knowledge. Findings indicated the CJCC's next strategic plan would have to do more to improve pretrial justice, racial equity and recidivism, and require looking at the root causes of crime from a more societal level.

These are significant community challenges and being such require community solutions. This is the major deciding factor in employing Dialogue to Change, in partnership with Everyday Democracy, to better inform and involve over 1,200 members of the community in setting the course for the CJCC's strategic plan. A comprehensive process founded upon the belief that people and institutions need to recognize and set aside their own limitations to view issues with fairness and equity. In doing so it allows for the connection across differences, being willing to share honestly, consider diverse views, and work together to identify and offer actions toward change. It was a turning point in community engagement and I strongly encourage replication of Dialogue to Change prior to the development of any future strategic plans. Before reviewing the strategic initiatives enclosed, I hope you will review the background and strategic planning process sections to learn more about it.

The strategic initiatives provide concrete next steps for moving forward together in service of the Charleston community. The initiatives, developed by strategic planning workgroups inclusive of system leaders and community representatives, are grounded in community priorities, key data and more recent lessons learned—from the pandemic and the growing movement for racial justice. I am grateful to the Charleston community and the entire CJCC team for their leadership, compassion and determination. No plan is perfect and there will inevitably be adjustments as we evolve in the years to come. Please stay engaged with us as we progress over the next several years. For example:

- Engage with us online,
- Review our publications,
- Share information with your neighbors, colleagues, friends and family,
- Come to a CJCC meeting and/or event, and
- Volunteer to support efforts in the community to improve pretrial justice, racial equity and recidivism.

We are all in this together and each of us can make a difference. Individuals, alone or in small groups, as well as community organizations can help to improve the local criminal justice system. I hope that you will support the implementation of this plan, hold us accountable, offer feedback and collaborate with us. In these trying times, it is imperative we continue to work together to help make the system more effective, equitable and efficient.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL (CJCC) BACKGROUND

The Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is a collaborative council of criminal justice system leaders and community representatives that studies trends, identifies common challenges and implements strategies to address them. The mission of the CJCC is to assist in making sustainable, data-driven improvements to Charleston County's criminal justice system (CJS) and thereby improve public safety and community well-being. Since its inception in 2015, the CJCC has taken a collaborative and data-guided approach to improve Charleston's CJS with an ongoing commitment to accountability and transparency.

The CJCC's efforts underscore the importance of intentional, data-guided policies and practices that engage the community in improving the local criminal justice system. In 2015, the CJCC developed an initial plan based upon an innovative and exhaustive data-guided review of the local CJS (inclusive of analysis on system trends and the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities) and best practices in the field. The CJCC carefully examined jail use for the calendar year 2014 to understand how Charleston County was utilizing the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center (SACDC). Findings indicated:

- The most frequent charges resulting in jail use were municipal and magistrate charges (e.g., simple possession of marijuana) that also disproportionately impacted the black community.
- Individuals living with mental illness, substance use disorders and/or homelessness were among the most frequent users of the jail, often cycling through repeatedly.
- Defendants in bond court rarely had representation and judges had minimal information to use when setting bonds. Three-quarters of the time judges ordered financial bonds.
- Defendants who were unable to secure release lingered in jail for long lengths of stay while waiting for their cases to resolve.
- Delays in the earliest stages of a case (such as transferring evidence from law enforcement to prosecution and assigning attorneys for defense and prosecution) added to the time it took to bring cases to justice.
- The net result in 2014 was nearly 25,000 local admissions to jail with an average daily population of 1,111 locally detained individuals, including 167 sentenced (15%) and 944 pretrial (85%).

The CJCC also recognized the primary purpose of jail in South Carolina is to hold defendants awaiting court who pose a public safety or flight risk that cannot be reasonably managed in the community as well as people serving sentences less than ninety days. Unnecessarily incarcerating defendants awaiting court who are not a safety or flight risk results in significant costs to individuals, families and communities¹. Research has shown a variety of negative impacts from pretrial detention, such as higher rates of conviction and harsher sentences than those released, who have the benefit of demonstrating their ability to behave responsibly in the community². Detained defendants, especially those that pose lower risk of pretrial failure, may become further destabilized and less capable of being healthy, contributing members of society³. They can experience loss of housing and income, separation from children or other family members in need of care, untreated mental health and substance use conditions, and develop further needs that place them at elevated risk of future arrest⁴. Jails are also expensive; the approved budget for fiscal year 2019 included \$39,470,000 of Charleston County's general fund for the SACDC⁵. Notably, there are also other local criminal justice system expenses such as the costs of law enforcement, courts, defense, prosecution, probation and parole, and other treatment programs and services to consider.

In recent years, the CJCC launched strategies to address these challenges, improve the local CJS, and

better utilize the local jail for its primary purpose. The CJCC began implementing the plan in 2016 with funding support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety + Justice Challenge (SJC). While not a comprehensive listing of all the efforts to-date, examples of key accomplishments through 2019 are listed below.

Build a centralized database to track progress across the CJS and study trends.

- The centralized database started in 2016. It regularly imports data from across the CJS and has made it possible to gradually increase the capacity for data analysis and evaluation (e.g., pretrial outcomes and recidivism).
- Data is routinely analyzed and provided to system leaders to guide ongoing efforts, track trends, study areas in need of improvement and measure progress.
- The CJCC also uses the central database to produce two publications annually, keeping the community apprised of criminal justice system trends.

Deflect and divert people from jail on municipal and magistrate charges that can be handled without resorting to incarceration.

- Law enforcement practices to limit the unnecessary use of detention began in 2015 and the results comparing the 2014 baseline to 2019 indicate:
 - ◊ Municipal and magistrate charges brought to the jail declined by 67% and General Sessions charges became the most frequent reason for jail use in 2019 (declining 4% since 2014).
 - ◊ Five specifically targeted single charge bookings (simple possession of marijuana, open container, misdemeanor shoplifting, trespassing and public intoxication) reduced by 73%.

Increase law enforcement's use of options other than jail to help individuals get the help they need (e.g., Tri-county Crisis Stabilization Center or TCSC) and reduce the number of familiar faces cycling repeatedly through the jail.

- The SACDC booked and released 3,618 familiar face individuals (individuals with three or more recent bookings) in 2014, and by 2019 that number decreased 55% to 1,642.
- Law enforcement's use of options other than jail to help address the underlying factors bringing people into contact with law enforcement and related data tracking increased each year since 2017 when the TCSC re-opened. In 2019 there were:
 - ◊ 74 referrals by law enforcement to the TCSC ,
 - ◊ 473 law enforcement consultations with embedded clinicians, and
 - ◊ 152 law enforcement drop offs to the Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center.

Provide bond court judges with more information to consider in order to set bonds that are fair, just and meaningful.

- Completed studies of bonding practices and pretrial outcomes (releases, re-arrests and failures to appear).
- Bond court representations by public defender attorneys started in 2016, gradually increasing from 0 in 2015 to 1,723 in 2019.
- Bond court also now has regular participation among local law enforcement, victim advocates, and an assistant solicitor.
- Pretrial Service Reports (PSR) were implemented in 2018 to better inform bond setting judges and provide a consistent, objective and reliable way to assess for risk of rearrests and/or missing court.
- PSRs were available about half of the time through 2019. In 2020, the availability of PSRs has increased to over 90% each month with the advancement of a locally validated assessment.

Transfer docket management to the court of General Sessions, expedite efficiencies in the early stages of case processing (e.g., transferring evidence and assigning attorneys faster), and take steps to improve case processing.

- Docket management was officially transferred to the court in 2017.
- Average number of days in the early stages of case processing improved from 2015 to 2019:
 - ◊ Time to public defender assignment went from 101 to 68 days.
 - ◊ Time to solicitor assignment went from 30 to 26 days.
 - ◊ Time to initial discovery from law enforcement to prosecution went from 45 to 21 days.
- Initiated regular reviews of the jail population in 2019 to identify pretrial defendants who remain in jail unable to post bond with the potential for reducing pretrial lengths of stay.

Address the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in the CJS.

- Analysis in 2015 of racial and ethnic disproportionality across the criminal justice system led to several of the CJCC's initial strategies such as deflecting and diverting people from jail when appropriate.
- In 2018, the CJCC issued a midyear report that laid the groundwork for the steps that followed. It explored a variety of racial and ethnic inequities locally and nationally, dissected local decision points from 2014 to 2017, and reviewed national examples for addressing inequities.
- Analysis of relative rates at booking from 2014 to 2017 indicated somewhat decreasing relative rate indices and more work to do.
 - ◊ In 2017, black individuals were booked into the jail on five low-level target charges 2.61 times as often as white individuals, a rate 29% lower than it was in 2014.
 - ◊ In 2017, black individuals were booked into the jail 3.56 times as often as white individuals overall, a rate 4% lower than it was in 2014.
- After grappling with these findings, next steps were devised. The CJCC continued data analysis and comprehensively expanded community engagement to shape the next strategic plan, and the Solicitor provided racial equity training for her staff.

By 2019, jail use in Charleston County was more closely utilized for its intended purpose, thereby reducing the harmful effects of unnecessary incarceration. For example, between 2014 and 2019:

- The local jail population achieved a sustained reduction of 20%, from 1,111 to 888.
- Local bookings, individuals booked, and charges reduced by roughly 50%.
- Simple possession of marijuana (SPM) was no longer the most frequently occurring charge booked; instead driving under the influence (DUI) 1st was the most frequent charge booked.

The lessons learned through all of the efforts to date indicated the CJCC's next strategic plan would have to do more to improve pretrial justice, racial equity and recidivism. In 2019 the CJCC employed Dialogue to Change to better inform and involve over 1,200 members of the community in setting the course for the next strategic plan.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced a transition in day to day operations, generated a sharp decline in the local jail population, and increased the time to disposition for defendants in- and out- of custody. Meanwhile, the movement for racial justice continues to grow. These trying times reinforce the CJCC's commitment to its mission and elevate the importance of having a local criminal justice system that is increasingly effective, equitable and efficient.

MEMBERSHIP

There are positional members of the CJCC who are members due to the position they hold. These individuals serve on the CJCC for as long as they occupy the position entitling them to membership and can appoint a designee, listed below. The CJCC also includes a dozen community representatives identified through an open application process. Community representatives serve for a period of two years in staggered terms, and their voices and input are considered by the CJCC in its decision-making process. In addition, the CJCC has dedicated staff with relevant experience to help carry out its mission.

POSITIONAL MEMBERSHIP

COUNTY COUNCIL

Vic Rawl
Councilmember

SHERIFF

Al Cannon, Sheriff

ASSISTANT SHERIFF

Mitch Lucas, Assistant Sheriff

CITY OF CHARLESTON POLICE CHIEF

Luther Reynolds, Chief
Naomi Broughton, Deputy Chief
Jason Bruder, Lieutenant

MOUNT PLEASANT POLICE CHIEF

Carl Ritchie, Chief
Stan Gragg, Deputy Chief

NORTH CHARLESTON POLICE CHIEF

Reggie Burgess, Chief
Karen Cordray, Deputy Chief

JAIL ADMINISTRATOR

Willis Beatty, Chief Deputy
Dorothy Harris, Major

SOLICITOR

Scarlett Wilson, Ninth Circuit Solicitor
Charles Young, Director of Case Management

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Ashley Pennington, Ninth Circuit Defender
Meghan Ehrlich, Chief Public Defender

CLERK OF COURT

Julie Armstrong, Clerk of Court
Robert Duncan, Operations Manager

DIRECTOR OF SUMMARY COURT

Junerese Rhodan, Director
Phylis Williams, Deputy Director

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE MAGISTRATE

Ellen Steinberg, Magistrate
James Gosnell, Magistrate

CIRCUIT COURT CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

Markley Dennis, Jr., Chief Administrative Judge

SPECIALTY COURT JUDGE

Irvin Condon, Probate Judge
Tamara Curry, Associate Judge of Probate

VICTIM ADVOCATE

Easter LaRoche, Victim/ Witness Coordinator
Martina Johnson, VA Supervisor– Detention

DIRECTOR, CHARLESTON DORCHESTER MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

Jennifer Roberts, LPC, CPM, Executive Director
Dennis Puebla, Director of Special Operations

DIRECTOR, CHARLESTON CENTER

Dr. Chanda Funcell, Executive Director
Jon Apgar, Program Manager of Clinical Services

AGENT-IN-CHARGE, SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION, PAROLE, AND PARDON SERVICES

Mitchell A. Ray, Agent-In-Charge
Kescia Holmes, Assistant Agent-In-Charge

DIRECTOR OF NORTH CHARLESTON MUNICIPAL COURT

Angela Cartrette, Director/ Court Administrator
Francie Austin, Legal Council

DIRECTOR OF CHARLESTON MUNICIPAL COURT

Alesia Rico-Flores, Judge
Lakesiya L. Cofield, Court Director

DIRECTOR OF MOUNT PLEASANT MUNICIPAL COURT

Levica Kirvin, Director/ Court Administrator
Laurie Wilson, Deputy Court Administrator

VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH COORDINATOR, VA CHARLESTON

Meredith Miller, Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator
Shanta Barron-Millan, LISW, Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator

LEGAL DIRECTOR, AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Frank Knaack, Executive Director
Susan Dunn, Legal Director

DIRECTOR, ONE80 PLACE

Selena Wilson, Program Officer
Lea Ann Adkins, Paralegal, Legal Services

EX OFFICIO MEMBER

CHIEF JUSTICE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Honorable Donald W. Beatty

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

LOCAL CIVIL RIGHTS COMMUNITY

Otha Meadows, President & CEO
Charleston Urban League

LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

Rev. John Paul Brown, Retired Minister
African Episcopal Methodist Church

LOCAL HISPANIC COMMUNITY

Lydia Cotton

LOCAL NONPROFIT COMMUNITY

David G. Phillips, President & CEO
Custom Development Solutions, Inc. (CDS)

LOCAL HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY

Dr. Michael Bowman, President BOD
Father to Father, Inc.
Professor Emeritus, MUSC

LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Scott Barhight, SVP Government Relations
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

LOCAL DEFENSE BAR

Lauren E. Williams, Partner
Williams & Walsh, LLC

LOCAL GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMUNITY IN RELATED FIELDS OF STUDY

Dr. Anthony Bishara, Associate Professor
College of Charleston

LOCAL CRIME SURVIVOR COMMUNITY

Vanessa Halyard, Family Advocate
Dee Norton Child Advocacy Center

LOCAL FORMERLY INCARCERATED COMMUNITY

Keith Smalls, Mentor
My Community's Keeper Mentor Group

LOCAL COMMUNITY-AT-LARGE

Areyonna Keels, Bilingual Victim Advocate
People Against Rape (PAR)

ONE DESIGNATED LIAISON FROM ANY OTHER ENTITY DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Alexandra E. Menegakis, Criminal Defense Attorney, Adams & Bischoff, P.C.

CJCC STAFF

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Kristy Pierce Danford, MPA

SYSTEM UTILIZATION MANAGER

Susanne J. Grose

DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR

Christina Dixon Parnall, Esquire

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Adina Baer Gross, MBA

PRETRIAL ANALYST

Robert Brimmer

PRETRIAL ANALYST

Karyn Houston

PRETRIAL ANALYST

Inara O’Gorman

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Jessica L. Bauer



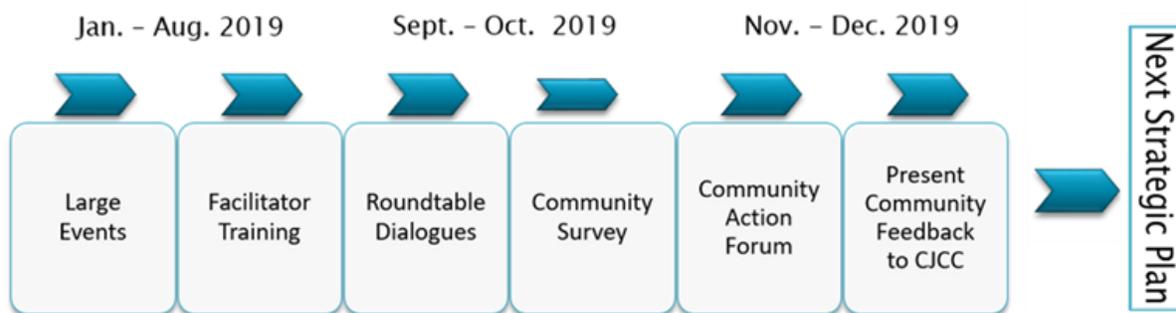
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In 2019, the CJCC thoroughly expanded community engagement to better inform and involve the community in improving the local CJS moving forward. The CJCC utilized a “Dialogue to Change” process founded upon the belief that people and institutions can use an equity lens, connect across differences, share honestly, consider diverse views, and work together to identify and offer actions toward change. Through Dialogue to Change (DTC), the CJCC worked hard to raise awareness and set a goal to engage 1,000 community members in shaping the development of the CJCC’s next strategic plan. The DTC project included three main objectives:

- 1) Build an infrastructure for outreach and meaningful engagement,**
- 2) Dialogue in constructive spaces to share perspectives on key criminal justice system challenges, foster relationships, and explore ideas for moving forward, and**
- 3) Conclude with an Action Forum to determine community priorities for the next strategic plan.**

The CJCC exceeded its goal and engaged 1,215 members of the community, including those most impacted by the criminal justice system. More than 450 people came to large community discussions; 101 people came to 11 recurring small group roundtable dialogues; and more than 650 people took part in a community survey.

Throughout the process community voices were heard, awareness of critical challenges increased, and community came together to find solutions. Positive feedback was received throughout the process. Feedback from the large events showed that 93% of attendees had a high or very high likelihood of attending future events. Participants also increased their knowledge of the local CJS and desire to



participate in improving it. Over 90% of participants in the roundtable dialogues reported feeling they learned from different points of view, felt their point of view could be heard, recommended the dialogues to others as a way to get involved in their community, and were motivated to take action to support making improvements in the local CJS. Collectively, five broad themes emerged:

- Racial bias and socioeconomic factors, such as poverty and low educational attainment, exacerbate disparity in the justice system.
- The everyday conduct and behaviors of system agents (such as police officers, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges) impacts perceptions of trustworthiness, accountability, and transparency of the criminal justice system.
- There are major challenges for individuals returning to the community from incarceration, such as system-related financial obligations, housing, treatment, transportation, employment, and regaining community trust.
- Outcomes produced by the local criminal justice system need to be improved.
- Engagement strategies such as transparent reporting, public forums, and community conversations are helpful in improving the local justice system.

The community survey also showed common perceptions of the local criminal justice system: People agree that improvements are needed, have concerns over safety, and want to know more. People want more to be done to improve fairness and address disparities, bonding practices, the time it takes to bring cases to justice, and recidivism. Further, at the Action Forum in November of 2019, community priorities were solidified as follows:

Increase education, training, and awareness for justice system stakeholders

- Specially trained units for special populations (mental health)
- Training on sensitivity, substance abuse and human-first language

Create more opportunities for community members to become actively involved and engaged

- Community buy-ins
- More involvement between the council and the community

Build on efforts and activities the CJCC is doing

- Provide adequate funding for council based on qualitative results
- Focus on the challenges of reentry from prison and jail

Establish partnerships and collaborations that will support local justice reform

- Prevention before intervention
- Find community leaders to be the face and voice of this advocacy

In December of 2019 the results were presented to the CJCC and by January of 2020, the CJCC initiated strategic planning efforts. The development of the plan was done by four strategic planning workgroups organized to focus on:

- community engagement and racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity (R+EDD),
- diversion and deflection from the criminal justice system,
- bond and reentry, and the
- processing of cases in the court of General Sessions.

The workgroups followed a common process and utilized a series of foundational resources, inclusive of DTC findings and more recent lessons learned—from the pandemic and the growing movement for racial justice—to design initiatives for the next three years. Each collaborative working group was provided a specific purpose and dedicated areas of focus as indicated below.

Workgroup membership was comprised of community representatives and system leaders that worked collaboratively to design a strategic plan that includes concrete and attainable goals as well as a foundation for more challenging goals that will necessitate continuing community engagement and support to advance. A brief summary of each group and its strategic initiatives is provided on the following page. Thereafter, a description of each workgroup and its initiatives are provided. The data behind the plan is also available⁶.

Foundational Resources	Process (January 2020 to July 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement findings and priorities (quantitative and qualitative), also included in both 2019 reports • Annual and midyear reports (see infographics or executive summaries for quick reviews of annual and/or racial equity trends) • Charleston County’s Sequential Intercept Map and companion report • City of Charleston’s Racial Bias Audit • Crime and population trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish workgroup membership and purpose, inclusive of CJCC members and community representatives • Discuss pressing issues and foundational resources • Review relevant data trends • Design goals and objectives • Re-evaluate and revise as needed • Finalize the strategic plan with CJCC membership approval

Overarching charge: To help protect public safety, minimize harms and cost-effectively focus limited system resources to promote an increasingly effective, efficient and equitable local criminal justice system.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES BY WORKGROUP

Community Engagement/ Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity (R+EDD) Workgroup

Purpose: Establish specific and innovative community engagement efforts to address R+EDD and support system improvement efforts.

Focus Areas: a) Continuing community engagement, b) Increasing engagement among individuals most affected by the criminal justice system, c) Continuing to examine and address R+EDD in the criminal justice system, and d) Supporting system improvement

Initiative One: Ongoing Community Engagement

Why? The community wants to know more and have more ways to actively engage.

Initiative Two: Updated Analysis of R+EDD

Why? There has not been an updated analysis of R+EDD in the local criminal justice system since the 2018 Midyear Report.

Initiative Three: Race Equity Fellowship Proposal

Why? There is not a clear-cut blueprint for addressing R+EDD and effective agents of change are needed to increase consciousness among system actors and lead efforts to address R+EDD.

Divert and Deflect Workgroup

Purpose: Update, innovate and improve upon efforts to divert and/or deflect individuals from the criminal justice system as appropriate.

Focus Areas: a) Community partnerships and other means of prevention before criminal justice intervention, b) Law enforcement practices surrounding citation and release, and c) Pre-booking divert/deflect options

Initiative One: Familiar face case conferencing

Why? The cycle of book, release and repeat does not work, particularly among the most active of familiar faces.

Initiative Two: Diversion and deflection research

Why? Research is necessary to more fully understand how deflecting individuals away from the criminal justice system and to diversion centers (and subsequent treatment) impacts arrests, jail population and behavioral health outcomes.

Initiative Three: Crime and Jail Use Tracking

Why? There is not a regularly available county-wide crime and jail use tracking mechanism. One is needed to better understand patterns of crime, diversion and deflection, arrests, and jail use activity.

Bond and Reentry Workgroup

Purpose: Update, innovate and improve upon procedural justice and recidivism outcomes for individuals from booking to reentry from incarceration.

Focus Areas: a) Booking, b) Bond court, c) Procedural justice, d) Detention center- based reentry preparations and e) Community-based efforts to reduce recidivism

Initiative One: Ensure bond hearings are continually fair, just and meaningful

Why? While significant strides have been made in Centralized Bond Court, continuing attention is necessary.

Initiative Two: Widely accessible directory of services

Why? There is not a common understanding of what reentry services are available, let alone which work best for whom.

Initiative Three: Proposal for pretrial service option(s)

Why? Regardless of the type of bond set, there is minimal oversight of the conditions of the bond setting, let alone feedback about pretrial outcomes and/or which services work best to maximize safety, appearance and liberty.

Case Processing Workgroup

Purpose: Update, innovate and improve the processing of cases in the court of General Sessions.

Focus Areas: a) Case processing, b) Jail population review (JPR), c) Procedural justice, d) Bond reconsideration and other pretrial matters

Initiative One: Jail Population Review

Why? Absent regular reviews of the jail population, defendants that are not a threat to public safety or a flight risk can be unnecessarily detained.

Initiative Two: General Session's Court Reminders

Why? Losing contact with defendants while cases are pending results in missed court appearances, bench warrants and slower times to disposition.

Initiative Three: Research pandemic impacts and institutionalize lessons learned

Why? Charleston County does not meet the statewide case timeliness standard established by State Court Administration (80% pending less than 365 days) and it will be further compounded by the pandemic.

Community Engagement and Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity

Workgroup purpose: *Establish specific and innovative community engagement efforts to address racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity (R+EDD) and support system improvement efforts.*

Membership: Lydia Cotton, CJCC Community Representative; Kristy Danford, Project Director CJCC; Dr. Jennifer Baker, past CJCC Community Representative; Dr. Michael Bowman, Director of Father to Father; Dr. Chanda D. Funcell, Director of Charleston Center; Adina Gross, CJCC Communications & Outreach Coordinator; Alyssa Harmke, Public Defender, Charleston County Defender’s Office; Amber Johnson, Inclusion, and Racial Conciliation Manager, City of Charleston; Kevin Kuehmeier, Senior Associate, Justice Systems Partners; Lt. Jason Bruder, Charleston Police Department; Alexandra Menegakis, Attorney at Law and CJCC Community Representative; David Phillips, CJCC Community Representative; Keith Smalls, CJCC Community Representative; Emily Walter, SC Community Outreach Coordinator, ACLU; Donna White, LPCS, LPC, LAC, CCS, CPS/P Program Administrator, Adolescent and Prevention Services, Charleston Center; Scarlett Wilson, 9th Judicial Circuit Solicitor

Summary: The workgroup reviewed a variety of relevant metrics related to 2019 community engagement results (also known as the Dialogue to Change project), changes in relative rates from 2014 to 2017 (booking through disposition) and more recent lessons learned from the pandemic and growing movement for racial justice. Three initiatives for the strategic plan were developed providing concrete objectives for moving forward. The initiatives are also intentionally adaptable given the ever-changing environment. For instance, engaging with the community online when in-person is not feasible, and including specific deliverables to inform future policy and/or budgetary steps.

Initiative One: Ongoing Community Engagement

It is evident that the community wants to know more and have more ways to actively engage in improving the local criminal justice system. For example, following the Action Forum, a local organization comprised of several current and past CJCC community representatives, known as South Carolina for Criminal Justice Reform (SC4CJR), formed as a community voice for advocacy. In addition, the growing movement for racial justice has engaged more people, particularly younger generations, in reform efforts. Participants in the DTC also identified a variety of ways community members can get involved (individually, in small groups and/or collectively) such as learning more about the local system, coming to CJCC meetings, volunteering with local organizations that serve justice-involved populations, and supporting data-guided improvements in the political process. Therefore, this initiative deliberately focuses on making information increasingly accessible and available to a broader audience through social media and community events. A hallmark of this strategy is to inform and engage the community in helping to improve the local criminal justice system.

ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Challenge	The community wants to know more and have more ways to actively engage.
Initiative	Make information increasingly accessible and available to a broader audience through social media and community events.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify CJCC report content into graphics, short facts, and brief videos that can be easily digested and disseminated online and in-person • Develop content for social media • Start a CJCC Instagram account • Share simplified content on social media (approximately weekly) • Collaborate with CJCC officials and community partners to expand information sharing capacity • Develop and/or participate in community events quarterly (in-person or online) • Monitor progress and make improvements as needed • Evaluate impact
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded social media underway • Initial event by the end of summer 2020 • Thereafter, an average of one event per quarter <p>Note: It is anticipated not all events will be managed by CJCC as partnering with community organizations is critical to engaging and involving the broader community.</p>
Leader	Kristy Danford, CJCC Project Director
Core Partners	CJCC Community Representatives and CJCC staff, particularly Communication and Outreach Coordinator Adina Gross. CJCC membership will participate in various events and promote information sharing.

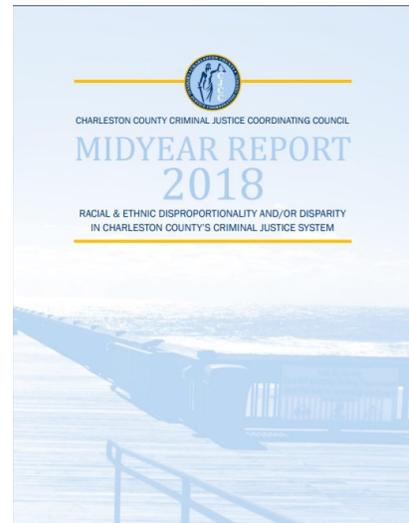


Initiative Two: Updated Analysis of R+EDD

There has not been an analysis of R+EDD in the local criminal justice system since the 2018 Midyear Report⁷. The report explored a variety of racial and ethnic inequities locally and nationally (e.g., education, healthcare, housing), provided key findings from the literature on the costs and consequences of R+EDD in the criminal justice system (e.g., public safety, legal, economic and societal impacts), dissected local decision points from booking to disposition between 2014 and 2017, and reviewed national examples of best practices in R+EDD reduction. Examples included increasing procedural justice, community engagement and the utilization of racial equity tools.

After grappling with the findings, next steps included racial equity training among Solicitor staff, continuing data analysis and expanding community engagement to shape the next strategic plan.

Now it is time for an updated analysis of R+EDD in the local criminal justice system. A hallmark of this strategy is a collaborative workgroup of community representatives and leadership from data contributing members working together to determine decision points to analyze, establish a common understanding of the methodology, and take ownership of the findings to guide ongoing improvement efforts.



UPDATED ANALYSIS OF R+EDD	
Challenge	There has not been an analysis of R+EDD in the local criminal justice system since the 2018 Midyear Report.
Initiative	Publish and disseminate a report updating and expanding upon the prior report.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form collaborative working group • Determine which decision points to analyze • Establish methodology • Conduct analysis • Draft findings and review results • Make recommendations based upon findings • Publish the report • Simplify report content into graphics, short facts, and brief videos that can be easily digested and disseminated online and in-person for use in initiative one
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group will form in the fall of 2020. • Report will be published by the spring of 2021.
Leader	Kristy Danford, CJCC Project Director
Core Partners	TBD members of the workgroup such as community representatives, data contributors and CJCC staff, particularly Database Administrator Christina Parnall. Data Contributors include Charleston County Sheriff's Office, Mount Pleasant, North Charleston and Charleston Police Departments, respective municipal and magistrate court leadership, Ninth Circuit Solicitor, Ninth Circuit Public Defender and the Clerk of Court.

Initiative Three: Race Equity Fellowship Proposal

There is not a clear-cut blueprint for addressing R+EDD and effective agents of change are needed to increase consciousness among system actors and lead efforts to address R+EDD in the Charleston community. Addressing inequities is a continuing and complex process that requires broad and deep collaboration between community members and leaders within and beyond the scope of the criminal justice system. Addressing R+EDD is a process, not an event. Therefore, it is critical to equip leaders from a variety of disciplines with the skills and tools needed to advance racial equity. In this initiative, the CJCC will work with community partners to develop a proposal for instituting a Race Equity Fellowship program for the Charleston community. The vision for the program is to graduate agents of change to address R+EDD from a variety of disciplines including education, healthcare, non-profits, business and criminal justice. Fellows will be in positions of authority and complete capstone projects in their respective areas of expertise. The fellows will be able to learn from one another while gaining skills, tools and practical experience to serve as agents of change in their own organizations. In addition, the capstone projects will help generate collective impact across the Charleston community.



A hallmark of this initiative is the research-based approach coupled with a diverse steering committee of dynamic representatives from the disciplines targeted to guide proposal development and engage in helping to make the program a reality. The project will be completed by the College of Charleston’s Community Assistance Program in

collaboration with faculty from the Master of Public Administration program and the Joseph P. Riley Center for Livable Communities. Research will be completed on program components most likely to yield desired outcomes, delivery formats most ideal for leadership and people in positions of power, costs associated with implementing and sustaining the program, and recommendations to make the fellowship sustainable.

RACE EQUITY FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL	
Challenge	There is not a clear-cut blueprint for addressing R+EDD and effective agents of change are needed to increase consciousness among system actors and lead efforts to address R+EDD in the Charleston community.
Initiative	Develop a proposal for instituting a Race Equity Fellowship program for the Charleston community.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish steering committee • Complete content and delivery format research • Complete survey of potential training organizations • Develop cost-estimates, including recommendations for sustainability through a train-the-trainer model • Develop budget proposal • Finalize program proposal
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The steering committee will be established in September of 2020 • Program proposal will be completed by March of 2021 • Next steps determined thereafter

Leader	Kristy Danford, CJCC Project Director
Core Partners	Marla Robertson, Community Assistance Program Director, College of Charleston's Master of Public Administration and the Riley Center for Livable Communities; LaVonda Brown, Director of the YWCA; Amber Johnson, Inclusion, and Racial Conciliation Manager, City of Charleston; and other TBD members of the steering committee

Divert and Deflect

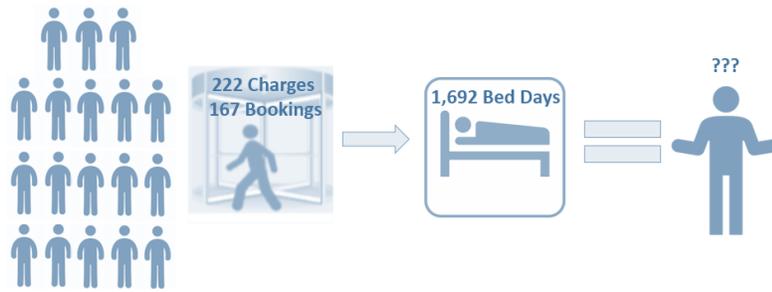
Workgroup purpose: *Update, innovate and improve upon efforts to divert and/or deflect individuals from the criminal justice system as appropriate.*

Membership: LeaAnn Adkins, One80Place; Deputy Chief Naomi Broughton, Charleston Police Department; Deputy Chief Karen Cordray, North Charleston Police Department; Kristy Danford, Project Director CJCC; J. Frederick Davis, North Charleston Prosecutor; Dr. Chanda D. Fucell, Director of Charleston Center; Deputy Chief Stan Gragg, Mount Pleasant Police Department and CJCC Chair; Susanne Grose, CJCC Systems Utilization Manager; Adina Gross, CJCC Communications and Outreach; Christopher Jardin, Community Liaison & Homelessness Coordinator, City of Charleston; Sonya Jenkins, Clinic Director, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Kevin Kuehmeier, Senior Associate at Justice Systems Partners; Christina Parnall, CJCC Database Administrator; Dennis Puebla, LSW, LADC, Director of Special Operations Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Alecia Rico Flores, Honorable Judge, Charleston Municipal Court; Jennifer Roberts, LPC, CPM, Executive Director Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Hollen Sellers, Charleston County Mental Health Coordinator, Probate Court; Ellen Steinberg, Honorable Judge, Charleston Magistrate and CJCC Co-Vice Chair; Emily Walter, ACLU SC Community Outreach Coordinator

Summary: The workgroup reviewed a variety of relevant metrics related to jail use, crime and population, custodial and non-custodial charging and related relative rates indices, diversion and deflection patterns, familiar face activity and more recent lessons learned. Three initiatives for the strategic plan were developed that are grounded in data and will shape ongoing efforts to uphold public safety, achieve improved outcomes, and support continuing efforts to ensure the use of jail in the county stays true to its intended purpose.

Initiative One: Familiar face case conferencing

In 2019, 18 people (average of 47 years old, 83% male and 67% black) were booked into jail nearly 170 times on over 220 charges (most often trespassing and various crimes against public order) consuming nearly 1,700 jail bed days. This initiative deliberately focuses on the most active familiar faces cycling through the SACDC and capitalizes upon the existing resources and services within the Charleston community. The most active familiar faces will be thoughtfully engaged and provided an opportunity to participate in collaborative, inter-agency case conferencing. Once enrolled, an individualized assessment and coordinated case management plan will be developed and supported by criminal justice system



actors and community service providers to address the underlying factors contributing to repeated jail use. A hallmark of this initiative is to reduce harm and prioritize realistic, small steps toward improved outcomes. Therefore, progress and impacts will be measured to guide ongoing improvement in the initiative as well as shape future recidivism reduction efforts.

FAMILIAR FACE CASE CONFERENCING	
Challenge	The cycle of book, release and repeat does not work, particularly among the most active of familiar faces.
Initiative	Familiar face case conferencing to achieve improved outcomes for the most active familiar faces in the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop inter-agency memorandum of understanding • Develop release of information to facilitate appropriate consent and information sharing • Establish harm reduction protocols that are defined and realistic • Develop data tracking mechanisms to assess progress and provide feedback • Launch outreach and engagement to encourage enrollment • Implement inter-agency community case conferencing with the most active familiar faces (average 4 per quarter) • Engage individuals in the development of an individualized realistic and coordinated harm reduction plan to help achieve improved outcomes • Monitor progress and provide feedback • Evaluate impact
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six months to develop the infrastructure • Thereafter, an average of four of the most active familiar faces per quarter will be served by the program.
Leader	Christopher Jardin, Community Liaison & Homelessness Coordinator, City of Charleston
Core Partners	Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center, Charleston Center, One80 Place, Probate Court, Charleston County Sheriff’s Office, Mount Pleasant, North Charleston, Charleston Police Departments, dedicated personnel from Centralized Bond Court, Charleston and North Charleston Municipal courts, and CJCC staff

Initiative Two: Diversion and deflection research

Research is needed to more fully understand how deflecting individuals away from the local CJS and to diversion centers (and subsequent treatment) impacts arrests and jail populations, as well as behavioral health outcomes. The services provided among the local law enforcement community and the

Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center provide an opportunity for such evaluation.



Working alongside Safety and Justice Challenge research partners, Justice System Partners (JSP) and the Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG), provides the opportunity to complete this research and better understand how effectiveness of diversion programming varies (or not) across sub-group populations. The study will be a mixed method design that includes analysis of data to compare Tri-County Crisis Stabilization Center (TCSC) enrollees to those that have not received TCSC services as well as to understand more about individuals who enroll and stay for various markers of time. In addition, the study will include a review of program documents and semi-structured

interviews to understand how the program works on the ground to learn more about on-scene decision making and how officers decide which diversion option is most appropriate. Combined, the qualitative data will help contextualize evaluation results and will directly inform future diversion and deflection initiatives.

DIVERSION AND DEFLECTION RESEARCH	
Challenge	Research is necessary to more fully understand how deflecting individuals away from the criminal justice system and to diversion centers (and subsequent treatment) impacts arrests, jail population and behavioral health outcomes.
Initiative	Partner with external researchers to study the impacts of diversion and deflection on individuals and the community.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickoff research with designated research partners to review research objectives and protocols • Complete information sharing agreements • Researcher completes a review of Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center (CDMHC) diversion and deflection materials • Researcher completes interviews with key stakeholders (e.g., program participants, program staff and law enforcement officials) • Researcher completes interim report • Researcher completes analysis of key data pursuant to the information sharing agreement • Researcher completes evaluation report and presents findings • Report finalized
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim report to be completed by January 2021 • Final report completed by January 2022
Leader	Jennifer Roberts, Director, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center
Core Partners	Safety and Justice Challenge researchers, CDMHC, Mount Pleasant, North Charleston and Charleston Police Departments, Charleston County Sheriff’s Office and CJCC staff

Initiative Three: Crime and Jail Use Tracking

There is a great deal to be learned from the changes experienced throughout the pandemic and growing movement for racial justice in the Charleston community. An important way to learn from these experiences is to analyze crime, law enforcement activity, patterns of jail use, and diversion and deflection activity on a routine basis.



Unfortunately, there is not currently a routine mechanism to do so and crime data is often delayed. For instance, crime data available through the State Law Enforcement Division is generally one to two years behind and is reported by individual agency. Having current information compiled and analyzed on a county-level will allow for analysis of crimes occurring, diversion and deflection activity, arrests, and jail use to better understand how these patterns impact the courts as well as the broader community. Therefore, a routine county-wide crime and jail use mechanism will be instituted.

CRIME AND JAIL USE TRACKING	
Challenge	There is not a regularly available county-wide crime and jail use tracking mechanism. One is needed to better understand patterns of crime, diversion and deflection, arrests, and jail use activity.
Initiative	Institute a regularly available county crime and jail use tracking mechanism.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop structure for reporting with assistance from the JFA Institute • Develop an agreed upon method for gathering and reporting data • Compile data and draft report for review and approval • Establish recurring schedule • Finalize report format • Report trends on an ongoing basis
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft report generated by fall of 2020 • Recurring report cycle to initiate in the first quarter of 2021
Leader	Christina Parnall, CJCC Database Administrator
Core Partners	Mount Pleasant, North Charleston, Charleston Police Departments, Charleston County Sheriff’s Office, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center, JFA Institute, Community Representatives and CJCC staff

Bond and Reentry

Workgroup purpose: *Update, innovate and improve upon procedural justice and recidivism outcomes for individuals from booking to re-entry from incarceration.*

Membership: LeaAnn Adkins, One80Place; Jonathan Apgar, Program Manager of Clinical Services, Charleston Center; Administrative Captain Mark Arnold, Mt. Pleasant Police Department; Amy Barch, Director, Turning Leaf; Taneal Behrens, Sentencing Specialist, Charleston/Berkeley County Public Defender's Office; Alvin Bligen, Magistrate, Centralized Bond Hearing Court, Charleston County; Crystal Brooks, Charleston Municipal Court; Captain Emma Salters, Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center; Lakesiya L. Cofield, Director, Municipal Court; Kristy Danford, Project Director, CJCC; Dr. Chanda D. Funcell, Director, Charleston Place; James Gosnell, Magistrate, Charleston County Preliminary Court; Deputy Chief Stan Gragg, Mount Pleasant Police Department and CJCC Chair; Susanne Grose, Systems Utilization Manager, CJCC; Christopher G. Hamilton, Charleston County Public Defender; Amanda S. Haselden, Magistrate, Charleston County Centralized Bond Hearing Court; Christopher Jardin, Community Liaison & Homelessness Coordinator, City of Charleston; Martina Johnson, Supervisor–Detention, Charleston County VA; John C. Kenney, Magistrate, Charleston County Centralized Bond Hearing Court; Frank Knaack, Director, ACLU SC; Peter Kouten, Honorable Judge, Charleston County Probate Court; Rebecca Kreutner, PIER Program Administrator, Charleston Center ; Kevin Kuehmeier, Senior Associate, Justice Systems Partners; Easter Laroche, Victim/Witness Coordinator, Charleston County Sheriff's Office ; Major Dorothy M. Harris, Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center; Teresa Middleton, Jail Liaison, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Amy J. Mikell, Magistrate, North Area Magistrate Court 1; James Moody Jr., Charleston Municipal Court; Ashley Pennington, 9th Judicial Circuit Public Defender; Dennis Puebla, LSW, LADC, Director of Special Operations, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Mitchell A. Ray, Agent-In-Charge, South Carolina Probation, Parole and Pardon Services; Junerese Rhodan, Director, Summary Court Administration; Twana Richards, Chief Mental Health Counselor, South Carolina Department of Mental Health; Jennifer Roberts, LPC, CPM, Executive Director, Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center; Ellen Steinberg, Honorable Judge, Charleston Magistrate and CJCC Co-Vice Chair; Pamela L. Veurink, Case Mgt. Supervisor & Reentry Specialist, Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center; Lauren Williams, Attorney at Law, Community Representative; Scarlett Wilson, 9th Judicial Circuit Solicitor

Summary: The workgroup reviewed a variety of relevant metrics related to jail use, pretrial release rates, bond settings, local pretrial outcomes studies (rearrests and failure to appear), pretrial best practices, qualitative feedback from stakeholders actively working with populations re-entering the community from incarceration, and more recent lessons learned. Three initiatives for the strategic plan were developed that are grounded in data and will shape ongoing efforts to maximize liberty, court appearance and public safety, achieve improved outcomes, and support continuing efforts to ensure the use of jail in Charleston county stays true to its intended purpose.

Initiative One: Institute mechanisms to ensure bond hearings are continually fair, just and meaningful

While significant strides have been made in Charleston County's Centralized Bond Court, (hereinafter, "CBC") continuing attention to outcomes and best practices is necessary. This initiative will institute mechanisms to ensure bond hearings are consistently fair, just, and meaningful. Creating Bond Court

data dashboards to measure CBC and the Charleston Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (CPRAI) activity and outcomes is the first step. Next, trainings for CBC magistrates and stakeholders on the American Bar Association and National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies standards will generate meaningful dialogue and evaluations as to current practices and industry standards to guide improvements as needed. Furthermore, protocols will be established and implemented for regular CBC observations for feedback to the Court regarding its alignment with these best practice standards.



INSTITUTE MECHANISMS TO ENSURE BOND HEARINGS ARE CONTINUALLY FAIR, JUST AND MEANINGFUL	
Challenge	While significant strides have been made in Charleston County’s Centralized Bond Court, continuing attention is necessary.
Initiative	Institute routine mechanisms to ensure bond hearings are continually fair, just and meaningful.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Bond Court Data Dashboard to regularly monitor bonding practices, release patterns, and the use of the Pretrial Service Reports (PSR) • Train workgroup members on the American Bar Association and National Association Pretrial Service Agencies standards • Develop an observation tool that can be operationalized to monitor the degree of alignment among CBC practices and national standards as well as track consistency of representation provided by public defenders, law enforcement, prosecution, victim advocates and the availability of Pretrial Service Reports • Recruit and train neutral parties to observe bond court on a quarterly basis • Monitor progress and provide feedback • Re-assess the utility of the Charleston Pretrial Risk Assessment, partner with external researchers from the Safety and Justice Challenge to validate the results
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing dashboard monitoring • Core training in national standards and development of the observation tool will be completed in the fall of 2020. • Recruitment, selection and training of bond court observers will occur once the pandemic subsides. In the interim, magistrates and pretrial analysts will pilot the use of the observation tool. • The CPRAI outcome study will be completed in 2022 ensuring an adequate period for pretrial outcome analysis. • Quarterly workgroup meetings to monitor progress, provide feedback and make ongoing improvements.
Leader	Amanda S. Haselden, Magistrate, Charleston County Centralized Bond Hearing Court
Core Partners	Charleston County Centralized Bond Hearing Court Magistrates, Defense Counsel (Private and Public), Solicitor, Law Enforcement, Victim Advocacy, CJCC staff (inclusive of management staff, database administrator and pretrial analysts), Safety and Justice Challenge research partner and TBD court observers

Initiative Two: Widely accessible directory of services

There is not a common understanding of reentry services, let alone about which work best for whom. Locally, front line personnel working in the criminal justice system have often relied on static information about various programs as they learn about them in the course of their work. This information gets passed on to justice-involved individuals over time. In turn, awareness of programs available in the community varies from person to person and access to information can be clunky, confusing and deter some from getting assistance. Similarly, information about what services work for whom tends to be anecdotal and based on the experiences of different individuals. Therefore, the first step to systematically improving reentry into the community is to establish a centralized repository of services available in the community that justice-involved individuals, their loved ones, and personnel working with these individuals can easily access.

The workgroup determined a partnership with United Way, specifically its SC 211 program, was the most prudent and sustainable path forward. United Way is a local nonprofit organization, a catalyst for measurable community transformation through collective impact in education, financial stability and health (www.tuw.org). Its SC 211 program provides information and referrals to health and human service resources available in the community. The SC 211 platform and helpful staff manage an existing and sustainable infrastructure with dynamic information that is accessible by anyone at any time of day, every day. It includes helpful information about services available across the community and is routinely updated with the most current information. The most frequent SC 211 referrals are made for support with basic needs such as food, utility, shelter and rent assistance. In the last 18 months, SC 211 made 69 referrals to services classified as reentry programs across the state (14 referrals from the Charleston area). To better understand the potential volume of reentry needs, in fiscal year 2019, South Carolina Department of Corrections released 417 people to the Charleston area⁸, and the SACDC released 11,089 persons in 2019. Therefore, a hallmark of this strategy is the collaboration with United Way's 211 Services to increase its use among criminal justice system actors and gather feedback to help expand the quantity and quality of reentry information available on the SC 211 platform.

The strategy includes United Way SC 211 training for numerous criminal justice system actors (e.g., personnel from CBC, summary courts, SACDC, probation/parole, public defenders, etc.), identification of gaps in reentry information available on SC 211, and notifying SC 211 of those gaps when feasible. In addition, United Way SC 211 information will be marketed to justice-involved populations in appropriate locations such as waiting rooms or lobbies in criminal justice locations (e.g., probation and parole office). Periodic surveys will be done to solicit feedback from SC 211 users and service providers to guide next steps.



WIDELY ACCESSIBLE DIRECTORY OF SERVICES	
Challenge	There is not a common understanding of what reentry services are available, let alone which work best for whom.
Initiative	Partner with United Way's 211 to make reentry information more accessible and available to the public and justice-involved populations.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host brief, virtual United Way 211 trainings with stakeholders across the system • Scan current service providers in the SC 211 directory and identify missing information and/or other known providers to help bolster reentry information • Prepare marketing materials and market SC 211 directly to justice-involved populations • Conduct survey periodically to solicit feedback • Monitor progress and provide feedback to guide next steps
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the end of 2020, the workgroup will spread the word about SC 211 and begin virtual trainings with system actors. • The focus in 2021 will be on identifying ways to bolster reentry information . • Thereafter, feedback will be gathered from 211 users and service providers to upgrade reentry information and/or trainings as needed. It is anticipated trainings will average up to four per quarter.
Leader	Lauren Williams, Attorney at Law and CJCC Community Representative
Core Partners	United Way SC 211 Services, particularly Community Resource Coordinator Katie Reams, community service providers, CJCC member agencies, community representatives, the SACDC's Reentry Specialist, Pamela Veurink and CJCC Staff

Initiative Three: Proposal for pretrial service option(s)

This initiative continues the pursuit of pretrial practices that are fair, just and meaningful. Pretrial outcome analysis demonstrated most defendants release from the SACDC at some point in the pretrial period (most often in the first few days or week) and when they do:

- Most stay out of trouble; new arrest rates remain low.
- Pretrial service reports are effective in assessing risk of pretrial failure.
- Financial bond releases have more new arrests than releases on personal recognizance, overall and when controlling for an assessed level of risk.
- New arrests happen much more often than appearance violations and they happen most often within first six months of release.
- Releases on bond that have a new arrest often have more than one in the pretrial period.

The CJCC also recognizes that regardless of the type of bond set, there is minimal oversight of the conditions of the bond, let alone feedback about pretrial outcomes and/or which services work best to maximize safety, appearance and liberty. A cohesive system to track conditions of bond and oversee them does not exist. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the need for additional pretrial service options as courts remain in a state of limbo. As of the end of May 2020, 50% of the pending caseload in the Court of General Sessions was over 365 days, and 86% of the pending caseload

was out-of-custody. Meanwhile, the length of stay for those that remain in-custody continues to grow with each passing day. By the start of July 2020, the average length of stay for pending cases was over 250 days, up from an average of 209 days in the beginning of March.



A hallmark of this initiative is to draft a proposal that can be utilized to advance effective pretrial service option(s). The vision for the proposal is to thoughtfully consider experience to-date, current South Carolina law, research on best practices and evolving trends in maximizing safety, appearance and liberty, and recommend viable pretrial service option(s). It is anticipated the proposal will include a summary of the research and recommended service options(s), identification of policy barriers and a framework for policy reform, an understanding of the infrastructure required, and a corresponding budget for implementation of the recommended pretrial service option(s). In addition, a community forum will be held to review the proposal and guide next steps in budgetary and/or legislative pursuits as needed to help make the option(s) a reality.

PROPOSAL FOR PRETRIAL SERVICE OPTION(S)	
Challenge	There is minimal oversight as to the conditions of the bond setting, let alone feedback about pretrial outcomes.
Initiative	Proposal for pretrial service option(s)
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study current SC law and research on best practices for maximizing safety, appearance and liberty • Gather information on types of conditions ordered and patterns in pretrial failures • Examine pretrial systems in other states and evolving trends in the field • Determine evidence-based recommendations for pretrial service option(s) • Identify legal, policy and financial requirements for implementation of recommended option(s) • Outline program, policy and budget proposal • Finalize proposal package • Hold community forum on proposal
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research conducted by the end of 2020 and proposal drafted thereafter • Policy forum to be held in the spring of 2021 that will guide next steps
Leader	James Gosnell, Magistrate, Charleston County Preliminary Hearing Court
Core Partners	Charleston County Centralized Bond Hearing Court Magistrates, Circuit Defense Counsel (Private and Public), Solicitor, Law Enforcement, Victim Advocacy, CJCC staff, Safety and Justice Challenge research partner, community representatives and TBD state officials as appropriate

Case Processing

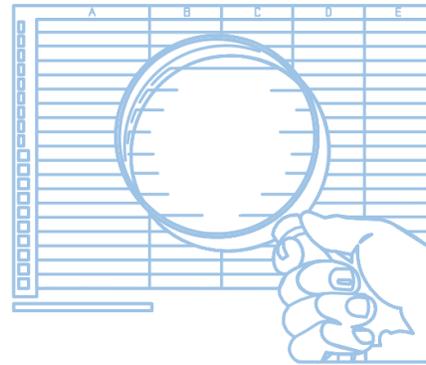
Workgroup purpose: *Update, innovate and improve the processing of cases in the General Sessions Court of Charleston County.*

Membership: Julie Armstrong, Clerk of Court, Charleston County; Dr. Anthony Bishara, CJCC Community Representative; Kristy Danford, Project Director, CJCC; Markley Dennis, Honorable Judge, Charleston County Circuit Court; Robert Duncan, Operations Manager, Clerk of Court; Megan S. Ehrlich, Charleston County Public Defender; James Gosnell, Magistrate, Charleston County Preliminary Court; Deputy Chief Stan Gragg, Mount Pleasant Police Department and CJCC Chair; Susanne Grose, Systems Utilization Manager, CJCC; Kevin Kuehmeier, Senior Associate, Justice Systems Partners; Christina Parnall, Database Administrator, CJCC; Ashley Pennington, 9th Judicial Circuit Public Defender; A. Vic Rawl, Honorable Judge, Charleston County Council; Ellen Steinberg, Honorable Judge, Charleston Magistrate and CJCC Co-Vice Chair; Lauren Williams, Attorney at Law, Community Representative; Scarlett Wilson, 9th Judicial Circuit Solicitor; Charles Young, Director, Case Management, 9th Circuit Solicitor’s Office

Summary: The work group reviewed a variety of relevant metrics related to jail use and case processing, such as bond court representations, early case processing indicators, filings and dispositions, caseload clearance and pendency, time to disposition, jail population review, and more recent lessons learned. Three initiatives for the strategic plan were developed that are grounded in data and will shape ongoing efforts to achieve improved case processing while remaining adaptable as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

Initiative One: Jail Population Review (JPR)

Absent regular reviews of the jail population, defendants that are not a threat to public safety or a flight risk can be unnecessarily detained. As stated in Standard 10-1.1 of American Bar Association Criminal Justice Standards on Pretrial Release, “Deprivation of liberty pending trial is harsh and oppressive, subjects defendants to economic and psychological hardship, interferes with their ability to defend themselves, and, in many instances, deprives their families of support”. Therefore, this initiative will institutionalize weekly Jail Population Review (JPR) lists that have been utilized by the Court, the Solicitor, the Public Defender (and other courts as needed) as appropriate in consideration of potential release from SACDC via bond modification and/or disposition amidst the COVID-19 crisis. While defendants are released pretrial for a variety of reasons above and beyond the JPR process, having this information readily available has become a helpful tool. When the weekly JPR process initiated in early April 2020, there were 667 General Sessions pretrial defendants incarcerated with an average length of stay of 215 days. By early July, the number of General Sessions pretrial defendants incarcerated reduced to 536 while their average length of stay grew to 253 days. A hallmark of this initiative is the identification of defendants that remain incarcerated according to objective criteria that can be modified as needed pursuant to trends evident in the data and stakeholder feedback.



JAIL POPULATION REVIEW (JPR)	
Challenge	Absent regular review of the jail population, defendants that are not a threat to public safety or a flight risk are unnecessarily detained.
Initiative	Institutionalize regular jail population review procedures.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to perform JPR beyond the COVID-19 crisis • JPR lists generated weekly and provided to respective court actors • Monitor progress and gather feedback to guide next steps • Review JPR criteria on a quarterly basis and modify criteria as needed
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing JPR process • Monitor progress and make adjustments as needed
Leader	Ashley Pennington, 9 th Circuit Defender
Core Partners	Judiciary, Defense Counsel, Solicitor, Probation and Parole Agent in Charge, respective court officials from other courts as needed (e.g., municipal, magistrate and specialty courts), and CJCC staff

Initiative Two: General Session’s Court Reminders

Losing contact with defendants while cases are pending results in missed court appearances, bench warrants and slower times to disposition. Therefore, a court reminder system is necessary to keep in contact with defendants and remind them of important court information. The original automated court reminder system went offline in April 2019 due to a long-term disruption in the data required to run the system. Steps have been taken to resume use of the system going forward in a more comprehensive and streamlined fashion. This will help maintain contact with the released pretrial population, especially in light of continued court delays due to COVID-19. A hallmark of this strategy is to build on lessons learned from the previous iteration. Examples include fully integrating the enrollment process as part of bond hearing procedures within the SACDC to reach as many General Sessions defendants as possible, adding enrollment opportunities after the bond hearing for those that elect to enroll later, and allowing for more creative uses of the reminder system to support changes in court activity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.



Things not to forget:

1. pay your rent
2. file your taxes
3. going to court

GENERAL SESSIONS COURT REMINDERS	
Challenge	Losing contact with defendants while cases are pending results in missed court appearances, bench warrants and slower times to disposition.
Initiative	Institutionalize court reminder system for all General Sessions defendants to maintain contact and limit missed court appearances.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise court reminder system to meet expectations during COVID-19 • Beta test the jail-based bond court enrollment process to ensure processes work properly and launch • Launch jail-based bond court enrollment process • Enact subsequent enrollment component and protocols for those who did not have the opportunity or take advantage to enroll earlier • Develop court reminder dashboard to monitor activity pursuant to stated expectations • Monitor progress and adjust as needed
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jail-based enrollment operational by 9/01/2020 (achieve a 75% rate of enrollment) • Subsequent enrollment component operational by the end of 2020 • Court reminder dashboard to monitor activity thereafter • Ongoing monitoring and feedback
Leader	Honorable Ellen Steinberg, Charleston County Magistrate and CJCC Vice-Chair
Core Partners	SACDC, Centralized Bond Court, Charleston County Clerk of Court, Solicitor, Public Defense, CJCC Community Representatives Dr. Bishara and Attorney Lauren Williams, and CJCC Staff

Initiative Three: Research pandemic impacts and institutionalize lessons learned

The inability to hold court in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to innovations and challenges that merit further study, and creativity to help improve case processing in Charleston County. Charleston County like most of the state, does not meet the statewide standard for timeliness (80% of cases pending less than 365 days). This issue is being further compounded by the pandemic. As of May 2020, 50% of the General Sessions' caseload was pending for 365 days or more. In addition, data from May indicates more cases are being filed than are being disposed contributing to a growing backlog of cases awaiting justice. In addition, data indicates defendants awaiting court that have remained incarcerated during the pandemic are staying longer. This trend is likely to continue without jury trials and can lead to a growing jail population.

As leadership manages case processing through such turbulent times, it is important to take note of what has worked, what hasn't worked and what might work to get things back on track in the future. When courts closed in response to the pandemic, attorneys that typically spend a great deal of time preparing for court, traveling to and from court, and inside the courtroom found themselves with time for thoughtful review and analysis of their caseloads as well as



increased time to work on cases outside of the courtroom. Virtual hearings and status conferences took the place of in-person proceedings in order to continue holding court in a safe and efficient manner, providing daily opportunities to advance motions, bond modifications/revocations, and other steps toward case resolution. And, court leadership was routinely apprised of key jail use and case processing data analysis. Therefore, this strategy involves institutionalizing a case processing dashboard to routinely provide thoughtful review and analysis of case processing trends. A hallmark of this strategy is bringing key court stakeholders together to regularly monitor the dashboard and provide feedback, address the evolving trends, and creatively problem solve.

RESEARCH PANDEMIC IMPACTS & INSTITUTIONALIZE LESSONS LEARNED	
Challenge	Charleston County does not meet the statewide standard (80% pending less than 365 days) and it will be further compounded by the pandemic.
Strategy	Research pandemic impacts and institutionalize lessons learned.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine important indicators to continually monitor • Develop a case processing dashboard to regularly visualize the indicators • Review the dashboards on a monthly basis • Convene workgroup members to study lessons learned during COVID-19 and creatively problem solve • Monitor progress and adjust as needed
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case processing dashboard monitoring underway • Ongoing workgroup monitoring, analysis and feedback
Leader	Honorable Ellen Steinberg, Charleston County Magistrate and CJCC Vice-Chair
Core Partners	Judiciary, Clerk of Court, Solicitor, Public Defense, CJCC Community Representatives Dr. Bishara and Attorney Lauren Williams, and CJCC Staff

END NOTES

- ¹ Pilnik, Lisa. (February 2017). NIC Accession Number: 032831. *A Framework for Pretrial Justice: Essential Elements of an Effective Pretrial System and Agency*. And, Subramanian, R. et al (2015). *Incarceration's Front Door: The Misuse of Jails in America*. Vera Institute of Justice, New York, New York.
- ² Digard, Léon, and Swavola, Elizabeth. (April 2019) Vera Evidence Brief For the Record, *Justice Denied: The Harmful and Lasting Effects of Pretrial Detention*.
- ³ Digard, Léon, and Swavola, Elizabeth. (April 2019) Vera Evidence Brief For the Record, *Justice Denied: The Harmful and Lasting Effects of Pretrial Detention*.
- ⁴ Digard, Léon, and Swavola, Elizabeth. (April 2019) Vera Evidence Brief For the Record, *Justice Denied: The Harmful and Lasting Effects of Pretrial Detention*.
- ⁵ Fiscal Year 2019 Approved Budget Narrative. <https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/budget/files/FY19-Approved-Budget.pdf>, Page 57. Accessed March 2020.
- ⁶ Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Strategic Plan Development: Data Behind the Plan. (2020), North Charleston, SC.
- ⁷ Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council 2018 Midyear Report (2018), North Charleston, SC.
- ⁸ Distribution of Committing County for Inmates Released in FY 2019. http://www.doc.sc.gov/research/Releases/REL_Committing_Cnty_FY19.pdf. Published August, 2019. Accessed July, 2020.

This report was created with the support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation as part of the Safety and Justice Challenge, which seeks to reduce over-incarceration by changing the way America thinks about and uses jails. Core to the Challenge is a competition designed to support efforts to improve local criminal justice systems across the country that are working to safely reduce over-reliance on jails, with a particular focus on addressing disproportionate impact on low-income individuals and communities of color.



Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

