

**DUTCHESS  
COUNTY  
CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE  
COUNCIL**



**2014 ANNUAL REPORT**



**Marcus J. Molinaro  
County Executive**

Chairperson  
Mary Ellen Still

Administrative Coordinator  
Tami Deyo

**Vision Statement**

The vision of the Criminal Justice Council is a fair and effective Criminal Justice System.

**Mission Statement**

The Criminal Justice Council engages in a collaborative process of information sharing to maximize resources resulting in an enhanced criminal justice process. This work is done through utilizing research-based practices to ensure community safety, through the promotion and support of: intervention for at risk youth and adults; addressing victims’ needs; and reduction of recidivism.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

Community  
Involvement  
Committee

Juvenile  
Justice  
Committee

Re-Entry  
Committee

Women involved  
in Criminal  
Justice System  
Committee

Diversion  
Committee

Special  
Populations  
Committee

Victims  
Committee

## **BACKGROUND**

The Dutchess County Criminal Justice Council was created in 1992 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Legislature and the County Executive. In 1993, the Dutchess County Legislature passed Resolution Number 61 which formally created and recognized the Criminal Justice Council as “necessary to support an efficient and effective criminal justice system.” In 1998 and 2010 the Legislature adopted amendments regarding membership and other operating guidelines. The 2011 resolution outlined the duties and functions of the Executive Committee.

Through a strategic planning process facilitated by the National Institute of Corrections, the Council developed a committee structure and committed to the use of evidence-based practices.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee oversees and guides the work of the Council and its committees, establishes strategic direction and analyzes available data to ensure decision making is informed by research. The Executive Committee meets monthly and serves as the steering committee for the full Council.

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL**

The Criminal Justice Council meets six times annually at 8:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday (unless there is a conflict with a holiday) of the following months: January, March, May, July, September and November. Meetings are open to the public. Meetings are held at Catharine Street Community Center located at 153 Mansion Street in the City of Poughkeepsie. General information, annual reports, agendas and approved minutes are available on the county’s website: [www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov)

## **2014 Activities and Achievements**

- The Council applied for and received technical assistance from the SAMHSA GAINS Center. As a result, a one-day Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) workshop was held in July 2014. The purpose of the workshop was to focus on diversion efforts for people with behavioral health issues from their first contact with the criminal justice system.
- In late 2014, a Diversion Committee was created to follow-up on the SIM workshop. The committee will use the successful diversion project in San Antonio, Texas, developed by Mr. Leon Evans, CEO, as a model as well as other successful diversion projects. The committee will be organized and membership established in early 2015.

- The Council had presentations on Ready, Set, Work, an evidence-based employment readiness curriculum; the newly created Women's Center; the Universal Response to Domestic Violence Project and the Women's Risk and Needs Assessment, scheduled for implementation in 2015.
- Under the auspices of the Council, the county was granted a seventh year of funding from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services for re-entry services. Exodus Transitional Community is the provider for this contract.
- The annual ATI Update Plan that must be submitted to the state to maintain funding that helps support criminal justice programming was approved.
- The Council reviewed data compiled by its consultant, Gary Christensen, on various aspects of the jail population. The consultant obtained and evaluated data on jail length of stay, demographics and risk level of inmates. These reports are available on the county's website. Further data analysis will continue in 2015 with a focus on criminal justice processing. The consultant's work enables the Council to base decisions on research informed by data.
- In partnership with the county, Project MORE applied in 2013 for funding to establish a Women's Reporting Center. The Center opened in March 2014 and offers a variety of evidence-based gender-responsive programs and interventions. Recognizing the importance of gender-specific programming, the Council supported Project MORE's initiative.
- The committee structure was reorganized to reflect current needs. The Victims Committee and the Women's Committee were re-established in 2014.
- In addition to re-establishing the above committees, the Council created the Special Populations Committee to study the needs of various groups including youth, women, those with behavioral health needs and others. The Special Populations Committee works with a consultant, Kevin Warwick, from Alternative Solutions Associates, Inc. The committee works with the consultant to make recommendations regarding special inmate populations. Input from the consultant and workgroup will help to guide the design of the Justice and Transition Center as well as related community-based programming. The committee also worked to develop a programming plan for the inmates who will return to Dutchess County in the first quarter of 2015. An RFP for jail programming services will be issued in early 2015.
- The Council will have seven active committees in 2015: Community Involvement, Diversion, Juvenile Justice, Re-Entry, Special Populations, Victims and Women in the Criminal Justice System.

## **COMMITTEES**

Much of the work of the Criminal Justice Council is conducted at the committee level. From time to time, special workgroups are formed to study and report on a specific but time limited issue.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Shirley Adams

The Community Involvement Committee (CIC) is committed to actively engaging the community in activities that build community capacity, promote the dissemination of factual information and facilitate access to timely information as it relates to Dutchess County's criminal justice system.

Beginning in 2013 and throughout 2014, the CIC continued to review and assess the effectiveness of Dutchess County's Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) programs. The CIC determined that a fuller understanding of our ATIs was warranted, especially in light of the most recent highly publicized results from ATIs across the nation.

The CIC learned first-hand from Dutchess County's service providers and representatives from ATI programs that our evidence-based approaches are producing positive results. Presentations were made by: Project MORE, Office of Probation and Community Corrections, Community Transition Center and the Office of the Public Defender regarding services for indigent defendants. An assessment of the data presented, projected outcomes and indicators along with the actual results from the current programs seem to warrant our support and continued commitment to these programs. The CIC was advised and understands that the scope of our current ATI programs may be limited by the housing out of inmates and other factors restricting participation.

In collaboration with the Re-Entry Task Force, the CIC co-sponsored a meeting on the "Churches Role in Re-Entry" which included the participation of local clergy. Additionally, the CIC was privileged to be joined by the Criminal Justice Council's consultant and chairperson who provided a special power point presentation along with an in-depth analysis and explanation of statistical data.

The CIC has gained valuable knowledge over the past two years, its members realize that the decision-making process and ultimate commitment of resources to a specific ATI must include far more than the unverified claims of success by another jurisdiction. Specifically, to deem an ATI appropriate for our county, in-depth analysis and research is needed while keeping local needs in view. The county has built its robust ATI programs through a commitment to data driven planning and analysis. It is with this understanding that the CIC concludes that the development and implementation of new ATI programs, without understanding and perhaps strengthening our current infrastructure, will not yield the positive results our residents need and deserve.

## **JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Karen DeSimone

In 2010, the Criminal Justice Council added the Juvenile Justice Committee to its structure. This committee evolved from the already existing Juvenile Justice Task Force; a long-standing group hosted by the Office of Probation, comprised of members from various public agencies and organizations serving the at-risk youth population of Dutchess County. The Juvenile Justice Committee meets six times annually to discuss issues relating to the Juvenile Justice system, identify needs and trends, share information from related committees, and monitor statistics/outcome measures of the various programs in place for at-risk youth.

In 2014, the Juvenile Justice Committee gathered for bi-monthly meetings. Topics of discussion included:

- New York State Juvenile Justice Reform initiatives
- Review of current programs available for at-risk youth in Dutchess County
- Participation in the Mid-Hudson Regional Youth Justice Team
- Utilization of the NYS Detention Risk Assessment Instrument
- Updates from related committees and notification of training and events
- Increased committee membership seeking a broader range of participants from system stakeholders and community members.

This committee continues to monitor the Juvenile Justice Reform issues as they relate to the needs of the at-risk youth and potentially impact the Juvenile Justice system in Dutchess County. In 2013, New York State formed eight Regional Youth Justice Teams throughout the state and several members of the Dutchess County Juvenile Justice Committee agreed to participate on the Mid-Hudson Regional Youth Justice Team. Each regional team has a diverse roster of participants from various stakeholders. The regional teams are currently meeting on a quarterly basis to discuss identified issues and needs of at-risk youth in the region. Information and feedback is then related to the New York State Strategic Planning Action Committee (SPAC) for further review and consideration. In 2014 the Mid-Hudson Regional Team was awarded a grant of \$100,000 to be used in 2015 for training within the seven counties of our region.

The Juvenile Justice Committee continued discussions regarding the possible transition in New York State to move 16 and 17 year old youth out of the Criminal Justice system and under the jurisdiction of Family Court. While there were no changes in New York State law in 2014, a future transition remains possible as the

NYS Commission on Youth, Public Safety, and Justice is expected to submit its report by December 31, 2014.

The Juvenile Justice Committee monitored the implementation of the DRAI (Detention Risk Assessment Instrument) which completed its first full year of statewide use in 2014. The committee discussions have been helpful in the review of the utilization process and to address any systemic concerns.

The 2014 Supervision & Treatment Services for Juvenile Program (STSJP) multi-systemic plan submitted and approved for Dutchess County included the continued funding of the historically successful Probation Curfew Monitoring Program utilized by the Family Court as an alternative to detention.

The committee membership continued to expand in 2014; adding all the Dutchess County Family Court judges, additional local agency representation, and a Juvenile Specialist from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services.

In 2014, the Juvenile Justice Committee engaged in discussion regarding identified systemic issues of concern. These discussions produced new collaborative efforts and programming which have successfully addressed the concerns and improved multi-agency communication. The committee plans to continue problem-solving discussions in 2015.

This committee recognizes that recent years have been especially challenging for youth and families in New York State. Programming to address the needs of our youth remained limited by financial constraints and community resources are often stressed to capacity. Despite these challenges, Dutchess County is fortunate to have many dedicated and exceptional professionals who strive to meet the needs of our youth and enhance their lives daily.

## **RE-ENTRY COMMITTEE**

Chairpersons: Thomas Angell and Jill Lenard-Horne

The Re-Entry Task Force continues to partner with Exodus Transitional Community, Inc. to provide re-entry services to Dutchess County residents. Last year, we had a change in re-entry coordinators. Diana Ortiz did an excellent job establishing the program in Dutchess County. Ms. Ortiz was relocated full time to the main office in New York City where she serves as Associate Director. We were pleased to welcome in September a new coordinator for our program, Carlos Valencia. Mr. Valencia was previously the re-entry coordinator in Ulster County.

The Task Force targets its limited resources on assisting individuals who are released from State Prison with the highest actuarial risk of recidivism. During 2013 services were provided to a total of 322 individuals. Of these, 209 clients

were determined to be high risk. For the second half of 2014 the Task Force did 95 assessments, worked with 82 participants for 45 days and 61 participants for 90 days. The remaining 113 individuals were lower risk clients referred by Dutchess County Office of Probation, other community agencies, and self-referred.

The work of the Task Force continues to be completely funded by a grant that Dutchess County receives from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The focus of our intervention is to connect the participant with programs that will reduce criminogenic factors and thus the risk to reoffend. The COMPAS risk and need assessment instrument is used to determine the domains that need to be addressed for each client. In turn, Exodus Transitional Program coordinates monthly case management meetings with parole and various community and local governmental agencies to design specific programming for each identified need that the client has. The contract with DCJS is based on performance criteria being met. In 2014 all performance criteria was met, if not exceeded.

In addition, the Task Force met on a bi-monthly basis to address systemic barriers that individuals returning to the community from correctional facilities face. These meetings have been well attended with often 30 or more people present. Representatives from parole, social service agencies, jail, mental hygiene, substance abuse agencies, domestic violence agencies, concerned citizens and many others have attended on a regular basis. We have had presentations about services for the developmentally disabled, physically disabled and veterans. We facilitated a discussion on how faith-based communities can become more involved in the re-entry process. We had a presentation on the secondary educational programs being offered in some state correctional facilities. Based on these meetings, the Task Force has reported periodically to the Criminal Justice Council regarding its findings and with specific requests for advocacy for change in identified areas.

The Task Force remains committed to using evidence-based practices in an effort to assist those who have been incarcerated to successfully reintegrate into their home communities and, equally important, lower the recidivism rate among parolees. We plan to continue these important and necessary efforts in 2015.

### **SPECIAL POPULATIONS COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Chief Ronald Knapp

This workgroup was created to assist the Special Populations consultant (Kevin Warwick-ASAI) to determine the most effective ways to address the needs of Dutchess County's special inmate populations. The input and guidance from the workgroup, working with the consultant, will contribute to the design of the Dutchess County Justice and Transition Center (DCJTC). The committee is

comprised of a diverse group of agencies and individuals; the membership list may be found on the county's website.

The first meeting was held on August 11, 2014 followed by monthly meetings thereafter. Working with the consultant, the focus of the meetings in 2014 were to identify the resources and current structure within the Dutchess County Jail (DCJ). It should be noted that one of the hardships that affects inmate programming is the current boarding out of approximately 200 inmates per day. These inmates do not receive any programming. The consultant began the task of developing an effective curriculum by showing various models to the workgroup along with an explanation of evidence-based practices. The curriculum needs to meet the criminogenic needs of the higher-risk offender. The group also worked on gaps that exist that would need to be addressed to achieve this goal. This includes staffing levels, physical materials and training. Some of these gaps will be addressed in future budget plans or in the reallocation of resources that will take place with the return of the boarded out inmates. It was also decided that an RFP would be developed to provide transitional in-jail services for offenders using a community-based provider to work closely with the Jail, Office of Probation and Department of Mental Hygiene staff.

Members of the workgroup also met with members of RicciGreene Associates to address the space related needs for programming. Some workgroup members toured the jail to determine short as well as long-term needs for programming. The housed out inmates are expected to return in March 2015 with programming beginning shortly thereafter.

It has been determined that for programming to be effective, it has to be conducted intensively for a period of 60 to 90 days. Inmates with a higher risk (for recidivism) Proxy score will be candidates for the programming. It is envisioned that 50 male and 20 female inmates will participate in the programming which will be evidence-based. Current jail-based staff from the Department of Mental Hygiene, jail staff, probation officers from the Office of Probation and a community-based provider will provide the curriculum. Transitional planning and case management will be provided as well.

In addition to facilitating the workgroup meetings, the consultant has also been meeting with key providers and criminal justice agencies. He has met with both the Treatment and Systems Flow Committee and the Quality Assurance Committee.

### **VICTIMS COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Sharon Doane

The committee was reorganized in late 2014 under the leadership of a new chairperson. Initially, the committee's focus was on generating ideas regarding

activities to enhance the criminal justice response for victims and making the system more victim-centered.

A number of areas were identified as important for the committee to focus on, including educating first responders, facilitating cross-training between victim services, improving communication between systems and victims, ensuring that first responders give victims contact information for victim services on-site, encouraging refresher training annually on Mandated Child Abuse Reporting for first responders, and creating a Speakers Bureau comprised of committee members, professionals and community volunteers to continually work to raise awareness about services available to victims of crime in Dutchess County.

Subsequently, it was agreed that in 2015 the committee will focus on building awareness among both professionals and community members about what services are available to victims in Dutchess County and how to access them. In order to accomplish this, the committee will develop brief trainings that provide information on the range of victim services in Dutchess County and deliver them to a variety of audiences.

### **WOMEN INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Susie Balutis

The committee's focus is on the specific needs of women and supporting the gender-responsive strategies that are most effective in reducing recidivism. In 2014, the committee focused on learning about two major initiatives that were the culmination of many years of study and research into best practices. The first was the establishment of a Women's Center operated by Project MORE and made possible by funding from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Partnering with the Office of Probation and Community Corrections, Project MORE employs evidence-based practices to address the special needs of women offenders. The committee was invited to tour the Women's Center and learn more about the programs available. Programs include cognitive behavioral groups and interventions, employment readiness and case management. The committee also learned about the upcoming implementation of the WRNA (Women's Risk and Need Assessment).

In addition, the committee followed the progress of a new assessment instrument, the ION (Inventory of Needs) that is currently being piloted by the Office of Probation and Community Corrections. This initiative is supported by a technical assistance grant from the Center for Effective Public Policy and the National Center on Justice Involved Women. It is anticipated that the findings from this project will inform the field of pretrial practices.

The committee also reviewed jail programming and the linkages between jail and community-based services. Building on the innovative and research based initiatives already in place, the committee will continue to look at the need for specialized services that are gender-responsive.

### **SUMMARY**

For the Council, 2014 has been a busy and productive year. The creation of two new committees, Special Populations and Diversion, will directly impact the future of criminal justice and the Justice and Transition Center.

The Council has also been deeply committed to using data for research and planning purposes and to help understand the factors influencing the census at the jail. The Council also recognized that the jail does not operate in a vacuum, but is part of a dynamic criminal justice system.

In 2015, the Council will focus on processing in the criminal justice system in order to better determine how to be more effective and efficient. It is anticipated that all of the committees will be very active in their respective missions and that this will have a positive impact on the criminal justice system as a whole.