

**DUTCHESS  
COUNTY  
CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE  
COUNCIL**



**2015 ANNUAL REPORT**



**Marcus J. Molinaro**  
**County Executive**

Mary Ellen Still  
Chairperson

Tami Deyo  
Administrative Coordinator

### **Vision Statement**

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

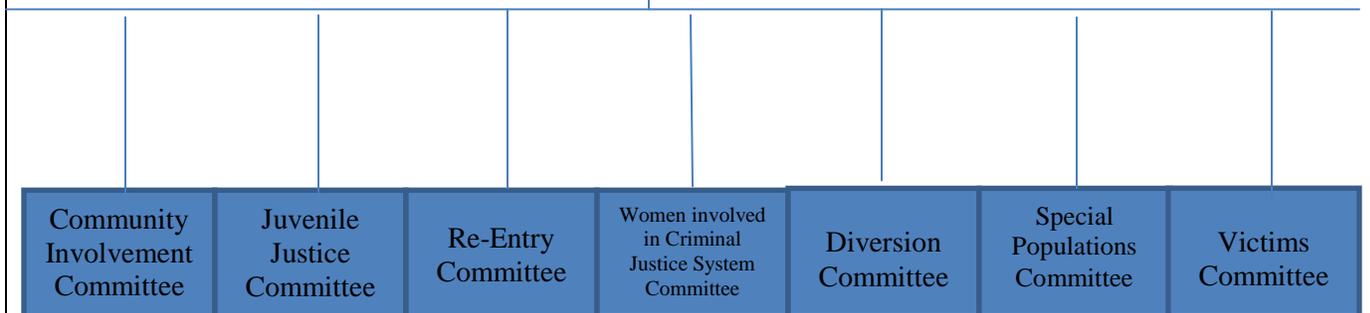
### **Mission Statement**

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**



## **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.

At the recommendation of County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro, the Diversion Committee was formed in order to explore opportunities to train law enforcement in crisis intervention and to create a stabilization center for individuals experiencing severe behavioral health issues that might result in hospitalization or incarceration.

The County Executive also formed a Special Populations workgroup that subsequently became a committee of the Council. This committee addresses the needs of special populations within the criminal justice system.

## **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 69 Catharine Street (entrance on Mansion Street) in the City of Poughkeepsie. General information, annual and other reports, agendas and approved minutes are available on the county’s website: [www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov)

## **2015 Activities and Achievements**

- Under the auspices of the Council and the oversight of the Re-Entry Committee, the county was granted a ninth year of funding from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for re-entry programming. Exodus Transitional Community is the provider for this contract.
- The Council had several presentations from its consultant, Dr. Gary Christensen, on pertinent data involving jail length of stay, evidence-based practices and decision-making, criminal justice processing and the impact of housing out on the criminal justice system. Reports may be viewed on the Criminal Justice Council's website.
- The impact of housing out was seen by the decrease in average length of stay once the majority of inmates returned to the county.
- Dr. Christensen and Chairperson Mary Ellen Still attended a Magistrates Association meeting to discuss criminal justice processing and expediting pre-sentence reports for inmates. In 2016, "expedited" pre-sentence reports will be available to all courts for individuals housed at the jail.
- Under the auspices of the Council and through the work of the Juvenile Justice Committee, the J-Fire Intervention and Response program was created. The mission of J-Fire is to provide a comprehensive, non-punitive, multi-disciplinary approach to address the problem of juvenile fire setting through early identification, assessment, education and intervention.
- The Juvenile Justice Committee coordinated and became the liaison for the newly formed Mid-Hudson Regional Youth Justice Team.
- Under the auspices of the Council and through the work of the Special Populations Committee, an RFP was issued by the county for the purpose of creating a jail program for high-risk inmates. Two vendors were selected for this multi-agency initiative: Hudson Valley Mental Health and Project MORE. This intensive, evidence-based program, known as RESTART, began in late 2015.
- RESTART was created with the assistance of the CJC consultant, Kevin Warwick. It has the capacity to serve up to 50 men and 20 women high-risk inmates. Transition and re-entry services are an essential component of the program.
- The Special Populations workgroup, in conjunction with our consultant, Kevin Warwick, makes recommendations regarding the needs of special populations. These recommendations will be considered in the design of the new Justice and Transition Center.
- Presentations were made by: Nicole Willoughby from the Community Transition Center (CTC), Kevin Warwick from Alternative Solutions Associates, Inc., and Beth Alter and Marie Dynes from the Department of Mental Hygiene.
- The Diversion Committee was organized and membership was established in early 2015.

- In an effort to divert people with behavioral health issues from hospitalization and/or jail, the Diversion Committee worked to develop a stabilization center based on the successful model in San Antonio, Texas. It is anticipated that the center will open in 2016.
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for law enforcement was initiated with the first 40-hour class offered in June. An eight-hour version is also being offered. The purpose of CIT is to assist law enforcement to deal effectively and with sensitivity to people experiencing behavioral health issues.

## **RESEARCH AND PLANNING**

Dr. Gary Christensen, Consultant

To guide evidence-based research and study of actual services and practices used within the Dutchess County system of criminal justice, each of the areas of study below has been identified by the CJC. It is the intention of the CJC that each area of research informs future criminal justice decision-making and results in outcomes that are proven to enhance efficiency system-wide and improve long-term public safety outcomes.

- Evaluate Average Length of Stay (ALOS) in jail by jurisdiction, crime type, race, gender etc. to inform future jail sizing analyses
- Review system process by jurisdiction, crime type, race, gender, etc. to identify opportunities for efficiency
- Query and evaluate existing programs and services to determine adherence to evidence-based practice
- Review and evaluate programmatic assignments by risk and need system-wide
- Evaluate system outcomes for existing interventions and strategies for their effect on long-term public safety within Dutchess County
- Identify gaps and/or duplication in services/resources to accommodate/advance desired long-term public safety outcomes

Throughout 2015, numerous studies have been conducted within each of these areas and research continues into 2016. Results of these studies have been shared with all criminal justice stakeholders (inclusive of community stakeholders and interested citizens) and published on the CJC website.

In 2015, the New York State Commission of Corrections approved temporary housing pods with 200 additional jail beds. These new beds have allowed the practice of housing out inmates in substitute jails to lessen dramatically and, slowly, the average length of stay for Dutchess County Jail inmates has decreased. Given the direct correlation between average length of stay and jail beds/days needed, it is intended with the coming year (as the effect of housing out lessens) that the CJC will better define average length of stay for various inmate groups

and evaluate its jail bed needs in the proposed Dutchess County Justice and Transition Center.

Additional quality assurance measures have also begun within 2015 to evaluate court processes and agreements have been made between the Public Defender and the District Attorney to adhere to specific time limits. Studies are pending to evaluate the practice of forensic assessment and efforts have been made to streamline legal requirements such as the pre-sentence report.

## **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 specific but time limited issues.

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Shirley Adams

The Community Involvement Committee (CIC) continued its commitment to build community capacity, promote the dissemination of factual information and facilitate the community's access to timely information as it relates to Dutchess County's criminal justice system.

Over the past years, the CIC assumed the task of increasing the community's awareness about the issues and facts surrounding our jail. To understand the criminal justice system, the CIC determined that county residents must have a basic understanding of the process that is in place to divert hundreds of individuals from the jail--Dutchess County's Alternative to Incarceration Programs (ATIs).

In 2015, key program representatives from ATI programs shared with the CIC and community residents information and data, analytical comparisons, progress and trends. The CIC found the presentations informative and reviewed the data supporting the positive impact the ATI programs are having on our jail. The overall impact these programs have on the numbers of individuals diverted annually from the jail is significant. If it were not for the success of the ATI programs, our housed-out numbers could have more than doubled, resulting in an increase cost to county residents.

The CIC was also pleased to have presentations from the CJC Juvenile Justice Committee chair as well as staff from the Department of Mental Hygiene and Jail who provided in-depth details and explanations about an in-jail, evidence-based intervention known as the Jail Re-Entry Stabilization Transition and Reintegration Track Program (RESTART).

In 2016, the CIC will continue to facilitate the community's access to timely and factual information. The CIC, as its primary task, will work to identify collaborations that will assist in promoting and encouraging residents to participate in community forums and discussions, ensuring them a voice and access to the decision-making process, which could enhance and significantly affect the quality of their lives in Dutchess County.

### **DIVERSION COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Steve Miccio

The Diversion Committee formally met for the first time on February 19, 2015. The basic concept of the Stabilization Center was presented to the members and work groups were formed:

- Community Relations—responsible for assisting with the *Imagine Dutchess* web portal being designed as a resource and referral information system to assist community members of Dutchess County with access to services
- Core Values—responsible for developing the core values for the Stabilization Center and develop the behaviors that support our core values
- Training—responsible for developing the training curriculum for all staff working at the center
- Assessment—responsible for developing a “whole health assessment” that addresses physical and behavioral health

The work groups have drafted the work as described and the Steering Committee is now meeting weekly since November to finalize all drafted documents and assessments for review in 2016.

The Steering Committee is also drafting a governance document that was requested by the New York State Office of Mental Health and Office for Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services for approval. This approval is intended to result in sustainable funding for the Stabilization Center. We will continue to work with the licensing agencies through 2016 to finalize all agreements.

The Steering Committee, that is made up of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health, PEOPLE, Mid-Hudson Alcoholism Recovery Center (MARC), Astor Services for Children and Families and the Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital has been meeting weekly to develop policies and procedures for the Stabilization Center. This work will continue into 2016.

### **Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)**

Two 40-hour crisis intervention trainings were held in 2015 in June and September. A total of 56 officers were trained representing the following law enforcement agencies: Hyde Park, Town of Poughkeepsie, City of Poughkeepsie,

Rhinebeck, East Fishkill, Sheriff's Office, U.S. Postal Inspectors, Probation, Jail and the New York State Police.

One brief eight hour CIT was held on December 11<sup>th</sup> with 26 officers trained from several agencies.

In 2016, five 40-hour and eight one-day trainings are planned.

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Karen DeSimone

The Juvenile Justice Committee continued to monitor the proposed "raise the age" initiative of the state. This initiative, if passed, would raise the of age of criminal responsibility for 16 and 17 year olds. The committee stands poised to make recommendations depending on the form any legislation may take.

This committee represents the county on the regional Youth Justice Team. As a result of the team's sponsorship, several relevant trainings were held for agencies and stakeholders in the juvenile justice system. A full day training was also provided by the Burns Institute on *Strategies to Reduce Racial/Ethnic Disparities in the Youth Justice System*. In addition, this funding made it possible for several juvenile officers to attend the state Juvenile Officers conference.

The committee also recommended the creation of a juvenile fire setters intervention program and secured funding for training and development. The J-Fire Intervention Response and Education program was created in 2015 as a collaborative effort among law enforcement, firefighters, probation officers and mental health professionals to provide early assessment, intervention and education.

### **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. Our re-entry coordinator is Carlos Valencia.

The Task Force targets its limited resources on assisting individuals who are released from state prison with the highest actuarial risk of recidivism. During 2015 services were provided to a total of 270 individuals. Of the total, 136 participants completed the anger management program and 23 participants completed the Ready, Set, Work employment program. Each month, four to six participants were assisted with job placement services. This is in addition to the multitude of additional services provided by Exodus on a daily basis—individual

advocacy, counseling, case management services, and community building exercises. The center is constantly in use. The Re-Entry Center is located at 85 Cannon Street in the City of Poughkeepsie.

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 needs assessment instrument is used to determine the domains that need to be addressed for each client. In turn, the 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 2015, all performance criteria were 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 from Rochelle McDonough, Crime Victim Specialist, New York State Police; Michael Hill, Director of Dutchess County Drinking Driver Program; supervisory staff of the Dutchess County Department of Community & Family Services; Sharon Daniels, Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene; Laraine Kautz, Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board; and Taj Majors, Salvation Army. In addition, we assisted Fordham University's Coming Home Program to establish a mentoring program for parolees in Dutchess County. We are currently working with several agency partners in establishing additional work training opportunities for the re-entry community. 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 regarding identified problems.

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 to lower the recidivism rate among parolees. We plan to continue these important and necessary efforts in 2016.

### **SPECIAL POPULATIONS COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: 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 was to identify the resources and current structure within the Dutchess County Jail (DCJ). 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. During 2015, the workgroup focused on a screening and assessment process for entry into the program and considered staffing levels, physical materials and training. Members of the workgroup also met with members of RicciGreene Associates to address the space related needs for programming.

An RFP was developed to provide transitional in-jail services for inmates that would be closely linked to community providers as well as Jail, Office of Probation and Department of Mental Hygiene staff. Based on the research, it was 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 at any given time will participate in the programming which will be evidence-based. Current jail-based staff from the Department of Mental Hygiene, jail staff and probation officers from the Office of Probation will work closely with RESTART. Project MORE and Hudson Valley Mental Health were selected as vendors for the program and began providing services in the fall of 2015.

The current curricula includes Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), New Directions, Anger Management (SAMHSA curriculum), Habits of Mind (positive thinking strategies—substance abuse), Seeking Safety (trauma informed) and Ready, Set, Work (for participants who will be seeking employment post-release.) The Quality Assurance Committee was created to determine and monitor quality of services both in the jail program as well as in the community-based programs. In order to provide for the post-release continuation of recommended treatment, the committee developed and approved a uniform set of curricula to be used by the community-based programs to which many RESTART participants will be referred. The links to these community-based programs (including but not limited to Community Transitions Center, Transitions House, ITAP, the Women's Center, Office of Probation and Community Corrections, NYS Parole, Lexington Center for Recovery, Hudson Valley Mental Health and others) will be maintained and coordinated throughout the course of the participant's RESTART involvement. In addition, performance and outcome measures were developed. At present, the

RESTART program is fully operational and inmates are screened for the program and linked to community-based services post-release.

### **VICTIMS COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Sharon Doane

During 2015, the Victims Committee identified goals and made plans for an educational outreach to the community. The committee discussed various ways to communicate with the public including through the greater use of technology.

In addition, the committee began to strategize how to provide information to first responders, develop cross training and possibly create a speakers bureau to raise awareness about available services.

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

Chairperson: Mary Haight

The committee's focus is on the specific needs of women and supporting the gender-responsive strategies that are most effective in reducing recidivism. With this in mind, the committee reviewed literature from the National Institute of Corrections regarding criminogenic risk factors and those additional factors that are more likely to affect women. Additionally, the portrait of "Justice Involved Women" (Bloom, Owen, & Covington 2003) was highlighted, revealing the following information about the characteristics of many women in the criminal justice system:

- Early 30s
- Drug related crimes
- Undereducated/unskilled
- Poverty
- Unemployed
- Disproportionately women of color
- Mothers of minor children
- Victims of physical and/or sexual abuse
- Substance abuse problems
- Mental health problems

Discussions centered on which of those risk factors this committee would attempt to address in upcoming meetings. Several areas were selected including employment, housing, and enhancing educational strengths.

The committee began a campaign in order to connect with local employers and develop relationships with those companies willing to hire individuals with conviction histories. Granted early access to vendors at the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce Job Fair in September, committee members supplied information to potential employers concerning the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Federal Bonding Program. Individual committee members have also reached out to small business owners and other local companies to provide further education. A database is being updated with this contact information for future job seekers.

The Committee is also monitoring utilization of programs and incarceration trends on a monthly basis. The information gathered includes a breakdown by gender in the Dutchess County Jail, those attending the in-jail programming of RESTART, those under community supervision, and the number of females enrolled in alternative to incarceration programs.

Looking ahead to 2016, the committee will continue to foster potential employer relationships and further explore some of the barriers and challenges faced by justice-involved women.

### **SUMMARY**

In 2015, the Council has been involved in multiple projects and initiatives for youth, women, individuals with behavioral health needs and those designated as higher risk (for recidivism.)

The Council has also focused on criminal justice processing and, through its consultant, has obtained data that will help to promote informed decision-making. No matter what program is being considered, the Council has been committed to using data to analyze the jail and criminal justice population and to develop or modify evidence-based programs according to the identified needs.