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**Charleston County
Criminal Justice
Coordinating Council**

**CHARLESTON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL (CJCC)
AWARDED CAPSTONE \$640,000 GRANT BY MACARTHUR FOUNDATION SAFETY
AND JUSTICE CHALLENGE**

**Funding Will Support Charleston County's Ongoing Public Safety and Racial Equity
Initiatives at the Local Level**

NORTH CHARLESTON, SC, February 27, 2023 – Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is the recipient of a capstone \$640,000 grant by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation as Charleston County recognizes 7 years of progress toward safely reducing the local jail population and addressing inequities in the justice system in collaboration with local leaders and community members. The grant marks a total of \$6.177 million invested in Charleston County as part of the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#), a \$323 million national initiative to reduce over-incarceration and eliminate racial inequity in local criminal justice systems.

Since being selected to join the Safety and Justice Challenge Network in 2015, Charleston County has remained committed to addressing the factors that contribute to over-incarceration in America. Through the implementation of evidence-based strategies and policies at a local level, Charleston County successfully and safely reduced the jail population by 40.5% as of the end of 2021 compared to 2014. These strategies include:

- building a robust data warehouse combining data from across the criminal justice system
- prioritizing alternatives to jail for lower level charges most frequently booked and that disparately impacted communities of color
- supporting law enforcement's increasing use of community-based services like the Tri-County Crisis Stabilization Center so people can get the help they need without falling deeper into the criminal justice system
- supporting efforts to make consistent improvements in the earliest stages of case processing including assigning attorneys faster and more efficiently transfer of evidence
- instituting Public Defender attorneys in Bond Court to ensure indigent defendants are afforded the right to counsel
- automated court text reminders for General Sessions Court
- Implementing the use of Pretrial Analysts to provide the Court with Pretrial Service Reports (PSR), which produce an objective and reliable way to assess for risk of rearrests and/or failure to appear.



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Looking to the future, Charleston County will maintain key practices at the county level to carry forward the successes achieved during the Safety and Justice Challenge. Through data-guided and collaborative problem-solving, the strategies being implemented are achieving results, and Charleston County has taken important strides in tackling some of the most long-standing and complex challenges in our local criminal justice system.

“The Safety and Justice Challenge has allowed us to bring the voices of community members to our criminal justice system leaders in order to rethink criminal justice in Charleston County. Through this partnership, we’ve developed a long-term framework to continually uplift the experiences of people most impacted by our justice system. Moving forward, we will sustain our efforts to reduce jail populations and produce more equitable outcomes, all while ensuring that our work is reflective of the community’s needs.” stated Captain Jason Bruder, Charleston Police Department.

This round of funding will solidify the Charleston County CJCC’s ability to sustain long-term public safety initiatives and will also promote continuity at the county level of the strategies Charleston County developed throughout its participation in the Safety and Justice Challenge.

More than seven years since its public launch, the Safety and Justice Challenge has grown into a collaborative network of 74 sites in 33 states modeling and inspiring reforms to create more fair, just, and equitable local justice systems across the country.

“I am proud to celebrate and reflect on the progress made by the Safety and Justice Challenge cities and counties over the past seven years. This initiative shows that communities can bridge their differences in pursuit of a more equitable and just response to people in conflict with the law,” said Laurie Garduque, MacArthur Foundation’s Director of Criminal Justice. “With innovative and evidence-based solutions now in place, these communities have the framework to sustain their progress and the tools to respond to the challenges that lay ahead.”

More information about the work underway in Charleston County can be found on cjcc.charlestoncounty.org as well as on www.SafetyandJusticeChallenge.org.

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About the MacArthur Foundation

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. MacArthur is placing a few big bets that truly significant progress is possible on some of the world's most pressing social challenges, including advancing global climate solutions, decreasing nuclear risk, promoting local justice reform in the U.S., and reducing corruption in Africa's most populous country, Nigeria. In addition to the MacArthur Fellows Program and the global 100&Change competition, the Foundation continues its historic commitments to the role of journalism in a responsive democracy as well as the vitality of our headquarters city, Chicago. More information about the Foundation's criminal justice reform work can be found at www.macfound.org/criminaljustice.

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 jointly funded by Charleston County and a Safety + Justice Challenge grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more information, visit www.cjcc.charlestoncounty.org.

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