



Rethinking Expectations: Efforts to Improve the Local Justice System and Rethink Jail Use in Charleston

Safety, Justice, Fairness, Effectiveness...

Calls for Service
Arrests
Supervision
Field Contacts
Warning
Detain or Release?
Booking
Location, Location, Location
Summons to Appear
Bonds
Dispose
Divert
Recidivism
Surety or Recognizance?
Assessment
Treat
Prosecute
Prison
Dismiss
Probation
Legal Foundations
Sentencing
Jail
Representation



CJCC Membership

- ▶ Charleston County Council
- ▶ Charleston County Sheriff
- ▶ Charleston Police
- ▶ North Charleston Police
- ▶ Mt. Pleasant Police
- ▶ Ninth Circuit Solicitor
- ▶ Ninth Circuit Defender
- ▶ Charleston County Clerk of Court
- ▶ Charleston Center
- ▶ Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center
- ▶ Victim Advocacy
- ▶ Judiciary including Circuit, Magistrate and Municipal Leadership
- ▶ Chief Justice (ex-officio)
- ▶ Probation, Parole and Pardon Services
- ▶ Veterans Justice Outreach (Veterans Affairs),
- ▶ American Civil Liberties Union,
- ▶ 10 Community Representatives



What We Do

- ▶ Mission to assist in making sustainable, data-driven improvements to Charleston County's criminal justice system and thereby improve public safety and community well-being.
- ▶ Comprehensive efforts led by this sustained group to:
 - Focus on the system
 - Address common challenges through agreed upon solutions.



Key Findings

- ▶ Use of our jail is most frequently driven by:
 - Bookings for low level charges,
 - Lengths of stay pending trial,
 - Time to disposition in circuit court, and
 - Familiar faces (returning repeatedly).
- ▶ Disproportionality exists
 - Highest upon entry, particularly for certain types of low level charges and bookings for criminal bench warrants.
- ▶ Community involvement
 - Critical and necessary.



Research Has Come a Long Way Since the Rise of Mass Incarceration

Rehabilitation has no real appreciable effect on recidivism.

What works best for whom & under what conditions?

Correctional interventions can reduce recidivism.

Nothing Works

Call for Research

What Works



Relevant Research

- ▶ Pretrial detention impacts
 - Ability to prepare for trial
 - Stability in community (e.g., job, home, family)
 - Future criminal behavior
 - Already difficult conditions (e.g., mental illness)
 - Likelihood of conviction and length of sentence
 - Jail bed day consumption
- ▶ Risk–Need–Responsivity
 - Significant capacity to reduce recidivism
 - Detrimental when not followed





Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)

THREE-YEAR TRANSFORMATION PLAN



Strategy One

Risk assessment tool for law enforcement for greater uniformity in arrest decisions for low-level charges.

Strategy Two

Alternatives to jail through a triage service located within the Tri-county Crisis Stabilization Center.

Strategy Three

Automated court date reminder system to increase court appearances and reduce criminal bench warrants.

CJCCs help to enhance public safety and improve cost-effectiveness.

Strategy Four

Pretrial risk assessment for bond setting to be more risk-based and less dependent upon financial circumstances of defendants along with early assignment of counsel.

Strategy Five

Redesign expectations for the timeliness of case processing in General Sessions (felony and high-level misdemeanor).

Strategy Six

Centralized database where all agencies can share information and use data analysis to guide ongoing improvements.

Every decision and every decision maker matters.

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Current Data Capacity



- ▶ Publications
 - Annual report (2014–2016) and 2017 midyear
- ▶ Performance measures
 - Jail use
 - Strategy specific
 - Historic database for aggregated trend analysis
- ▶ Expanded analysis and research (e.g., pretrial outcomes)
- ▶ Data capacity is essential to the CJCC's mission and improving our criminal justice system



Bottom Line

- ▶ When we translate high quality research into practice we can:
 - Reduce new crimes and new victims
 - Demonstrate the effectiveness of our efforts
 - Achieve a greater return on investment
 - Improve outcomes
 - Avoid causing harm



Thank you!

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Join our email list by texting
CHSCJCC to 22828

