

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 7, 2018



**CHARLESTON COUNTY CJCC RELEASES MIDYEAR REPORT:
GROUNDBREAKING STUDY OF RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY WITHIN THE CHARLESTON COUNTY CRIMINAL
JUSTICE SYSTEM: IMPROVEMENTS MADE AND MORE WORK TO BE DONE**

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The Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) has issued a midyear report that provides the community a comprehensive look into racial and ethnic disproportionality and/or disparity (REDD) in the local criminal justice system (CJS). Disproportionality exists at various points in the CJS and the CJCC intends to search for the causes of that disproportionality in order to bring about improvements. "The silver lining in all of this is that the CJCC's seriously focused, action oriented and results achieving work is making a difference, a much appreciated difference. While we are not where we should be, we are nonetheless, headed in the right direction," said Dot Scott, President Charleston NAACP. Key report findings include:

- In 2017, the rate of incarceration in the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center (SACDC) per 1,000 adults in Charleston County was 10.19 among black individuals and 1.33 among white individuals, a ratio of over seven to one.
- In 2017, black men were booked into the jail 4.47 times as often as white men, up 1% since 2014. In 2017, black women were booked 2.05 times as often as white women, down 18% since 2014.
- Efforts to reduce jail use and corresponding disproportionality resulted in double-digit declines in the rates booked per 1,000 in the county population between 2014 and 2017.
 - Issuing tickets rather than booking into jail for five low-level, non-violent single-charge crimes (simple possession marijuana, open container, trespassing, misdemeanor shoplifting, and public intoxication) dropped the booking rate by 61% for black defendants and 44% for white defendants.
 - Reducing criminal bench warrant bookings dropped the booking rate 44% for black defendants and 35% for white defendants.
- At Charleston County's Centralized Bond Court, black and white defendants receive financial and personal recognizance bonds at similar rates. Disproportionality in the average cost of financial bonds declined between 2014 and 2017. However, since 2014 the average amount of financial bonds ordered have become more expensive, and ordered higher for black defendants than white defendants (General Sessions: 2017 averages of \$55,711 and \$40,189, respectively).
- Individual, community, and criminal justice system factors contribute to REDD. For example, poverty, education, mental illness and substance use disorders, and housing instability can increase the risk of incarceration, and intensify through involvement in the CJS. Ultimately, REDD harms public safety and generates significant individual and societal costs.
- A growing number of best practices exist that the CJCC can draw upon in moving REDD reduction efforts forward (e.g., procedural justice improvements and racial equity tools).

"Getting the facts is an important first step in assuring we use incarceration fairly, infrequently and in ways that reflect the values of the entire community," said Susan Dunn, Legal Director, American Civil Liberties Union, South Carolina. Pending renewal of grant funds, a specifically dedicated REDD reduction strategy is planned that will be inclusive of system leaders and community members. The strategy will dive deeper to identify the causes of disproportionality in the CJS, develop and launch concrete interventions, and conduct ongoing assessment and monitoring consistent with best practices.

For more information, visit cjcc.charlestoncounty.org.

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About the CJCC

The CJCC is a collaboration of elected and senior officials, law enforcement leaders, judicial and court leadership, behavioral health professionals, victim and legal advocates, and various community leaders working in service of the Charleston community. The mission of the CJCC is to assist in making sustainable, data-driven improvements to Charleston County's criminal justice system and thereby improve public safety and community well-being. The CJCC is currently funded by a Safety + Justice Challenge grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more information, visit www.cjcc.charlestoncounty.org.