

LA Probation Governance Study

Model Jurisdiction Report



Prepared by:

Resource Development Associates

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About Resource Development Associates

Resource Development Associates (RDA) is a consulting firm based in Oakland, California, that serves government and nonprofit organizations throughout California as well as other states. Our mission is to strengthen public and non-profit efforts to promote social and economic justice for vulnerable populations. RDA supports its clients through an integrated approach to planning, grant-writing, organizational development, and evaluation.





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Executive Summary

This report highlights probation practices that jurisdictions from across the country have implemented in an effort to improve community supervision for youth and adults. The jurisdictions highlighted in this report are not necessarily model jurisdictions in every way. Instead, they are jurisdictions that have effectively implemented evidence-based and best practices in probation supervision in order to support improved outcomes for youth in county custody and youth and adults under community supervision.ⁱ

RDA draws on practices that have been implemented in numerous jurisdictions across the country including:

- ❖ Maricopa County, AZ
- ❖ Multnomah County, OR
- ❖ New York City, NY
- ❖ San Francisco County, CA
- ❖ San Joaquin County, CA
- ❖ Santa Clara County, CA
- ❖ Solano County, CA
- ❖ Washington D.C.
- ❖ Wayne County, MI

Much of the information included from New York and Washington, D.C., stems from a site visit to each jurisdiction that RDA organized for a cross-system LA County stakeholder group to attend. RDA conducted follow-up interviews with staff from New York and Washington, D.C., as well as with staff and leadership from the other jurisdictions delineated above. Additionally, RDA reviewed a variety of reports and evaluations related to these jurisdictions, as well as departmental documentation, such as policies and procedures, job descriptions, etc. to gather additional details around the work highlighted in this report.

Chapter 1: Organizational Assessment

This section highlights factors that impact or are related to organizational performance and outcomes. We assess factors across four domains: organizational culture; external environment; organizational capacity and structure; and racial disparities.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a system, both explicit and implicit, of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which govern how people behave in an organization. This section describes the New York City Department of Probation's (NYC DOP) efforts to shift its organizational culture toward one that more explicitly focused on client wellbeing and partnerships with the communities in which most probation clients reside.

ⁱ There is no perfect jurisdiction, nor is there any jurisdiction truly comparable to Los Angeles County. Moreover, differences in legal landscape of different jurisdictions and the consequent variation in the roles of probation departments across the country makes direct comparisons across all functions impossible.



As part of a new approach focused on client well-being and healthy development, NYC DOP launched the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) initiative (a community-based probation model discussed in greater detail below) in 2011. Initially, a number of probation officers expressed uncertainty with the new approach, so NYC DOP took steps to shift the organizational culture and clarify new expectations for staff.

Among the most significant lessons learned by those who led NYC DOP's culture shift were the importance of:

- ❖ Building staff buy-in and morale;
- ❖ Engaging staff in the change process by soliciting input on ways to implement change;
- ❖ Shifting symbols that exist within the physical and social environment;
- ❖ Identifying champions of change within the organization; and
- ❖ Over-messaging the new vision and mission along with successes along the way.

These lessons learned highlight an important notion: In order to build buy-in and improve morale, leadership must explain the benefits of implementing new supervision approaches and highlight early successes.

External Environment

Probation departments, like all public agencies, are embedded within external environments that impact operations, opportunities, and barriers. Probation departments must work with and respond to outside inquiries and scrutiny from advocacy organizations, local government, and media outlets, among others. It is imperative that probation departments develop trusted relationships with these external bodies in order to manage pressures that could arise from disparate, often competing, perspectives.

In order to develop productive relationships with political leaders (e.g., City Council and the Board of Supervisors), department leadership from Washington, D.C.'s Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) and Maricopa County's Probation Department both focus on developing trust with political leaders and proactively sharing data to ensure that political leaders have an accurate understanding of their operations and client populations.

DYRS has been similarly proactive about sharing data with the local media, as well as intentional about promoting stories about organizational and client successes to build support for many of their reform efforts. In order to strengthen relationships with local community members, DYRS facilitated a collaborative process with advocates, ministers, and other community stakeholders to build a community-based continuum of care.

Organizational Capacity & Structure

Organizational capacity refers to an organization's internal resources, processes, and capabilities. This section highlights how the organizational structure of probation departments, including their strategic leadership and planning, internal communication processes, and data capacity impact operations and efficiency.



As the second largest department in the country, NYC DOP has developed operational structures that work together to create an efficient and effective organization. NYC DOP takes a regionalized approach so that under Juvenile and Adult Operations there are Associate Commissioners who oversee Assistant Commissioners and Supervisors who are responsible for operations in each of the City's five boroughs. The Department ensures there are structures in place to encourage regular coordination and collaboration between each region and division.

In order to be most successful in organizational change, leaders need to create a shared desire to attain a goal or move in a particular direction, and also empower others to provide leadership and become champions of change. New York's strategic planning process involved staff, clients, and the community in order to enhance buy in within each group around the direction of the Department. Furthermore, NYC DOP internally communicated their mission, vision, goals, and objectives after developing their strategic plan with valuable input from staff, clients, and the community. In addition, they also clearly communicated the strategies and tactics they intended to implement in order to reach these goals.

Maricopa County's Probation Department and Washington D.C.'s DYRS both use data for quality assurance and performance management in order to measure staff performance and make decisions about budget allocation, organizational structures, and changes in practices to promote positive organizational- and client-level outcomes. Consistently identifying department goals and using data to track their implementation is paramount to the success of the organization.

Racial Disparities

While there is substantial variation in the total numbers and rates of individuals on probation in counties across the country, there are clear racial disparities that exist with regards to who is under supervision. The key themes highlighted across jurisdictions that are actively working to reduce racial disparities are the importance of using data to identify disparities and continuously collaborating with cross-system stakeholders to identify where disparities exist and how they can be reduced. For example, San Joaquin County Probation and Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors established a data team and the Juvenile Justice System Collaborative (JJSC) respectively, to review data, identify where disparities exist, and establish potential mechanisms for reducing disparities. In addition, Multnomah County is currently focused on reducing disparities in juvenile detention by reducing biases found in their detention risk assessment instrument (RAI).

Chapter 2: Hiring, Staffing, and Training

The labor force of any organization is crucial to its success. Hiring candidates with the necessary skills and experience to fulfill a department's mission, promoting effective workforce management, and offering high-quality and comprehensive workplace training and development programs all contribute to a well-functioning and productive department. This section describes best practices in hiring, staffing, and training within several jurisdictions across the country.



Hiring

Probation in New York City and Solano County emphasize the importance of transparency and communication with regards to hiring to ensure that candidates possess a clear understanding of a probation officer's role and the department's approach. By having detailed job descriptions and holding information sessions these jurisdictions effectively provide candidates with a clear understanding of the expectations of the department, helping ensure that individuals who apply for jobs are best suited to carry out the department's mission.

Staffing

Leadership from Multnomah and Solano County expressed the importance of using data to inform staffing decisions. Regular monitoring and forecasting of staff caseloads enables departments to make immediate adjustments so that staff have similarly assigned workloads. Additionally, regular assessment and discussion of staff performance helps ensure that staff's responsibilities align with their strengths.

Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice (DCJ) uses dashboards and assessments to monitor and assess staff workloads. The dashboards identify any increases or decreases in populations, which allows management to adjust staffing in response. Caseloads are also constantly monitored to ensure that they are meeting target caseload size. Solano County Probation also bases caseload sizes around the specific activities and interactions expected of officers within the Probation Department, and the time it takes to successfully complete these activities with each client. Solano County even hired a workload consultant to identify exactly how much time it takes probation officers to complete their work.

Training

Though all probation departments are required to meet state training standards for new and continuing staff, they also generally have flexibility to select what types of trainings are provided and how these trainings are implemented. Interestingly, while probation leadership from New York City, Multnomah County, and Maricopa County spoke about certain types of trainings that they have found to be successful—such as restorative practices, EPICS, or leadership skills—they all stressed the importance of sustaining and maintaining skill development. They identified booster trainings, observational assessments, and individual coaching as necessary to reinforce and deepen skill development and ensure uniform implementation across the department.

Chapter 3: Client Service Delivery

Probation departments should focus their services on clients who pose a legitimate risk to public safety, and utilize validated risk assessment and need assessment tools to determine each client's risk for recidivism and supervision intensity, as well as to identify service needs to be addressed through strengths-based case management and connections with services.¹ Successful community supervision is highly dependent on the rapport built between POs and their clients, and increasingly probation officers



are applying motivational interviewing techniques, cognitive behavioral interventions, and trauma-informed approaches to help build rapport with their clients and enhance their readiness for change.

Supervise the Right People the Right Amount

This section highlights work being done in New York, Multnomah County, Maricopa County, and Wayne County to promote public safety through a harm reduction model. In New York City, adults who score low-risk on a risk and needs assessment tool are put on an administrative caseload with only telephone or kiosk check-ins. By not actively supervising low-risk clients, this opens up additional resources dedicated for working with medium and high-risk populations. Similarly, in Maricopa County, low-risk cases also do not report in person, and some low-risk cases go unsupervised (with conditions attached that they must successfully complete). Most notably, as a part of the County's Justice Reinvestment Strategy, individuals can earn time credit and early termination from probation. In Multnomah County, a Day Reporting Center (DRC) that is non-residential, highly structured, and targets criminogenic needs is offered as an alternative to incarceration for probation clients that many other jurisdictions would hold in jail, including probation violators. Finally, Wayne County has placed emphasis on implementing and utilizing prevention and diversion options to reduce the number of youth officially processed in the County.

Structured Decision Making

SDM is the use of a formal and standardized procedure for guiding probation officers in their recommendations to the court, particularly around client dispositions and placements. The goal of SDM is to ensure that probation recommendations are more consistent, fair, and effective. In implementing SDM, probation departments generally use a grid that lists out what sorts of recommendations should be made based on risk assessment results and offense severity.

NYC DOP's Commissioner of Probation received input from an array of stakeholders prior to implementing SDM so that by the time they finalized the tool and began implementation they had a great deal of buy-in from multiple stakeholders. Preliminary data indicates that since SDM implementation, the use of placement has gone in NYC. Multnomah County has implemented an externally validated detention risk assessment instrument (RAI) to support structured decision-making in detention screening as well.

Case Management and Supervision Approach

Probation officers should utilize validated risk and need assessment tools to determine clients' risk for recidivism and supervision intensity, as well as service needs to be addressed through strengths-based case management and connections with services. Additionally, successful probation officers build rapport with their clients by striking a balance between law enforcement and intervention roles, and by applying techniques such as motivational interviewing techniques, cognitive behavioral interventions, and trauma-informed approaches.



RDA highlights NYC DOP's innovative approach to case management and supervision, which includes spending substantial upfront time engaging with clients and developing individualized action plans (IAPs) and the establishment of Neighborhood Opportunity Networks (NeONS). NeONS are community-based probation offices located in the communities where the largest numbers of youth and adult probation clients live. Here, probation clients can check-in on computerized kiosks, meet in-person with their POs, and access services and programs through extensive partnerships with community-based organizations and public agencies.

Solano County and Multnomah County have undergone reform efforts to their Juvenile Divisions in order to improve youth outcomes under supervision. For example, the Juvenile Division of the Solano County Probation Department has prioritized training on non-coercive techniques and skills-development among probation officers and also implemented a Response Matrix to create greater consistency in probation officer responses to violations of clients' terms of probation. In an effort to improve outcomes for high-risk youth under supervision and their families in Multnomah County, the Juvenile Division follows the Functional Family Probation Model, a model that engages, motivates, assesses, and works with high-risk youth and their families.

Supervising Transitional Age Youth

Neurological research verifies that young adults (ages 18-25) are developmentally distinct from older adults and more similar to their younger counterparts. Because of this, the transition to adulthood is especially challenging for justice-system-involved young adults, as they are more likely to have personal histories that can further disrupt psychosocial development. For these reasons, probation departments across the country are developing specialized units to work with the transitional age youth (TAY) population.

Within San Francisco's Adult Probation Department there is a specialized unit that supervises TAY ages 18 to 25 and in New York City there is the "Anyone Can Excel" (ACE) unit for 16-24 year olds. Both units use a strength-based approach towards case management and service delivery, and prioritize probation officers working to build rapport with their clients through the development of individualized case plans. For TAY clients, service delivery focuses on addressing their comprehensive needs by providing and connecting them with evidence-based services and critical resources such as housing, mental health treatment, and vocational training through partnerships with community providers. In addition, NYC DOP formally partners with individuals with a history of incarceration to provide a transformative mentoring intervention designed to meet young people where they are in the process of pro-social engagement.

Continuum of Services

In order to provide individuals under community supervision an opportunity to change course and not further penetrate the justice system, it is imperative for an accessible suite of services to be in place. Probation departments should collaborate with community members in the planning process in order to



best identify the needs of the community, and develop a continuum of services that meet the needs of individuals on probation.

Above and beyond developing a system of services to support clients on probation, New York and Washington, D.C. shifted their approach to maintain a central focus on leveraging indigenous supports and providing meaningful services to justice-involved youth and adults within the communities they live. Both jurisdictions established centers, namely the NeONS and MLK Achievement Center, which are designed to support basic needs and provide opportunities including education, employment, mental health, and substance use services, among others. Furthermore, NYC DOP and Washington, D.C. foster collaborative efforts to reduce high-risk behavior by partnering with community organizations, agencies, and educational institutions to provide an array of services including transformative mentoring and parent peer support programs.

Juvenile Diversion

Research reflects a shifting juvenile justice paradigm acknowledging that youth should be diverted from formal processing to the greatest extent possible. This is because youth on probation experience higher reoffending rates than comparable youth whose cases are diverted rather than processed in juvenile court.² This section highlights the emphasis that is placed on juvenile diversion in Wayne County and Multnomah County, respectively.

In Wayne County, the Juvenile Services Division relies largely on prevention and diversion programs to provide services for youth. Prevention programs are intended to eliminate court contact for at-risk youth altogether, while diversion programs provide court-involved youth an opportunity to stop further penetration into the juvenile system. Approximately 1,200 referrals to diversion programs and 7,500 referrals to prevention programs were made in the 2013-14 fiscal year. At the same time, the state ward caseload dropped to approximately 620 youth, compared to approximately 3,400 youth in 1999. Recidivism also dropped from above 50% to 16% and the County incurred drastic cost saving through the reduced reliance on state training and residential care facilities.³ Similarly, youth in Multnomah County who have committed low-level offenses for the first time are typically diverted and referred out to the Community Healing Initiative (CHI), which are designed to decrease violence by providing culturally appropriate community support to youth and families.

Chapter 4: Facilities

This section highlights that when youth are incarcerated, they should remain in the communities where they live (or near where they live) so that they remain close to their prosocial supports and their lives are interrupted to the least extent possible. The facilities they are detained/placed in should be clean and safe, and offer youth appropriate living conditions.

Location



When jurisdictions commit to keeping young people close to home and probation departments make a commitment to using SDM in determining recommendations for placements, they typically also need to build out a local continuum of supports and services, as well as less secure placement alternatives. A key goal of NYC's Close to Home Initiative was to keep young people from New York City who are put in placement near their families and home communities. Previously, young people who had been adjudicated as juvenile delinquents were placed in facilities hundreds of miles away, where it was difficult for them to visit with their families, remain connected to their communities, or earn school credits. Under Close to Home, young people are placed in or near the five boroughs, close to an array of resources that were built out to support their rehabilitation and their safe re-integration into local communities

Juvenile Detention and Placement Facilities

This section highlights New York's Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement facility, Washington, D.C.'s New Beginnings Secure Placement Facility, and Santa Clara County's William F. James Boys Ranch, each which borrow from the Missouri Model. None of these facilities look like jails; instead they are developmentally-appropriate environments conducive to the rehabilitate goals of the probation department. The physical layouts and environments are very different from typical juvenile facilities, and they provide a therapeutic atmosphere for detained youth where large emphasis is placed on education, as well as addressing the criminogenic needs of youth.

Youth placed at Leake & Watts attend school each day at Passages Academy in Belmont, which is operated by the New York City Department of Education. Staff from the facility travel with youth to and from school, and also accompany youth at school throughout the day. A key element of the Leake & Watts facility is that program staff target criminogenic risk and work to help youth develop tools and skills that they will need to address personal challenges upon release.

The New Beginnings Facility is a co-ed facility that houses the Maya Angelou Academy. Classes are co-ed, and the educators from Maya Angelou Academy see it as their responsibility to help address the barriers to learning that their students present, including trauma and poor social skills. Classes are designed to be as enriching as the classes youth would receive if they were at a high-quality community-based high school, and they have authors, poets, and young playwrights come in and present on-site, as well as mentors from American University.

In Santa Clara County, under former Chief Sheila Mitchell's leadership, the average census in juvenile hall dropped from nearly 370 youth per day in 2004 to approximately 140 youth per day in 2013. Santa Clara County operates co-ed facilities, and in alignment with the Missouri Model, the County implemented the Enhanced Ranch Program (ERP) model at the William F. James Boys Ranch, moving from prison-style barracks to small family-like settings where staff implemented a cognitive behavioral service delivery model to improve youth outcomes.



Chapter 5: Fiscal Operations and Financial Management

Regarding fiscal operations and the financial management of probation departments, it is important to note that there are few, if any, model jurisdictions or jurisdictions that are comparable to Los Angeles County. However, there are a number of practices and an emerging body of research to inform a study of financial management. Methodologically, RDA conducted an extensive, but focused literature review and interviewed several probation leaders from California and New York to gain from their experiences.

Community Partnerships

Challenges with lengthy contracting and regulatory processes are not unique to any one jurisdiction, and RDA found a range of practices employed by various jurisdictions as means of more effectively partnering with the communities they serve. These practices also show solution-oriented strategies that help jurisdictions circumvent bureaucratic requirements and realize their goals and objectives. For instance, one alternative is an agency-to-agency partnership. Public-private partnerships can also be an effective means of reducing barriers in contracting and procurement processes, although they are more difficult to approach and take political buy-in and leadership to achieve. Another way to formally partner with the private sector is through master contracting with a CBO that can more easily distribute funds to the community or subcontract to other CBOs.

One research study of several public agencies within a single metropolitan area revealed a number of strategies to deal with barriers to effectively contracting with community partners. This study found that “governmental agencies typically did more than simply issue RFPs and wait for responses. There were often formal and informal initiatives taken both before and after the RFP had been issued.”⁴ The staff took a more active, targeted approach to outreach as a means of engaging CBOs and persuading them to participate. In addition, there are ways to reform internal procurement or contracting processes to be more effective.

Participatory Management Approaches

In a participatory management framework, staff have more opportunities to partake in decision-making that relates to their own work and working conditions. The Clinton/Gore-era ‘Reinventing Government’ movement highlighted the benefits of participatory management from an administrative perspective. Research from that period uncovered the dysfunction of hierarchical, centralized bureaucracies. Reinventing government under a participatory management framework meant envisioning new roles for public sector leaders. These roles included:

1. Developing a clear vision;
2. Creating a team environment;
3. Empowering and communicating with employees;
4. Putting clients first;
5. Cutting red tape; and
6. Creating clear accountability.



Implementing these six practices can transform the culture of governmental bureaucracies to be more inclusive of staff in decision-making processes. The literature has shown participatory management to reduce employee stress, increase job satisfaction, and reduce turnover.^{5 6 7}

Financial management practices such as accounting, procurement, contracting, etc., are not neutral, disconnected, or weak activities that occur in a black box. Rather, when 'loosely coupled' with operational practices, financial management can be a mechanism imbued with the power to bring consensus between the competing drives of operations and administration.⁸ As many accounting researchers have argued, financial management must be seen within the setting in which it is deployed.⁹ Because the management of administrative functions is woven into the institutional fabric in which it sits, the research and practices illustrated in the section above demonstrate that, when it comes to managing the finances of a large public agency, it is essential to unify operations and administration under the umbrella of a shared vision and common goal.



Introduction

Across the country, many probation departments are implementing new strategies, including evidence-based practices and community-based services, while placing increased emphasis on rehabilitation and youth development in order to promote public safety. In addition, there is an increased focus on harm reduction through supervising only those who need to be supervised, for the amount of time they should be under supervision.^{10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17} Building on RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, this report highlights probation practices that jurisdictions from across the country have implemented in an effort to improve community supervision for youth and adults.

Because there is no such thing as a perfect jurisdiction, and there is also no jurisdiction exactly like Los Angeles County's, RDA researched jurisdictions across the country to identify those that have implemented model practices in specific areas, such as data-driven performance management or strategic leadership and planning. The jurisdictions highlighted in this report are not necessarily model jurisdictions in every way. Instead, they are jurisdictions that have effectively implemented evidence-based and best practices in probation supervision in order to support improved outcomes for youth in county custody and youth and adults under community supervision.

Organization of the Report

The structure of this report largely mirrors the structure of RDA's *LA Probation Assessment* report. The first section examines model practices at the organizational level, focusing on elements such as culture and infrastructure. Each subsequent section highlights model practices across four specific functions: staffing, hiring, and training; client service delivery; juvenile facilities; and fiscal operations.

Review of Jurisdictions Included in Report

As noted above, there is no perfect jurisdiction, nor is there any jurisdiction truly comparable to Los Angeles County. Moreover, differences in legal landscape of different jurisdictions and the consequent variation in the roles of probation departments across the country makes direct comparisons across all functions impossible. For example, in New York City, juvenile facilities are operated by the local child welfare department, the Administration of Children's Services, rather than by the probation department, as in California counties. Moreover, New York City, which operates its own probation department, is a single city that overlays five separate counties. These differences notwithstanding, this report focuses particular attention to the New York City Department of Probation (NYC DOP), the second largest probation department in the Country, and one what has undergone substantial change in organizational culture and approach to client service delivery over the past decade. This report also focuses heavily on the Washington, D.C., Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS), an organization that has many of the same functions as LA County's Probation Departments. These two jurisdictions were the subject of site visits coordinated by RDA and attended by a cross-system stakeholder group from LA County.



In addition to drawing on the work being done in New York and Washington, D.C., RDA also draws on probation practices that have been implemented in numerous jurisdictions across the country. Table 1 below summarizes the areas of focus in each jurisdiction highlighted in this report.

Table 1. Summary of Model Practice Areas Highlighted in Each Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Model Practice Areas
Maricopa County, AZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Political Environment❖ Data Driven Decision Making and Performance Management❖ Supervise the Right People the Right Amount
Multnomah County, OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Reducing Racial Disparities❖ Staffing❖ Training❖ Supervise the Right People the Right Amount❖ Structured Decision Making❖ Case Management and Supervision❖ Juvenile Diversion
New York City, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Organizational Culture❖ Community Involvement❖ Hiring❖ Training❖ Supervise the Right People the Right Amount❖ Structured Decision Making❖ Case Management and Supervision❖ Supervising Transitional Age Youth❖ Continuum of Services❖ Juvenile Facilities
San Francisco County, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Supervising Transitional Age Youth
San Joaquin County, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Reducing Racial Disparities
Santa Clara County, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Reducing Racial Disparities❖ Training❖ Juvenile Facilities
Solano County, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Hiring❖ Staffing❖ Case Management and Supervision
Washington D.C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Political Environment❖ Community Involvement❖ Media❖ Data Driven Decision Making & Performance Management❖ Continuum of Services❖ Juvenile Facilities
Wayne County, MI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Supervise the Right People the Right Amount❖ Juvenile Diversion



Methodology

Much of the information included from New York and Washington, D.C., stems from a site visit to each jurisdiction that RDA organized for a cross-system LA County stakeholder group to attend. RDA conducted follow-up interviews with staff from New York and Washington, D.C., as well as with staff and leadership from the other jurisdictions delineated above. Additionally, RDA reviewed a variety of reports and evaluations related to these jurisdictions, as well as departmental documentation, such as policies and procedures, job descriptions, etc. to gather additional details around the work highlighted in this report.

Table 2 and Table 3 below highlight each individual that RDA interviewed for this report, as well as the jurisdiction and/or content area for which they were interviewed.

Table 2. Individuals Interviewed by RDA

Jurisdiction/Content Area	Individual Interviewed
Maricopa County, AZ	❖ Barbara Broderick , Chief of Adult Probation
Multnomah County, OR	❖ Scott Taylor , Director of Multnomah County Department of Community Justice
New York City, NY	❖ Sharun Goodwin , Deputy Commissioner of Adult Operations ❖ Gineen Gray , Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Operations ❖ Bob Costello , Assistant Commissioner for Staff Development (also oversees ACE Unit for young adults) ❖ Stephen Cacace , Director of Community Resource Unit ❖ Michael Forte , Deputy Commissioner of Administration ❖ Vincent Schiraldi , Former Deputy Commissioner of Probation
San Francisco County, CA	❖ Ernest Mendieta , AB 109 Division Director
San Joaquin County, CA	❖ Kayce Rane , Rane Community Development
Santa Clara County, CA	❖ Sheila Mitchell , Former Chief of Probation
Solano County, CA	❖ Christopher Hansen , Chief of Probation
Washington D.C.	❖ Vincent Schiraldi , Former Chief of Staff for the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
Wayne County, MI	❖ Dan Chaney , Former Director of Wayne County Department of Children and Family Services

Table 3. Individuals Interviewed by RDA, by Content Area

Content Area	Individual Interviewed
Racial Disparities	❖ James Bell , Founder and President of Burns Institute
Fiscal Operations & Financial Management	❖ Michael Forte , Deputy Commissioner of Administration ❖ Wendy Still , Chief of Probation, Alameda County ❖ Dawn Hawk , Chief Operating Officer, Philanthropic Ventures Foundation ❖ Jeanne Woodford , Former Warden of San Quentin State Prison, Director and Undersecretary of the California



Los Angeles County Executive's Office

LA Probation Governance Study

Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Executive
Director of Death Penalty Focus

- ❖ **Michael Jacobson**, Executive Director, City University of New York's Institute for State and Local Governance
- ❖ **Christie Myer**, Chief of Probation, Tulare County



Chapter 1: Organizational Assessment

This section highlights factors that impact or are related to organizational performance and outcomes. We assess factors across four domains: organizational culture; external environment; organizational capacity and structure; and racial disparities. Below, we provide key findings before moving into deeper discussions about each domain.

Key Findings

1. In order to successfully shift a probation department's culture, leadership should focus on building staff buy-in, improving morale, and engaging staff in the change process. This includes identifying champions of change and messaging extensively about the organization's mission and vision, as well as promoting successes along the way.
2. Intentionally developing relationships with external entities, including local government, community representatives, and the local media, builds trust to mitigate the impact of setbacks.
3. Involving staff, clients, and the community in the strategic planning process generates buy-in within each group about the direction of the department.
4. Consistently identifying department goals and using data to track their implementation is paramount to the success of the organization.
5. Reducing racial disparities requires ongoing review of data both within a probation department and with law enforcement and community service partners to regularly identify where disparities exist and collaboratively implement mechanisms for reducing them.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a system, both explicit and implicit, of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which govern how people behave in an organization. A shared culture has a strong influence on the people in the organization and dictates how they act, talk, and perform their jobs.¹⁸ The section below describes the NYC DOP's efforts to shift its organizational culture toward one that more explicitly focused on client wellbeing and partnerships with the communities in which most probation clients reside.

New York City

As part of a new approach focused on client well-being and healthy development, NYC DOP launched the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) initiative (a community-based probation model discussed in greater detail below) in 2011. Initially, a number of probation officers expressed uncertainty with the new approach, so NYC DOP took steps to shift the organizational culture and clarify new expectations for staff.

Among the most significant lessons learned by those who led NYC DOP's culture shift were the importance of:

- ❖ Building staff buy-in and morale;
- ❖ Engaging staff in the change process by soliciting input on ways to implement change;



- ❖ Shifting symbols that exist within the physical and social environment;
- ❖ Identifying champions of change within the organization; and
- ❖ Over-messaging the new vision and mission along with successes along the way.

These lessons learned highlight an important notion: In order to build buy-in and improve morale, leadership must explain the benefits of implementing new supervision approaches and highlight early successes.

Building Staff Buy-in and Morale

NYC DOP's leadership utilizes multiple mechanisms to build staff buy-in and morale. One way to foster buy-in for change is to establish a positive workplace environment. The leadership team works to create this positive environment in a number of ways. They develop trainings and continuous coaching opportunities to teach their staff new approaches for working with their clients. They also reward officers for implementing the new practices they have been taught. In addition to working with and rewarding staff at work, leadership also holds department-wide "working parties," such as an annual holiday party and picnics. These gatherings help bring staff who may feel disconnected together so that they have an opportunity to hear about the Department's success, acknowledge exemplary practice by their colleagues, and engage with one another. This helps create greater cohesion among staff and provides leadership an opportunity to recognize specific staff members who are implementing the desired changes.

On top of bringing staff together and highlighting the good work of individuals, the primary mover of staff buy-in and morale is for them to see that the new approaches are resulting in better client outcomes. One probation staff member expressed:

"I've had 32 years in probation, and my work at the NeON has been the most satisfying, the most engaging. It's restorative. We are not looking just at behavior, [we are really] looking at the person. You feel wonderful about what you are doing – you see change in their lives."
– Deputy Probation Officer

This highlights the importance of developing strategies for communicating early successes so that staff can see and hear about the effectiveness of the change (discussed in greater detail in the section "Messaging Success," below).

Engaging Staff in Change

An important mechanism for promoting a positive culture while implementing change is to engage staff in the production of change. New York City's Commissioner of Probation began his tenure with a listening tour, where he and his team asked questions from staff at all levels and divisions about the work environment. This helped to ensure that staff felt heard, and also allowed the Commissioner to receive valuable feedback about practices currently in place.



During the listening tour, the Commissioner and his team asked staff for their perspectives about the strengths and needs of the Department, as well as about their work with their clients and a range of department functions and operations. During the tour, it became clear that there was deep-seated mistrust among staff, and skepticism that leaders were genuinely interested in their input. To demonstrate that they were indeed interested in staff input, leadership followed the listening tour by disseminating a written survey. They ultimately utilized findings from the listening tour and staff survey to develop a simple strategic plan that corresponded to the needs of the Department. This helped staff see that the new leadership team valued their knowledge and input, which helped them develop rapport and begin to repair the mistrust between staff and leadership.

Creating structured opportunities for probation staff to co-create change resulted in not only increased buy-in but also substantive innovation. Probation leaders recognized that some of the most innovative ideas used at the NeONs were generated by staff. These included bringing educational services onsite so individuals can earn their high school diploma or GED, as well as running a sports-focused program that connects clients to mentors and employment training.

Symbolizing Change

Symbols convey meaning and communicate expectations, and are entrenched in the social and physical environments of organizations. The leaders of change within NYC DOP understood the importance of symbols for conveying meaning and communicating expectations. As they advanced change in the City's community supervision approach, they also changed the physical environment by replacing things like the artwork on the walls of probation buildings, so that they would embody hopeful messages (e.g., "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," "Ask for help," "1. Improve yourself. 2. Change the world. Start here. Start small.>").



Figure 1. Symbols of Change at the Bronx NeON



Symbols can also manifest in terminology, and NYC DOP leaders recognized the importance of changing how they talked about their clients. Prior to the reforms, probation staff generally referred to probation clients as “offenders” and “felons,” which reduced them to their crime, rather than “clients,” which denotes a person deserving of respectful service. Finally, the leaders of change expended time and effort to redesign the physical environment where clients and probation officers meet (see more about NeON on Page 44).

Cultivating Champions

The former Commissioner of Probation and current Deputy Commissioner of Adult Operations expressed that staff are more willing accept counsel and influence from their peers than from outside experts. For this reason, change is more likely to take hold if champions for change are cultivated at every level within the organization. New York used a train-the-trainers model as they moved toward practices like Structured Decision Making, which targets criminogenic need through assessment and case planning and emphasizes youth development and skills development as the intended outcomes of the work. In identifying trainers, they “trained up people who love this stuff to act as champions.” In other words, they identified people who already had a rehabilitative orientation and strong relationship skills early on to serve as trainers and to persuade their peers. This created in-house expertise and training resource, and allowed for more trust between trainer and trainee than a traditional training model might afford.



Messaging Success

NYC DOP developed skills around telling their story, both internally and externally, and the former Director of Communications for Probation offered five basic principles for an effective communication strategy:

1. **Do your homework:** Create a strategic plan with no more than five key goals.
2. **Find easy wins:** Early on, identify small (or large) successes among those five goals and communicate those wins internally and externally.
3. **Crowdsource:** Allow staff to contribute their stories to the narrative of a changing department, through video, intranet, facilitated social media/electronic newsletter, etc.
4. **Be creative:** Be prepared to react to external circumstances with creativity and innovation (e.g., Hurricane Sandy caused devastation and NY probation used it as an opportunity to enlist individuals on probation and probation officers to work side-by-side providing relief – then they publicized it).
5. **Believe your own hype:** A message will seem disingenuous if leaders themselves are not committed to the vision it promotes. By contrast, a leader who is passionate about the change he or she is asking for will inspire and motivate people toward that vision.

Key aspects of the communication strategy were keeping things simple by choosing five key goals to highlight in their strategic plan, and then continuously reporting back on these goals. Focusing on no more than five goals makes it much more manageable to clearly communicate progress to staff, which is important for building staff buy-in into the direction of the Department. For external communication, the Department created informational one-pagers they distributed far and wide. For internal communication, one strategy they used was creating shorts with testimonials from probation staff who were using new strategies and approaches, stating very clearly how and why these new approaches had improved their sense of efficacy (Department of Communications staff would prompt staff: “Tell us about a client you have who is doing great,” and begin filming). Every other month they would post to the internet a new 2-minute video featuring probation staff having an impact. These videos inspired hope that the job could be rewarding, evoked emotion, and fostered new connections within the agency. They recommended that leaders of change in similar situations should try to find some “easy wins” that they can report on early in the campaign for change to generate enthusiasm and faith in the potential for progress. They also advised that communicators “believe your own hype” because authentic commitment comes through in any communication, internal or external.

External Environment

Probation departments, like all public agencies, are embedded within external environments that impact operations, opportunities, and barriers. Probation departments must work with and respond to outside inquiries and scrutiny from advocacy organizations, local government, and media outlets, among others. It is imperative that probation departments develop trusted relationships with these external bodies in order to manage pressures that could arise from disparate, often competing, perspectives.



Political Environment

In LA County, one key source of outside demands is the Board of Supervisors. This sort of external pressure is a common concern for probation departments across the country. In Washington, D.C., and Maricopa County, leadership developed relationships with the City Council and the Board of Supervisors, respectively, to build trust and secure funding for necessary operations.

Washington, D.C.

In Washington, D.C., the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) built strong relationships with the City Council and other key stakeholders. These efforts benefited DYRS in many ways, particularly in regards to managing the narrative following negative media coverage. For instance, as the agency implemented reforms to reduce the numbers of detained youth, they prepared for the plausible scenario that a youth might commit a high-profile crime that could provoke a political backlash. In anticipation of negative backlash for such incidents, building and managing relationships with political entities was made a top priority.

The DYRS Chief of Staff hired Legislation and Communication Directors whose primary jobs were to establish relationships with political entities such as the D.C. City Council (which functions similarly to the LA County Board of Supervisors) and the media, among others. One strategy they implemented was to plan events around areas of interest to political leaders. For instance, DYRS leadership was aware that the mayor enjoyed triathlons, so they held a mini-triathlon with youth and staff and invited the mayor to join them with an opportunity for pictures and an interview with the press included. There were also a number of City Council members who enjoyed basketball and football, so DYRS coordinated a nine game basketball tournament between youth and city council members, as well as an event for city council members to give youth letterman jackets they earned for being a part of a championship football team.

Another strategy DYRS implemented was proactively reaching out to the local media to promote stories about some of their successes. They routinely emailed positive stories to the D.C. City Council and other key stakeholders to keep them up to date about the reform efforts. This was the agency's way of building goodwill politically around a positive narrative.

When a negative incident would occur, DYRS's executive team would immediately contact key stakeholders and counter negative press with data. For instance, when a story came out about a violent crime committed by an individual who absconded, DYRS sent over data demonstrating that absconding had gone down, not up, since implementing reforms. In this way, one negative story was not able to drive perception and knowledge about what was actually happening.

Maricopa County

In Maricopa County, Arizona, the Chief of the Adult Probation Department, Barbara Broderick, has been with the Department for 17 years. According to Chief Broderick, the Probation Department did not have an ideal relationship with the Board of Supervisors when she began as Chief, and this made it difficult to receive funding for new and necessary operations. The former Chief of Probation had not been data-



driven, and Chief Broderick recognized that Probation needed to be able to tell its story, make recommendations, and back them up with data. Chief Broderick immediately began utilizing data to demonstrate the needs of the Department to the Board of Supervisors, and over time their relationship strengthened, as did her ability to secure resources for the Department.

In order to secure additional treatment options for individuals on probation, the Chief used data to clearly demonstrate the needs of clients across different communities, and mapped this to a geographic census of available treatment options. By demonstrating a lack of treatment options within certain communities, while also highlighting the client need, the Chief was able to make a compelling case that resonated with the Board of Supervisors, ultimately resulting in additional funding being allocated to support treatment options within specific communities.

According to Chief Broderick, board members have occasionally expressed dissatisfaction with Probation. In some of these instances, the Chief used data to assuage concerns. For example, when board members were concerned about the number of clients with sexual offenses living in their districts, the Chief used data to demonstrate that this was a misconception and that no district housed significantly more clients with sexual offenses.

Community Involvement

Communities benefit when probation departments have a positive effect on the individuals they serve. As such, probation departments should look to cultivate community resources and build partnerships wherever appropriate. For instance, probation departments should collaborate with community members to develop community-based continuums of care that leverage stakeholder input and meet the needs of the community.

Washington, D.C.

In order to build trust between DYRS and local community members in Washington, D.C., leadership facilitated a collaborative process for building a community-based continuum of care. The agency heavily engaged with advocates, ministers, and other community stakeholders by inviting them to planning meeting to develop recommendations. These recommendations formed the basis for the final plan. One of their strongest recommendations was to regionalize the continuum of care to enhance the services provided to clients. They also highlighted the need to identify lead entities that would be the holders of subcontracting agreements for smaller organizations to receive funding for their work.

Bringing in community members to help build the continuum of care not only resulted in building trust and bridging the gap between the community and the agency, but it also allowed DYRS to identify service options, such as ballet and tai chi, that may not have occurred to them otherwise.

New York City

Each borough in New York has an Assistant Commissioner who oversees all operations within the borough. In order to strengthen relationships with local community residents and organizations, the



Deputy Commissioner asked each Assistant Commissioner to establish a community planning steering committee that included, at minimum, a religious leader, a local business owner, a law enforcement representative, and formerly incarcerated individuals and their family members. The Assistant Commissioner was expected to identify these stakeholders to join the steering committee and work with them to assess local needs, identify the types of programs and services to bring into the community, develop and score RFPs, and assess the effectiveness of intervention strategies.

The Department also raised funds for arts programming involving people on probation in every borough. The steering committee in each neighborhood was given discretion to prioritize the arts programs to focus in on in their respective community. From here the Department developed an RFP for services and worked with Carnegie Hall to facilitate interviews between community stakeholders and all finalists.

The community planning steering committees played important roles in developing programming and services. Through this community-involved process, the NYC DOP built stronger relationships in the communities they serve.

Media

The media can be influential in shaping how probation departments are viewed by outside entities, as well as their own staff. In order to ensure that the media accurately portrays their work, probation departments should actively engage with the media and urge them to include data whenever they are running reports on isolated incidents. Providing the overall context will help prevent individual acts committed by individuals under supervision from being seen as widespread systemic issues.

Washington, D.C.

As noted above, in order to counter negative media stories, DYRS contests negative stories with data. For instance, when a newspaper wanted to run a story on a violent crime committed by a youth who had absconded from DYRS custody, DYRS aggressively insisted that the newspaper also include data from DYRS demonstrating a reduction in abscondance since the implementation of reforms in order to counter the perception that reforms had led to public safety threats and other negative outcomes.

Additionally, if DYRS knew they were going to be criticized by the media, they would connect with the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention, retired judges, the Public Defender's Office, and other supportive outlets. These allies would then publicly speak on DYRS's behalf and point out where the media might be misleading public perception.

Organizational Capacity & Structure

Organizational capacity refers to an organization's internal resources, processes, and capabilities. The following sections highlight how the organizational structure of probation departments, including their strategic leadership and planning, internal communication processes, and data capacity impact operations and efficiency.



Organizational Structure

As touched on in RDA's *LA Probation Assessment* report, LA County is a massive jurisdiction with the country's largest probation department. The Department has approximately 6,600 budgeted positions operating out of more than 80 locations across the county. It directly oversees more than 70,000 individuals (slightly more than 60,000 adults and approximately 10,000 youth), a number greater than any other probation department both nationally and globally.¹⁹ Staffing a department of this size requires both breadth and depth of employees across and within units, facilities, and area offices. Therefore, the organizational structure of the Department is inherently complex in its needs, and it is difficult to make a direct comparison to any other department.

This section features some efficient and effective processes of NYC DOP, which is the second largest department in the country after Los Angeles County. Below, we highlight how NYC DOP's operational structures work together to create an efficient and effective organization.

New York City

NYC DOP is a single department with separate Adult, Juvenile, and Administrative Operations. There is one Commissioner who oversees the Department of Probation as a whole and Deputy Commissioners who oversee Adult, Juvenile, and Administrative Operations. The City has taken a regionalized approach so that under Juvenile and Adult Operations there are Associate Commissioners; these Associate Commissioners directly oversee Assistant Commissioners and Supervisors who are responsible for operations in each of the City's five boroughs. There are two Assistant Commissioners in each borough; one who directly oversees adult operations and another who directly oversees juvenile operations. Finally, under each Assistant Commissioner there are Branch Chiefs who are responsible for specific elements of client service delivery such as Investigations and Intake, Intensive Engagement cases, NeON cases, etc. Again, these services are separated by adult and juvenile probation.

The organizational structures in Adult and Juvenile Operations mirror each other, and the Deputy Commissioners of Adult and Juvenile Operations expressed that they communicate daily to share information on cases they have in common, as well as partner on upcoming community events. They also attend cabinet meetings every other week where the Commissioner of Probation and all Deputy Commissioners connect to discuss policy and program implementation. Emphasizing the Department's community-based approach to supervision, Adult and Juvenile Operations also have strong relationships with community across boroughs. This is the result of Assistant Commissioners and Supervisors who oversee operations within each borough having the autonomy to make decisions about client service delivery within their jurisdiction. This allows them to transparently work with the community and to implement appropriate services.

The role of Administrative Operations is to support both Adult and Juvenile Operations. Within Administrative Operations there are Departments of Human Resources, Information Technology, Fiscal and Budgeting, Facilities, Fleet, Quality Assurance, Training, and Management and Assessment Planning. Because the Department has been operating in this manner for years, there are structures in place to



encourage regular coordination and collaboration between divisions. These structures allow Department leadership to collaboratively develop policies and assess resources across Juvenile and Adult Operations in real time. Because there are both common and separate funding streams for Juvenile and Adult Operations, as well as structured opportunities to collaboratively develop policies and programs, leadership is able to build consensus around where money should be allocated.

Strategic Leadership and Planning

As described in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, leadership exists throughout an organization, and should not be confused with authority or position. Leaders are most effective when they create a shared desire in a group to attain a goal or to move in a particular direction. In order to be most successful in organizational change, leaders must empower others to provide leadership, and champions of change need to be identified and recognized throughout the organization.^{20 21} We describe what this process looked like in New York as they developed their strategic plan.

New York City

NYC DOP involved staff, clients, and the community in the strategic planning process in order to enhance buy-in within each group around the direction of the Department. Once the planning process was complete, the main strategy for cultivating staff buy-in and change was to over-communicate the Department's vision and mission and celebrate staff that were implementing new approaches and experiencing successes with clients. For instance, as noted above, the Department created shorts with testimonials from probation staff who were using new strategies and approaches, stating very clearly how and why these new approaches had improved their sense of efficacy, and distributed these in department-wide emails.

To begin the strategic planning process, the then-Commissioner of Probation conducted a listening tour that included 19 separate focus groups of departmental staff, as well as meetings with key external stakeholders. As noted previously, during the listening tour the Commissioner and his team asked respondents about what they thought the strengths and needs of the Department were, including the strengths and weaknesses of their service delivery approach. Additionally, leadership sought input from judges, prosecutors, public defenders, clients, and community members to learn about their perspectives on the Department, including their service delivery approach and the accessibility of community-based treatment and services.

After seeking input from a range of stakeholders, NYC DOP published its mission, vision, goals, and objectives online. They also periodically held public meetings, such as town hall meetings, where cabinet members, including the Commissioner of Probation and Deputy Commissioners of Adult and Juvenile Operations, talked through each part of the plan; the heads of Juvenile and Adult Operations each talked through their sections of the plan, highlighting progress around intended goals, as well as the direction the NYC DOP was heading.



Internal Communication

Leaders must repeatedly articulate values that drive their beliefs about needed change, and also support and reward others who do so in order to help these values and beliefs permeate the organization.²² Over-communicating successes stemming from implementing change also helps to improve staff buy-in and morale. We describe what this process looked like in New York as they underwent change.

New York City

NYC DOP internally communicated their mission, vision, goals, and objectives after developing their strategic plan with valuable input from staff, clients, and the community. In addition, they also clearly communicated the strategies and tactics they intended to implement in order to reach these goals. The strategies and tactics were described in detail and updated periodically, and information was shared internally via email and written posts and videos posted on their website. At least yearly, NYC DOP released a handful of one- to two-minute videos highlighting areas where it improved during the previous year, as well as areas where they fell short and needed to enhance their efforts. In addition, NYC DOP also published testimonials that highlighted probation officers who were implementing new approaches and achieving success with their clients. In this manner, they relayed to their staff what they planned to implement, updated them continuously on how implementation was going, highlighted what success looked like, and clearly showed the direction the Department was headed.

While some probation staff immediately accepted the changes, others were reluctant. Skeptical staff were the target audience of internal communications aimed at increasing buy-in for the new approach. By over-communicating the message and highlighting successes, NYC DOP was able to improve staff morale and facilitate successful change.

Data-Driven Decision Making and Performance Management

As described in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, probation departments should use data to measure staff performance and make decisions about budget allocation, organizational structures, and changes in practices in order to help promote positive organizational- and client-level outcomes.²³

The probation department's executive management team should have a set of measurable goals to collect data on, and also hold regular meetings to assess the data and decide what practices to change, maintain, and/or amend in order to meet goals.²⁴ This section highlights some of the ways that Maricopa County Probation Department and Washington, D.C., DYRS utilize data for these purposes.

Maricopa County

The Maricopa County Probation Department has adopted the Managing for Results model. This model relies on managers developing clearly defined goals and using data to consistently measure outcomes in order to assess the extent to which they achieve these goals. As a part of the Managing for Results model, the Department has established five major goals and delineated specific actions they are implementing to achieve these goals. Data are collected on each goal/activity, and outcomes are



measured on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. This allows the Department to continuously identify issues by looking at data, and to develop services and infrastructure to respond to these issues, and measure the extent to which goals are being reached (i.e., issues are being ameliorated).

One of Maricopa County Probation's current goals is to increase consumer satisfaction, including the satisfaction of both probation clients and crime victims. Toward this end, they recently surveyed victims to assess their satisfaction with the Probation Department. Overall, there was an increase in victim satisfaction since their last survey, but there were some complaints about a lack of responsiveness in a timely manner. When the Department identified this finding from the survey, they broke the results down regionally in order to assess which offices were doing well and which had room for improvement. In the field offices that appeared to have room for improvement, the Probation Department implemented additional trainings and follow-up coaching, and also strategized around resources that might help to improve response times, such as equipping officers with iPhones. The Department continues to train and coach officers from areas with the lowest satisfaction in communication and responsiveness to victims. It also conducts ongoing surveys to assess whether strides have been made in this area and to identify other areas for improvement.

In 2015, Maricopa County Probation also surveyed clients for results to be included in their annual agency report. For the 2015 annual report, the Department collected anonymous questionnaires from 935 probation clients. Over a two-week period, the Department received paper surveys via a submission box in the lobby of every probation office. The surveys asked probation clients questions about how they have experienced probation supervision, and included questions on whether their PO:

- ❖ Treats them with respect;
- ❖ Spends enough time with them;
- ❖ Listens to them;
- ❖ Works with them to help them complete probation successfully;
- ❖ Lets them know how they are doing on probation;
- ❖ Asks for input when making plans for them;
- ❖ Compliments them for good behavior; and
- ❖ Offers to see them more often if they are having problems.

The questionnaire also asked probation clients how much the following practices influence their success on probation:

- ❖ My PO treating me with respect by being patient, honest, fair, understanding, reasonable, supportive, helpful, a good listener, and non-judgmental;
- ❖ My PO communicating with me;
- ❖ My PO keeping me informed about how I am doing on probation; and
- ❖ My PO providing me with referrals and assistance, especially for employment and transportation.



Not only does implementing a consumer satisfaction survey exemplify how to use data to identify issues and assess performance, it also demonstrates that the probation department cares about how probation services are being experienced by clients and families. This conveys an important message to the community as well as probation personnel.

Finally, Maricopa County also utilizes data for quality assurance purposes to assess the performance of probation staff. While probation officers' performance is not directly attached to client outcomes, the Department does assess the extent to which probation officers are implementing expected activities and processes. An example of this is that the Department reviews case plans to assess whether POs use the appropriate assessment tool to develop and update their case plans.

Washington, D.C

Using data for quality assurance and performance management is a critical component of implementing change and measuring success. Data can facilitate the implementation of desired changes by illustrating new criteria for assessing staff performance and holding staff accountable for implementing the desired changes. In Washington, D.C., DYRS built a quality assurance team at the New Beginnings Facility that was tasked with assessing certain measures they were required to report on because of a lawsuit. They also developed additional measures to assess staff performance and client outcomes, such as health, hygiene, and safety, among many other measures.

As a process, the quality assurance team negotiated all measures to track with the executive team. Once agreed upon, quality assurance staff developed metrics for reporting on outcomes. Each quarter, the DYRS director would review progress achieved towards all approved quality assurance measures. In order to minimize disruption of work, staff members were only required to attend presentations relevant to their division. For example, the doctor would come in when they were reviewing physical health measures while the principal attended when they were reviewing educational measures, etc.

A key to the quality assurance team's success in D.C. was that they obtained trust within the facility, and were able to learn and share information with the superintendent and his managers that was previously unknown. For instance, at the New Beginnings facility they had a goal of having 80% of youth receive programming, 80% of their waking hours. The superintendent could not measure this through observation, and by assessing this measure the facility learned that (1) youth weren't always participating when there were programs occurring on their living units and (2) youth who *were* participating more frequently in programming were less likely to be involved in staff incidents. Because the superintendent and staff were all interested in reducing these incidents, this learning promoted greater adherence and commitment to programming standards so that when youth were expected to be participating in programs, staff and teachers were more diligent in attempting to engage youth.

Racial Disparities

While there is substantial variation in the total numbers and rates of individuals on probation in counties across the country, there are clear racial disparities that exist with regards to who is under supervision. James Bell, founder and president of the Burns Institute, a nonprofit organization focused on



community-centered approaches to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in justice systems,²⁵ noted that a prerequisite for reducing disparities is a commitment to collect data on the issues and work collaboratively towards addressing them. Without a true commitment to reduce disparities, having the tools and data in place to track and measure them will not produce change. With this prerequisite in mind, the key themes highlighted across jurisdictions that are actively working to reduce racial disparities are the importance of using data to identify disparities and continuously collaborating with cross-system stakeholders to identify where disparities exist and how they can be reduced.

Multnomah County

In Multnomah County, Oregon, significant racial disparities across all levels of the justice system led to the county's participation in the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge. In 2016, research showed racially disparate outcomes at every discretion point in the justice system, including decisions to cite in lieu of arrest, decisions to prosecute, sentencing patterns, and the likelihood of a probation or parole violation to result in jail stays.

The Director of Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice (DCJ), which provides supervision and treatment services for youth and adults, expressed that the County is currently focused on reducing disparities in juvenile detention by reducing biases found in their detention risk assessment instrument (RAI). The revised tool is designed to ask questions that adjust for and/or neutralize cultural bias, as well as bias created by earlier decisions made about who should and should not penetrate the juvenile justice system. For instance, the RAI initially asked a question about whether youth come from a "good family structure"; this question could be biased toward two-parent households and therefore against minority youth, so they changed the wording on the instrument to ask whether there is an adult willing to ensure that the youth appears in court. As these questions emerge, Multnomah County continuously assesses and revises their tool to address cultural biases that impact scoring results and detention decisions.

Beyond assessing and revising their RAI, the DCJ also implemented an active internal research unit that builds dashboards to assess who is in detention by on race, age, and gender. As they identify disparities, the Department looks further into each case to see what delinquent acts brought youth into the system. By examining the entire system, the County has identified specific processes and practices that produce some of their racial disparities in justice involvement. For example, data showed that disparities existed regarding who was punished for mass transit platform violations. After a collaborative data review sessions with justice partners showed the impact of these disparities, the District Attorney's Office decided to no longer prosecute these cases.

San Joaquin County

San Joaquin County Probation has pursued several initiatives to help advance more positive probation practices in general. With regards to addressing racial and ethnic disparities specifically, the Probation Department received a Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities grant from the Board of State and



Community Corrections. With this grant, the County developed a data team to review data, identify where disparities exist, and establish potential mechanisms for reducing disparities.

The data team creates quarterly reports utilizing data gathered from justice system partners to examine racial disparity at various points in the system. These quarterly reports are reviewed by a coalition of justice partners that includes Probation officials, the District Attorney's Office, judges, and defense attorneys, who meet quarterly to review and discuss the trends in, causes of, and strategies to reduce racial disparity.

Santa Clara County

In 2008, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors established the Juvenile Justice System Collaborative (JJSC) to be chaired by the County Executive Office. The JJSC is dedicated to preventing youth from penetrating the juvenile justice system by improving processes and implementing evidence-based practices. A key goal of the JJSC is to reduce disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system.

The JJSC works together to review data and identify where racial disparities exist and develop mechanisms for reducing disparities. For example, a committee comprised of juvenile justice system and community stakeholders (formed by the JJSC) piloted a modified RAI that was meant to take greater account of the County's local context. In collaboration with the Burns Institute, the County piloted the modified tool on 300 sample cases and decided not to implement the modified instrument because results indicated that the tool could increase racial disparities in detention rates. This process demonstrates the intentionality with which reforms are made in Santa Clara County, as they take into account the racial impact of reform efforts.

The former Chief of Probation, Sheila Mitchell, noted that the development of the JJSC was key to the County's efforts for reducing racial disparities. Over the years, the JJSC's work has been continuously reinforced by the Board of Supervisors, the Probation Department, and other cross-system stakeholders so that the focus on reducing disparities is not just the "soup of the day," but rather a maintained focus. Each year, the JJSC highlights pressing issues, leading to the exploration and implementation of new mechanisms to reduce disparities in juvenile justice.



Chapter 2: Hiring, Staffing, and Training

The labor force of any organization is crucial to its success. Hiring candidates with the necessary skills and experience to fulfill a department's mission, promoting effective workforce management, and offering high-quality and comprehensive workplace training and development programs all contribute to a well-functioning and productive department. Below, we provide key findings around hiring, staffing, and training and then describe best practices in these areas within several jurisdictions across the country.

Key Findings

1. Providing candidates a clear understanding of a probation officer's role and department's approach—through strategies such as detailed job descriptions and information sessions—ensures that individuals who apply for jobs are best suited to carry out the department's mission.
2. A multifaceted hiring process that includes individual interviews, group interviews, and skills testing, such as writing tests, video clip observations, and situational analyses, allows departments to assess candidates' skills sets across multiple domains.
3. Determining the amount of time needed to serve different client populations and regularly monitoring and forecasting staff caseloads enables departments to make immediate adjustments so that staff have similarly assigned workloads.
4. Booster trainings, observational assessments, and individual coaching are necessary to reinforce and deepen skill development and ensure uniform implementation across departments.

Hiring

As government agencies, probation departments' hiring processes operate within a civil service system. Depending on the jurisdiction, civil services may develop job descriptions, create and administer hiring exams, and apply rules that govern the selection process. This section discusses how probation departments in New York City and Solano County have worked within the structure of the civil service system to improve their hiring processes. Both counties emphasized the importance of transparency and communication with regards to hiring to ensure that candidates possess a clear understanding of a probation officer's role and the department's approach.

Solano County

Solano County, California, located in the Northeastern Bay Area, has a population just over 400,000 and a Probation Department with approximately 230 staff. The Solano County Probation Department has taken steps to modify its job descriptions and hiring process to ensure that candidates have a clear understanding of how the Department approaches its work and what it means to be a Solano County probation officer. Solano County has two classifying positions for the position of a deputy probation officer—deputy probation officer (entry) and deputy probation officer (senior)—and both positions call for the same fundamental approach of rehabilitation and evidence-based practices (see entry level job description in Appendix A).



The knowledge of evidence-based practices, principles of social and correctional case and group work, family systems theory, child development, and behavior and motivational theories are listed as required knowledge for senior probation officers. Entry-level DPOs must have knowledge of principles, practices, and techniques of communication, interviewing, counseling, resistant-defensive behavior, personality theory and self-image, and stress and change theory, as well as self awareness-objectivity techniques for understanding others and personality types.

Both job descriptions stress communication and social skills. Officers are expected to communicate and coordinate with external players to support the success of clients under probation. Communication skills are explicitly required in order to build and maintain cooperative working relationships with peers, offenders,ⁱⁱ other agencies, and professionals. Furthermore, qualifying candidates must exhibit specific social skills that allow them to work effectively and fairly with all clients. The job description specifically calls for candidates that are able to learn how to “deal firmly and fairly with offenders of various socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments.” The call for knowledge of objectivity techniques for understanding other personality types supports this requirement.

While there are required abilities to enforce public safety through physical restraints, there is more emphasis on de-escalation and crisis intervention skills. For example, the entry-level job description states that candidates must “learn to recognize personality types and varying behaviors and to diffuse hostile and aggressive behavior.” Officers are also expected to refer clients for services, both job descriptions state that candidates must also be able to make referrals to local and regional providers of social, medical and/or other specialized services.

In addition to these detailed job descriptions, the Probation Department provides information sessions to candidates directly before they take the civil services test. In these hour-long information sessions, the Chief Probation Officer spends half an hour discussing the vision and mission of the agency, the type of employee sought by the Department, and how the Department uses best practices in its work. The Chief explicitly states that the Department is looking for employees who want to change lives and if candidates applied because they want to carry a gun and give orders, then they are better suited to work across the street at the Sheriff's Office. After the Chief's presentation, a background investigator describes the backgrounds process. Candidates then have an opportunity to ask questions to both the Chief and the backgrounds investigator about the hiring process, the job, and the Department. Leadership stressed how the information sessions serve as filters to make sure that the Department receives quality candidates who understand what it means to be a probation officer in Solano County.

After the information session, candidates take a multiple-choice civil service exam and a writing test. Those that pass these steps go on to interview panels, where candidates meet with three staff: a Probation supervisor, Probation line staff, and someone from an outside county agency such as Health and Human Services or the Sheriff's Department. This panel asks structured interview questions and involves staff at different levels to make the hiring process more inclusive. The last steps involve an interview with the Chief and Deputy Chief and the background check.



New York City

In New York City, the DOP does not create its job descriptions. Rather, the Department of Civil Service works with the DOP to conduct a job analysis, which then informs job descriptions and testing processes. Before they can revise job descriptions, the DOP must fully institutionalize a new approach throughout the Department so that Civil Service can conduct another job analysis. In the absence of updated job descriptions, NYC DOP tries to affect the hiring pool by focusing recruitment efforts, including attending career fairs and working with local colleges and university with criminal justice and social work programs to establish a pipeline of job candidates.

After candidates take the civil service test, they are placed on the civil service list, known as the hiring pool. Candidates from this list are then invited to an all-day interview and assessment run by DOP. This day includes individual interviews; group interviews; video clip observations, in which candidates mimic investigation work by observing a video and writing about it; and situational analysis through the Behavioral Personnel Assessment Device (BPAD). Candidates watch the BPAD scenario, then an interviewer asks them structured questions about the scenario and scores these answers using a tool. As described on its website, BPAD does not test knowledge, but helps assess candidate's interpersonal skills in job-specific situations (<http://www.bpad.com/probation/probation-entry.html>).

New York City's civil service rules require DOP to hire based on candidate's rank on the civil service list, which is in order of exam score. However, they are only required to hire one of every three ranked candidates, what they term the one-in-three rule. Therefore, though NYC DOP must hire one of the top three candidates, they are not required to hire all top three candidates. DOP goes down the list in threes, hiring at least one in each group until they have filled all the slots available. This allows DOP to ensure that all candidates have technical proficiency, as measured by the civil services exam, and also allows DOP to look more holistically at a candidate's performance in the interviews and observational assessments.

After candidates are selected and job offers are sent out, the training academy begins within four to eight weeks. During that time, candidates go through the background investigation and medical and psychological screening. A DOP hiring manager estimated that about 80% of candidates make it through the background check and screenings. Criminal history is considered during the background check, but there are no blanket exclusions. In other words, there are no convictions that make candidates ineligible to work for DOP. Rather, Probation assesses each candidate individually and takes into consideration the circumstances of any prior justice involvement, including how long ago the crime occurred.

Staffing

As discussed in this section, staffing refers to workforce management processes that department management uses to ensure that the right staff are in each position and that work is effectively allocated. The size of Los Angeles County, both in population and geography, make staffing particularly challenging. Leadership from Multnomah County and Solano County spoke to the need for data to inform staffing decisions. Regular monitoring and forecasting of staff caseloads enables departments to



make immediate adjustments so that staff have similarly assigned workloads. Additionally, regular assessment and discussion of staff performance helps ensure that staff's responsibilities align with their strengths.

Multnomah County

In Oregon, the Multnomah County DCJ emphasis on data-driven decision making extends to staffing. DCJ uses dashboards and assessments to monitor and assess staff workloads. The dashboards identify any increases or decreases in populations, which allows management to adjust staffing in response. Caseloads are also constantly monitored to ensure that they are meeting target caseload size. These caseload sizes are based on the expected intensity of the interaction between the probation officer and client. If there is a need for additional staff to due to spikes in population or due to vacancies, DCJ can bring in retired officers to fill spots temporarily. These individuals are already trained and have the necessary credentials to work as probation officers.

Solano County

Similar to Multnomah County, Solano County also bases caseload sizes around the specific activities and interactions expected of officers within the Probation Department. To identify exactly how much time it takes officers to complete their work, the Department hired a consultant to conduct a workload analysis. This analysis resulted in a supervision policy with specific instructions for interactions between probation officers and clients, such as what is required in the initial meeting. The workload analysis also produced a series of workload measures that are based on Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) scores. Supervisors frequently look at staff caseloads to ensure they are equally distributed.

Supervisors also meet with their staff individually on a quarterly basis to review staff performance. If there are any performance issues, a performance improvement plan is developed and staff meet more frequently with their supervisor. To assess staff performance, a supervisor and a member of the quality assurance team observe interactions with clients and provide feedback that aligns with training staff receive on Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS) and motivational interviewing. If Probation management regularly hears negative feedback about how a probation officer works with clients from the officer's supervisor, quality assurance person, and/or colleagues, then management will transfer the probation officer to a position that does not involve client-facing work.

Similar to hiring new probation officers, individuals seeking a promotion also go through two rounds of interviews. The first is a screening interview with two staff from outside agencies, such as Health and Human Services or the Sheriff's Office, and one staff person from Probation. As noted by the Chief of Probation, involving external interviewers allows candidates to be assessed from a different perspective and also limits any nepotism that could occur, since these external interviewers have not worked with the candidate. The second interview is with the Chief of Probation, the Deputy Chief, and an external individual with the same philosophy as the Probation Department. Promotions are determined based on the feedback from these interviews, coupled with a candidates performance reviews. (Note that this



process is less feasible in a jurisdiction the size of Los Angeles where the promotion process is more likely to vary by staff role.

Training

Though all probation departments are required to meet state training standards for new and continuing staff, they also generally have flexibility to select what types of trainings are provided and how these trainings are implemented. Interestingly, while probation leadership from New York City, Multnomah County, and Maricopa County spoke about certain types of trainings that they have found to be successful—such as restorative practices, EPICS, or leadership skills—they all stressed the importance of sustaining and maintain skill development. They identified booster trainings, observational assessments, and individual coaching as necessary to reinforce and deepen skill development and ensure uniform implementation across departments.

New York City

All personnel, probation officers, as well as clerical staff who interact with clients in New York City undergo a full 40-hour week of all-day trainings, plus additional ongoing training continuing over several months. Probation staff receive training in motivational interviewing, community engagement, cultural competency, trauma-informed care, and the six agency drivers (see the NeON description on Page 44), among other relevant subject areas.

While the training itself is valuable, perhaps more important is the ongoing coaching individuals receive upon completion of mandatory trainings. For example, after officers receive training on case plans, called Individual Action Plans (IAPS), they have field-based coaching. Trainers go to each office for a week, with the first two days of group training followed by three days of individual coaching. Individual coaching is employed whenever new practices are introduced. For example, when NYC DOP began using a new case management program, coaches assisted staff in understanding how to use the software and explained its benefits.

NYC DOP has found training on restorative practices to be particularly effective, largely because this approach spans different functional and skill areas. NYC DOP has taken steps to improve this training. Initially, it was off-the-shelf and while officers understood why it was important, they did not recognize how to apply restorative practices to their work. To ensure officers used restorative practices, NYC DOP refined the training and tailored it to the Department.

To make sure that trainings are relevant and useful to staff, NYC DOP is in the process of decentralizing training. Rather than relying on a centralized training unit to identify training needs and release a list of trainings that staff can attend, they have created the expectation that operational areas drive training. Though NYC DOP previously encouraged staff to request trainings, it is now an expectation that staff will think critically about what training they need and want.



Multnomah County

DCJ has been moving toward evidence-based practices since 2011. They have worked with the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) to implement the EPICS model. This shift required staff to place a more intentional emphasis on client skills training, client emotional management, adaptation to client style (versus client adaptation to officer style), and incorporation of evidence-based literature (as opposed to subjective experience) as the foundation of their work. It also required probation officers to structure their sessions with clients differently and to monitor how closely those sessions aligned with the EPICS model. Four years into adopting the EPICS model, DCJ's fidelity monitoring showed that 60% of cases followed the model with fidelity.

Extensive training and coaching was required to support this shift. First, the entire probation officer staff was required to participate in three full days of training delivered by the UCCI training team. As a follow-up, they all received monthly "booster" sessions, also delivered by the UCCI trainers, as well as coaching sessions. For the coaching sessions, each PO was asked to provide a tape-recorded client session, which the UCCI coach would code for how effectively the PO used the EPICS techniques, recognize his or her progress, and then support the PO in applying the techniques more effectively (as applicable). Toward the end of the first year, a team of DCJ staff who had already undergone the training and the five-month follow up boosters and coaching was trained by UCCI (during five full-day sessions) to become trainer-coaches, to eliminate DCJ's reliance on UCCI.ⁱⁱⁱ The DCJ trainer-coaches then took over the training and coaching; coaching and booster trainings were reduced to quarterly; and the three-day plus five-month training-coaching protocol was incorporated into the new employee induction process (delivered by internal trainer-coaches).

Table 4. Multnomah County Training

Training Description	Participants	Trainers	Frequency
Initial Year			
Three-day training on effective practices in corrections (risk-need-responsivity, cognitive behavioral interventions including cognitive restructuring, goal-setting, structured skill-building, etc.)	All Probation Officers	UCCI	Once
Monthly "booster" training sessions via video-conference (could be delivered as online training)	All Probation Officers	UCCI	Monthly for 5 months
Coaching sessions, based on one monthly tape-	All Probation	UCCI	Monthly

ⁱⁱⁱ Initially, Multnomah DCJ assigned PO supervisors to serve as coaches. They would rotate through this role so that every supervisor had a chance to coach POs in the new model. They found that supervisors gained a lot of understanding of the model this way. Eventually, however, they found that supervisors were overwhelmed with the new duties, which were laid on top of their regular duties. DCJ then decided to hire additional staff and create a team of 24 whose sole duties were to deliver training and coaching.



recorded client session	Officers	After Booster Sessions
Five-day training on how to become a trainer-coach	Supervisors or UCCI Designated Coaches	Once
Ongoing		
Three-day training on effective practices in corrections	All New Probation Officer	Internal Trainers As needed
Monthly coaching sessions with NEW POs, based on tape-recorded client sessions	All New POs	Internal Coaches Monthly for 5 months
Quarterly “booster” training sessions	All Probation Officers	Internal Coaches Quarterly
Quarterly coaching sessions, based on tape-recorded client sessions	All Probation Officers	Internal Coaches Quarterly

In addition to EPICS training, Multnomah incorporated regular officer coaching sessions. Similar to the basic EPICS construct, the implementation team asked all EPICS-trained probation/parole officers to submit one tape-recorded client session per month to a designated EPICS coach. The coach would then provide feedback on their EPICS fidelity. An integral component to note regarding the coaching process involves client consent to participate in coaching.

There are two dozen EPICS coaches in Multnomah County. In general, these officers are removed from an active caseload for a six-month period to serve as a full-time coach. At the end of a given term, the officers rotate back into their caseloads and are replaced by new line officers. Of note, it was subsequently discovered that these rotational term periods were allowing officers to incorporate new, advanced skills and knowledge into their caseloads.

Santa Clara County

When juvenile populations declined in the county, the Santa Clara County Probation Department (SCCPD) began to reconsider workforce training and development. With smaller caseloads, staff had more time to develop relationships with clients. To support a rehabilitative approach, SCCPD began offering training on trauma-informed care, case planning, and cognitive behavioral therapy. As staff learned new skills and became proficient in these areas, staff classifications also shifted in order to reflect new skillsets.

The SCCPD also offers specialized training for staff who work with specific populations. For example, staff at the Reentry Assistance Program at a juvenile ranch received training in evidence-based practices focused on four areas: practice skills, motivational interviewing, case planning, and rewards and sanctions.²⁶ Staff who work in the Dually Involved Youth unit receive cross-training with Department of Family and Children’s Services social workers around topics including Child and Family Practice Model,



Trauma-Informed Practice, Cultural Humility, Juvenile Justice 101, Dependency 101, and TARGET Trauma.²⁷



Chapter 3: Client Service Delivery

As noted in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, probation departments should focus their supervision and services on those clients who pose the greatest risk to public safety. Probation officers should utilize validated risk assessment and need assessment tools in order to determine each client's risk for recidivism and supervision intensity, as well as to identify service needs to be addressed through strengths-based case management and connections with services.²⁸ Successful community supervision is also highly dependent on the rapport built between POs and their clients, and increasingly probation officers are applying motivational interviewing techniques, cognitive behavioral interventions, and trauma-informed approaches in order to help build rapport with their clients and enhance their readiness for change.

Findings

1. Banking low risk caseloads and offering early release for individuals in long-standing compliance with their probation terms is consistent with evidence-based corrections and helps to reduce potential harms that come from supervising low-risk populations, as well as conserve resources for higher-risk cases.
2. Structured Decision-Making (SDM) helps guide probation officers in their recommendations to the court, particularly around juvenile dispositions and placements, so that their recommendations are more consistent, fair, and effective.
3. By providing services to help probation clients meet basic needs, as well as utilizing a community-based, client-centered supervision approach, probation officers can build trust with clients while improving client reporting and outcomes.
4. Collaborating with clients to develop individualized case plans that include long-term goals along with short-term activities to complete between meetings helps to build rapport and buy-in from clients.
5. Formally partnering with individuals with a history of justice system involvement to engage youth in structured and transformative mentorships is an effective model for supporting young adults on probation and changing antisocial attitudes, beliefs, and actions.
6. By providing access to various art programs, not only as a form of creativity and self-expression, but also as an avenue for employment, probation departments can help create employment opportunities that clients are passionate about.
7. Probation should only actively supervise the highest risk youth and use prevention and/or diversion programs to reduce harm and decrease penetration into the juvenile justice system for others.

Supervise the Right People the Right Amount

With probation departments across the country under transformation, a number of agencies are focusing on increasing public safety through a harm reduction model which includes reducing unnecessary probation contact by only supervising those who need to be supervised, for an appropriate period of time. In order to do so, some jurisdictions focus on prevention and diversion efforts, while also



relying more on incentives like shortening probation terms for good behavior, rather than sanctions like revocation and incarceration. This section highlights work being done in New York, Multnomah County, Maricopa County, and Wayne County to promote public safety through a harm reduction model.

New York City

In New York City, a Probation Officer in the Investigation/Intake Unit administers the Level of Service Inventory-Revised Screening Version (LSI-R:SV) risk and needs assessment to all adults sentenced to Probation and the Youth Level of Service (YLS) risk and needs assessment to all youth placed on probation. Adults who score low-risk are put on an administrative caseload with only telephone or kiosk check-ins. By not actively supervising low-risk clients, this opens up additional resources dedicated for working with medium and high-risk populations. Over the past decade, as New York City's actively supervised probation population has decreased drastically, funding has not decreased at the same pace. As a result, there are additional funds available to the Department that are used to implement new programs such as the NeON arts and sports programs, discussed in greater detail below.

The DOP also implemented SDM, also described in greater detail below, to ensure that probation recommendations are more consistent, fair, and effective, as well as to reduce the number of placements of the city's youth. Early results demonstrate that SDM has had the intended effect. NYC DOP has also been intentional about strictly limiting the circumstances in which the Department can put youth in custody pre-adjudication or recommend any custody post-adjudication. In particular, youth cannot be placed back in custody on the basis of truancy or any other violation of probation terms that does not pose a threat to public safety. For example, DOP has a presumption against detaining or recommending placement for youth involved in commercial sexual activity, unless they are also involved in other activity that puts the general public at risk, since commercial sexual activity in and of itself does not pose a risk to public safety.

Multnomah County

In 1994, Multnomah County opened a Day Reporting Center (DRC) as an alternative to incarceration. The DRC program is non-residential, highly structured, and targets criminogenic needs such as anti-social thinking, impulsivity, lack of employment and education, antisocial peers, substance abuse, and mental health concerns. It is operated by the DCJ (the same agency that runs probation). Clients have frequent contact with DRC staff. In some cases, they meet with staff daily. Clients participate in cognitive-behavioral skill-building groups, and are active agents in their case planning, setting priorities and goals with DRC staff and their probation officers.

The DRC is used for probation clients that many other jurisdictions would hold in jail, including probation violators. The existence of this program allows jail beds to be available for more serious offenders, and evaluations have demonstrated that individuals who complete the program have reduced rates of recidivism.

The philosophy of the juvenile justice system is to only actively supervise the highest risk cases with long histories of justice involvement. In fact, in Multnomah County there are numerous offenses for which



pre- or post-adjudication detention are not an option. Moreover, there is only one facility that that holds approximately 190 beds; on any given day today the County is only using approximately 38 of these beds to detain youth.

Rather than detaining and/or actively supervising the majority of youth, Multnomah County prioritizes juvenile diversion or informal probation where youth are not actively supervised. The County contracts with culturally specific providers who work with the Community Healing Initiative to lead the juvenile diversion effort. In addition, the County also has a Peer Court program to divert youth who have committed first time low-level offenses. The primary goal of the County's approach, along with ensuring public safety, is to keep penetration into the juvenile system at a minimum.

Maricopa County

In Maricopa County, the Offender Screening Tool is administered to each individual prior to sentencing. Based on their risk score each individual is assigned to a probation unit. In order to minimize harm and not waste resources, low-risk cases do not report in person, and some low-risk cases go unsupervised (with conditions attached that they must successfully complete).

Most notably, as a part of the County's Justice Reinvestment Strategy, individuals can earn time credit and early termination from probation. For each month in compliance with their case plan and community service hours, individuals received twenty days credit (some populations are excluded from this policy, including individuals convicted for sex offenses). Additionally, if an individual is in compliance with the conditions of his/her case plan for a sustained period, the Probation Department will go back to court and seek termination of the case. At these court hearings, the victim is given the right to be heard, and the prosecutor can weigh in. According to Chief Broderick, the judge grants termination in the vast majority of these cases (approximately nine out of every 10 times).

Wayne County

Wayne County, Michigan, has transformed its juvenile justice system over the course of the past two decades, placing focus on harm reduction through reducing the number of youth who penetrate the juvenile justice system. There has been huge emphasis placed on implementing and utilizing prevention and diversion options in the County in order to reduce the number of youth officially processed and improve outcomes.

As a result, since 1999:

- ❖ The average daily number of youth in secure detention has decreased from over 500 to approximately 108 youth per day;
- ❖ The average daily number of youth in state training schools has decreased from approximately 731 to three youth per day;
- ❖ The state ward caseload has decreased from approximately 3,400 youth to 620 youth; and
- ❖ Recidivism rates have dropped from approximately 50% to 16%.²⁹



Dan Chaney, former Director of the Juvenile Services Division in Wayne County, noted that a change in one area of the juvenile justice system impacts all areas of a system. For Wayne County, this meant that improving the continuum of services and reducing the number of youth penetrating the system resulted in lower rates of detention and wardship, smaller caseloads, fewer out-of-home placements, and better outcomes.

Structured Decision Making

SDM is the use of a formal and standardized procedure for guiding probation officers in their recommendations to the court, particularly around client dispositions and placements. The goal of SDM is to ensure that probation recommendations are more consistent, fair, and effective. In implementing SDM, probation departments generally use a grid that lists out what sorts of recommendations should be made based on risk assessment results and offense severity.

New York City

As noted previously, probation officers utilize validated risk and needs assessment tools in order to identify the criminogenic risks and needs of individuals on Probation. NYC DOP uses the LSI-R:SV with adult clients and the YLS tool with juvenile clients in order to inform their case planning efforts and supervision intensity. In addition to determining levels of supervision and informing case plans, risk scores also play a large role in the City's SDM process that was rolled out within juvenile operations in 2012.

During the implementation process, the probation commissioner received input from an array of stakeholders about the grid so that by the time they finalized the tool and began implementation they had a great deal of buy-in from multiple stakeholders. They went through seven versions of the SDM tool before landing on the current, finalized version highlighted in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. NYC DOP's Structured Decision Making Grid for Juvenile Placement

MOST SERIOUS CURRENT ARREST CHARGE	LIKELIHOOD OF RE-ARREST		
	HIGH OR VERY HIGH	MODERATE	LOW
CLASS I: A, B felonies (violent & non-violent), violent C felonies	BOX #1 Out of Home Placement ¹	BOX #2 Out of Home Placement or Alternative to Placement	BOX #3 Alternative to Placement or Probation (To Be Specified)
CLASS II: Non-violent C felonies, violent D felonies	BOX #4 Out of Home Placement or Alternative to Placement	BOX #5 Alternative to Placement or ESP (Level 3 Probation)	BOX #6 Level 1 or 2 Probation
CLASS III: Non violent D, All E felonies, misd assault and misd weapons possession	BOX #7 Alternative to Placement or ESP (Level 3 Probation)	BOX #8 Level 1 or 2 Probation	BOX #9 Level 1 Probation or CD
CLASS IV: A misdemeanors except assault and weapons and all B misdemeanors²	BOX #10 Level 1 or 2 Probation	BOX #11 CD or ACD	BOX #12 ACD or short term one time consequence or Dismissal
MANDATORY CONSIDERATIONS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Must consider CD or ACD for youth with no unsealed priors. Decision is based on the circumstances of the case. 2. If case goes to trial, use most serious finding offense DISCRETIONARY OVERRIDES: <p>POs have discretion to recommend either a more or less restrictive option than the grid provides. However, all overrides - up or down - must be submitted with justification for approval to the PO's supervisor and Borough Director</p>			

The YLS and SDM were rolled out at the same time one borough at a time. Within each borough, roll-out entailed three months of intensive support for probation, attorneys, and judges, with ongoing meetings after this initial period. When the tool was first introduced, various court stakeholders had many disagreements and a level of conflict persisted for the first six months. Probation then created a "bench book" to provide judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys with an explanation of the YLS assessment tool and SDM process. Proceedings went more smoothly after the bench book, and there are currently restrictions on the extent to which the tool can be overridden.

Based on 2016 data provided by NYC DOP, approximately 53% of the time judges follow the SDM recommendation, 28% of the time they override the recommendation and place clients in less secure settings, and approximately 19% they override the recommendation and place clients in more secure settings. Based on these findings, the use of placement has gone down since the introduction of SDM.

Multnomah County

Multnomah County has implemented an externally validated detention RAI to support structured decision-making in detention screening. Prior to implementing the RAI, probation staff made detention decisions based primarily based on their experiences and opinions, given the circumstances of each case.³⁰ The RAI allows for more objective decisions and a reduction of bias.

RAI scores are based on the seriousness of the new offense and previous criminal history, as well as aggravating (e.g., no community ties, history, or running away, etc.) and mitigating circumstances (e.g., school attendance, adult availability, first violation). The score determines a youth's risk to re-offend or fail to appear for a hearing. The RAI score results in a measurement of high, medium, or low need for



supervision (there are also circumstances where the tool may be overridden and youth are detained for domestic violence or weapon charges), and conditions for release as indicated below:

- ❖ RAI score of 0-6 = unconditional release
- ❖ RAI score of 7-11 = conditional release
- ❖ RAI score of 12 or greater = detained

Probation staff in Multnomah County continuously assess the RAI tool and modify it based on statistical data analyses that help to determine the extent to which specific questions introduce bias across race, class, and/or gender, among other factors, as well as the tool's performance as a risk assessment instrument. Since the initial implementation of the RAI, the County has developed three updated versions of the assessment tool.³¹

Case Management and Supervision Approach

As described in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, probation officers should utilize validated risk and need assessment tools to determine clients' risk for recidivism and supervision intensity, as well as service needs to be addressed through strengths-based case management and connections with services.³² Additionally, successful probation officers are able to build rapport with their clients by striking a balance between law enforcement and intervention roles, and by applying techniques such as motivational interviewing techniques, cognitive behavioral interventions, and trauma-informed approaches in order to help build rapport with their clients and enhance their readiness for change.³³ Below, RDA highlights NYC DOP's innovative approach to case management and supervision.

New York City

When an adult reports to Probation in New York, an intake probation officer conducts the LSI-R:SV and assigns each individual to the appropriate caseload based on his/her risk score, among other factors such as age and location of residence, discussed in greater detail below. All individuals who score low are put on an administrative caseload where they check-in only via telephone or kiosk. Individuals scoring medium to high-risk check in with greater frequency and have more intensive interactions under community supervision. Scores can be overridden only if both intake officers and their supervisors agree it is appropriate based on history and pre-sentence investigation.

All probation officers in New York are trained in motivational interviewing, community engagement, young brain development, and stages of change (see *Training* section above for more detail around NYC DOP's training approach). For individuals under active supervision, probation officers spend substantial upfront time engaging with clients, developing IAPs (discussed in great detail below and in Appendix B)^{iv}, and making referrals to services. At their first meeting, POs conduct the full LSI-R:SV, as well as mental health and substance use screenings in order to determine the needs of their client and appropriate

^{iv} Until recently these were implemented with greater consistency with the TAY population. Currently there is great emphasis on ensuring POs are developing and updating IAPs consistently with all adults under community supervision, including young adults.



treatment and service referral options. In conducting these assessments, POs begin to develop an understanding of the values and beliefs of each individual they are supervising, including their readiness for change and their attitudes toward employment, their family, peer relationships, etc. This is important so that POs and clients can work together to develop actionable goals that their client can meet, and build on as they work toward larger goals highlighted in their IAP.

While the service delivery components described above are key components of NYC DOP's supervision approach, what truly defines their unique approach are the NeONs.

Neighborhood Opportunity Networks

NeONs are community-based probation offices located in the communities where the largest numbers of youth and adult probation clients live. Here, probation clients can check-in on computerized kiosks, meet in-person with their POs, and access services and programs through extensive partnerships with community-based organizations and public agencies. More specifically, NeONs offer a broad suite of services that are helpful to many individuals on Probation and community members alike, and also align with Maslow's hierarchy of needs:

❖ Basic (physiological) needs:

- Food pantry
- Health insurance enrollment
- Photo IDs issued
- Transit support

❖ Safety needs:

- Mental health and substance abuse assessment and referral
- Parent support program

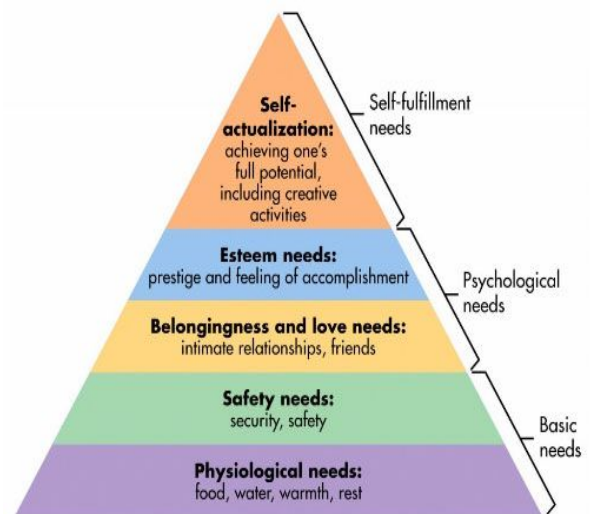
❖ Esteem needs:

- Pre-employment services (CBO-run at NeONs)
- Employment services
- GED (High school equivalency exam)

❖ Self-Actualization:

- City University of New York College Ready Now program (financial aid to Hofstra and Bronx CUNY)
- Free verse poetry classes and performances

Figure 3. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Probation personnel recognize the NeON approach as a paradigm shift from what probation used to be. By delivering services and supports to meet basic needs, the NeONs demonstrate that the Department supports the well-being of their clients. By co-locating education, employment, mental health, and



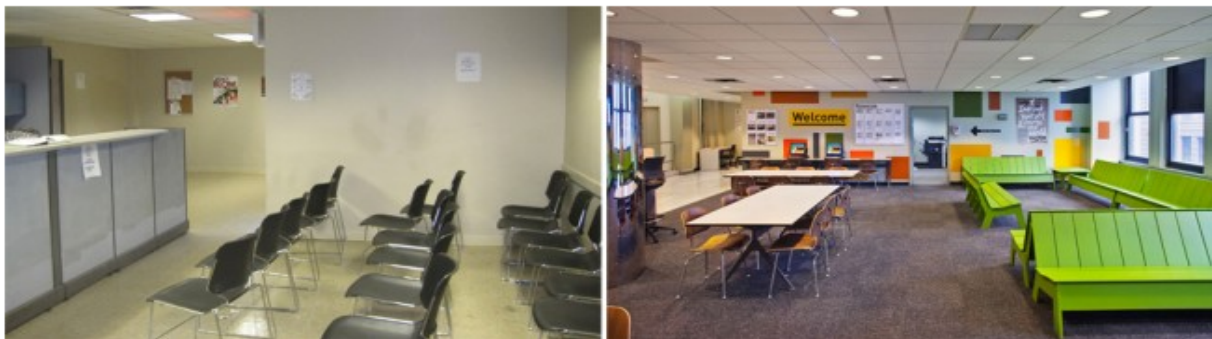
substance abuse services at the NeONs, NYC DOP enables clients to access the supports they need to satisfy the terms of their probation, all in one place. Also, by providing additional programs such as Arches, NeON Arts, and Parent Peer Support Programs (all described in greater detail below), among others, the NeON approach demonstrates to clients that Probation cares about them, and wants them to be their best selves. These messages are meaningful to clients, and appear to increase trust, improve client reporting, and result in better client outcomes.

"You can't say 'we've tried everything,' because, no you haven't. What we had been doing for decades in probation wasn't working. As a PO it can be hard to get clients to report, but when we opened the NeONs and offered clients what they needed and wanted, clients reported and came three times a week because they wanted to."

– Ana Bermudez, Commissioner of Probation

Figure 4. below provides a snapshot of a NYC DOP office prior to and after implementing the NeON model. Consistent with what one would expect to see in a community resource center, the NeONs are designed to be physically welcoming.

Figure 4. NYC DOP Office in Queens Before and After Developing NeONs



L: Queens Adult, 162-24 Jamaica Ave., 2010. Photo courtesy of the NYC DOP. | R: Resource Hub, 2012. Photo by David Sundberg, courtesy of Esto.

In order to create these beautiful spaces, NYC DOP had to redesign a number of probation offices. The South Bronx NeON, for example, had been a neighborhood-located satellite probation office. At that time, the office resembled your typical correctional setting with a reception desk surrounded by bullet-proof glass. NYC DOP transformed this space into a NeON by taking down the glass and removing rows of industrial chairs, as well as painting walls, installing artwork, replacing waiting area chairs with colorfully-painted benches and tables, building a small stage for performances and presentations, and much more.

According to probation officers working at the NeONs, the everyday execution of their jobs feels remarkably different at the NeONs.

"As a PO prior [to the NeONs], it was difficult to get clients to report. Once we started offering services, clients began reporting to Probation because they wanted to, not because they had to. When I saw clients coming in multiple times per week



voluntarily I knew we were on to something."

– NYC DOP Deputy Probation Officer

Not only do probation staff experience the difference afforded by the NeON model, community advocates also see a change.

"When this started, I was the biggest critic of the NeON and now I'm the biggest advocate. I didn't think Probation could be a part of social change."

– NYC Community Advocate

An important component to the NeON model is that all of the services and supports (except checking in at kiosks or in-person with probation officers) are open to the community. This is meaningful for three major reasons:

1. It reduces the stigma of using the NeON services.
2. It allows members of a client's support system (spouses, parents, siblings, friends, etc.) to also access services, which increases the client's likelihood of success.
3. It transforms the NeON from a conventional probation office to a community resource that serves as a resiliency factor at the neighborhood level.

Solano County (Juvenile Division)

Solano County received a grant from the Sierra Health Foundation to launch the Positive Youth Justice Initiative in 2012. Utilizing a positive youth development and trauma-informed approach, Solano County's juvenile division seeks to invest in youth, treat trauma, and provide wraparound service delivery to youth under community supervision. The goal of this approach is to reduce barriers to youth's successful transition to adulthood, including structural biases that exacerbate the overrepresentation of youth of color in the juvenile justice system.

Currently in Solano County, juvenile probation officers (as well as those supervising adults) are not armed, and pepper spray is not permitted in juvenile detention facilities. These policies, while controversial among some probation personnel, help ensure that the Probation Department prioritizes training on non-coercive techniques and skills-development among its officers. Policies like these are instrumental in how the role of the probation officer is envisioned, conceived, and enacted. They also help to emphasize that probation officer duties should center around cognitive-behavioral interventions, the practice of using incentives and graduated sanctions, and a focus on meeting clients' criminogenic needs (rather than a focus on control).

Along with these reform efforts, the Juvenile Division of the Solano County Probation Department has implemented a Response Matrix (see Appendix C) to create greater consistency in probation officer responses to minor, moderate, or major violations of probation clients' terms of probation. Similar to the use of a Structured Decision Making tool, which is used at the front-end to ensure consistency in placement decisions, a Response Matrix ensures probation officers hold the same understanding of commensurate responses to what the Department deems as low-severity, moderate-severity, and high-



severity probation violations. Recommended responses to probation violations align along the severity of the violation, as well as the assessed risk level of the client. Solano County's Response Matrix is designed so that a moderate-risk client who has a low-severity probation violation might receive a verbal admonishment, or a writing assignment, while a very high-risk client who has a high-severity probation violation may have an increase in supervision or may be remanded back into custody. In effect, the use of the Response Matrix in Solano County has significantly reduced the number of youth returning to custody on the basis of a probation violation. Such a tool can also guard against the capricious implementation of justice that can occur when the practices, training, and values of officers vary widely across a department.

Multnomah County (Juvenile Division)

As noted previously, Multnomah County's DCJ aims to only actively supervise the highest risk cases with long histories of justice involvement. Rather than detaining and/or actively supervising the majority of youth, Multnomah County prioritizes juvenile diversion or informal probation where youth are not actively supervised.

In an effort to improve outcomes for high-risk youth under supervision and their families, DCJ sought an evidence-based service delivery model. Specifically, for youth on active probation, the Functional Family Probation (FFP) model is followed.

In using FFP, the County strives to:

- ❖ Engage and motivate youths and families to participate in probation and in services to which the family is referred;
- ❖ Use proven assessment tools to identify the youth and family's greatest needs and most important areas for change;
- ❖ Focus on the strengths of the youth and his or her family members;
- ❖ Link youths and families to appropriate and effective services;
- ❖ Support youth and families and monitor attendance and participation in services to which they've been referred; and,
- ❖ When youth and family participation in referred services is complete, help youths and families maintain positive change for future success.³⁴

Since DCJ believes the families of youth ultimately play the most critical role in supporting youth to make positive changes, FFP focuses on relationships and families rather than on the individual youth. As an integrative supervision and case management model, FFP is used to engage, motivate, assess, and work successfully with high-risk youth and their families. Following the arrest, a Juvenile Court Counselor meets with families throughout the course of supervision. All services offered through FFP are community-based, evidence-based, and designed specifically for youth and their families.³⁵



Supervising Transitional Age Youth

Young adulthood is a transitional period that can range from age 18 to 25. As noted in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, neurological research has recently verified that young adults are developmentally distinct from older adults and more similar to their younger counterparts. Because of this, the transition to adulthood is especially challenging for justice-system-involved young adults, as they are more likely to have personal histories that can further disrupt psychosocial development.^{36 37} For these reasons, probation departments across the country are developing specialized units to work with the transitional age youth (TAY) population.

San Francisco

Within San Francisco's Adult Probation Department there is a specialized unit that supervises TAY ages 18 to 25. A validated risk and needs assessment, the COMPAS, is administered to every TAY client and each client works collaboratively with their probation officer to develop an Individual Rehabilitation Treatment Plan (IRTP). TAY on probation have input in developing their IRTP and collaborate with probation officers to agree on what goals to prioritize as well as the necessary activities to achieve these goals. Monthly contact is based on COMPAS risk scores:

- ❖ High-risk clients have one office visit and one home visit per month.
- ❖ Medium-risk clients have one office visit every month and one home visit every two months.
- ❖ Low-risk clients do not actively report and have periodic telephone check-ins.

TAY clients also have access to resources at the Community Service Assessment Center (CSAC), a one-stop reentry community center. At the CSAC, clients can access intensive clinical case management; individual, group, and family counseling; dialectical behavior therapy; drug therapy; drug monitoring; and referrals for substance abuse treatment, housing, parenting, academic, and vocational support through linkages in the community. Together, these services support a model of service delivery that is client-centered, strength-based, and trauma-informed. The TAY unit also partners with a violence prevention program, Interrupt, Predict and Organize that provides participants with job readiness training through a community based organization. Participants that successfully complete the training program are often placed in City departments.

In San Francisco, justice involved young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 "who have legal and social service needs" have the opportunity to be referred to Young Adult Court (YAC). YAC is a collaborative justice court program designed to promote positive life outcomes and avoid recidivism by providing added supports specific to the needs of TAY. Ultimately, the court strives to align opportunities for accountability and transformation with the unique needs and developmental stage of this age group.

In the YAC program, the probation officers, case managers, and partner staff work closely together to identify and address the needs of participants. YAC largely focuses on leveraging the probation officer and YAC staff as a support system for the participant. The program values connection with the client as an essential element of success; therefore, POs are trained in motivational interviewing and trust building.



YAC's approach to service delivery focuses on addressing the comprehensive needs of their clients by providing and connecting clients to evidence-based services and critical resources such as housing, mental health treatment, and vocational training through their partnership with city agencies and community providers. Community treatment and case management is provided by the Family Service Agency/Felton Institute (FSA), which follows a trauma-informed model for service delivery. FSA provides a strengths-based and client-centered approach for youth who are also challenged by substance abuse and co-occurring disorders and are deemed high-risk to reoffend. YAC staff and partners closely coordinate efforts with probation officers so that clients access a unique blend of services, contingent on the results of their IRTP and an Individualized Achievement Plan. Clients are engaged in YAC for a period of one year by transitioning through four phases, with an ongoing relationship of care in the areas of job readiness, housing, educational support, and parenting.

YAC accepts participants from varying risk levels, including violent and nonviolent misdemeanors and felonies. Upon program completion, participants are given the opportunity to reduce their sentence from felony to misdemeanor and/or be expunged.

New York City

In New York, individuals on probation are usually assigned an Investigation Probation Officer, an Intake Probation Officer, a Supervision Probation Officer, and a Step-Down Probation Officer. Investigation Probation Officer work with a client to develop reports for the court while Intake Probation Officer do intake and conduct the LSI-R:SV to determine which unit clients should be assigned to. Once assigned to a unit, each client typically works with one probation officer until the terms of their supervision are stepped down, at which point the client would be transferred to another probation officer until their probation is terminated. Contrary to the typical process, 16- to 24-year-olds who are assigned to the "Anyone Can Excel" (ACE) unit in New York only work with one probation officer. ACE emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the probation officer and client for this population. The unit focuses primarily on ensuring that probation officers are more than a liaison to service referrals, and instead leverages them as primary change agents for clients. ACE accomplishes this by conducting a validated risk and needs assessment with all TAY clients and utilizing information from the assessment to collaboratively develop IAPs with their clients.

Conversations between probation officers and their clients provide the framework for the IAPs. This approach is based on the importance of recognizing where clients are in readiness for change, as well as guiding clients to take ownership of their trajectory on probation. Rather than reading off a list of activities that clients must complete, clients and their probation officer work together to prioritize goals and action items based on LSI-R:SV score outcomes and client needs. For instance, if a probation officer and client identify attaining full-time employment as a goal on the IAP, then action steps might include filling out three applications prior to their next check-in and conducting a google search on the type of jobs that may interest the client.

The ACE unit uses a strengths-based approach towards service delivery, and probation officers are trained and coached on restorative practices, group facilitation, and motivational interviewing skills. POs



also receive training in Positive Youth Development and adolescent brain development. ACE unit probation officers are also expected to utilize the Carey Guides, a set of 33 handbooks that help officers use evidence-based practices with their clients. ACE uses these guides to support the implementation of a cognitive behavioral framework for addressing criminogenic needs and common case management issues.

All TAY clients are expected to complete a 16-week course called Decision Points. This course is an evidence-based, cognitive-behavioral correctional program designed to target clients' antisocial thoughts and address participants' risk, needs, and responsivity in a group setting. Decision Points is delivered in a repeating series of five group sessions where the trouble cycle and decision-making process is reviewed and connected to real life issues.

In addition to Decision Points, ACE clients are connected to services such as YouthWrap, Arches, and the NeON Arts and Sports programs, described in greater detail below. YouthWrap is a program developed after Hurricane Sandy that was established as a weekend restoration assistance project that continues to receive funding today. Some ACE clients are also connected to the Young Adult Success Corps, which is for higher functioning clients who have successfully completed YouthWrap. These individuals, through a partnership with City Services, receive paid internships at a nonprofit working four times a week, while every fifth day they receive professional development opportunities. The Young Adult Success Corps is a 10-month program, and upon successful completion many clients are offered full-time employment.

Continuum of Services

In order to provide individuals under community supervision an opportunity to change course and not further penetrate the justice system, it is imperative for an accessible suite of services to be in place. As noted in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, structured partnerships should exist with service providers who help to address the following needs:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ❖ Physical health | ❖ Legal aid |
| ❖ Mental health | ❖ Family support/reunification |
| ❖ Trauma/PTSD | ❖ Benefits |
| ❖ Substance use | ❖ Mentorship |
| ❖ Housing | ❖ Criminal thinking |
| ❖ Education/workforce development | ❖ Transportation |
| ❖ Employment | ❖ Positive youth development |

Probation departments should collaborate with community members in the planning process in order to best identify the needs of the community, and develop a continuum of services that meet the needs of individuals on probation. Above and beyond developing a system of services to support clients on probation, New York and Washington, D.C., shifted their approach to maintain a central focus on leveraging indigenous supports and providing meaningful services to justice-involved youth and adults within the communities they live.



New York City

As described above, the NeON approach is a total paradigm shift from what probation used to be. In New York there is a central focus on delivering services and supports within community-based probation sites. These sites are meant to support basic needs and provide opportunities including education, employment, mental health, and substance use services, among others.

Arches Transformative Mentoring

In addition to providing a suite of services described previously, in New York City there is an effort to formally partner with individuals with a history of incarceration or offending who have now committed to supporting the community and its young people. Commissioner Bermudez explained:

"We saw that we were having a continuing issue with violence, so we needed 'credible messengers.' We worked to create mentorship programs to address those needs, to help work with and protect our young people."

– Ana Bermudez, Commissioner of Probation

NYC DOP contracts with nonprofit organizations in targeted neighborhoods to provide a transformative mentoring intervention designed to meet young people where they are in the process of pro-social engagement. This intervention focuses on changes in cognition and thinking that often precede the ability to secure concrete attainments in education and employment. Credible Messengers work in partnership with probation and leverage their own life experiences to serve as mentors to probation clients. Not all credible messengers are returning felons, but they are all people who transformed their lives. The transformative mentoring approach that Arches uses is modeled after a model developed and validated by The Mentoring Center in Oakland, CA. The mentoring takes place in nine-month cycles, with two meetings a week (meetings always include a hot meal).

An Arches program operates in each borough and aligns with the NeONs. Core components of Arches include:

- ❖ A group process where mentors and participants become an important support system;
- ❖ Cognitive based interventions utilizing interactive journaling;
- ❖ Mentors who are on call, available 24/7, and doing "whatever it takes" to support youth;
- ❖ A positive youth development approach; and
- ❖ A paid stipend.

The group process is the core component of Arches, and mentors are paid for working with participants and mentees receive stipends for each group session completed. Group sessions target critical thinking, behavioral issues, difficult feelings, and peer associations, all of which are important criminogenic needs. Arches also connect participants to educational, vocational, and therapeutic programs when needed. Additionally, the program takes youth on field trips to college, skiing, and other places and experiences to which they may not have been exposed.



NeON Arts

Another unique aspect of NYC DOP's NeON approach is their focus on the arts, not only as a form of creativity and self-expression, but also as an avenue for employment. NeON Arts offers theater, dance, free verse poetry, and fashion design, as well as other programming such as filmmaking and editing. Carnegie Hall partners with NYC DOP and facilitates the RFP process in order to help identify which programs to fund, and as a result the programs are typically high-quality and well-run.

Through Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, NeON clients participate in music writing workshops and perform their compositions with professional musicians. For instance, the South Bronx NeON has a poet-in-residence, Dave Johnson, who conducts a workshop that includes clients and staff. He also organizes weekly poetry slams that are open to the public. Their work was recently collected in *Free Verse*, a new journal published with help from See ChangeNYC, an initiative of the NYC Department of Design and Construction. Additionally, the Artistic Noise program helped young people in the Bronx interpret Family Court Law through art and the Groundswell Mural Project has connected Brownsville NeON clients with professional artists to research, plan, and paint several large murals.

One of the NeON Arts programs, the Animation Project, uses computer animation to teach behavior modification techniques. The Animation Project collaborates with Arches to give participants an opportunity to learn filmmaking within a group process with support from credible messengers. The skills these individuals learn are sought after and can result in legitimate employment opportunities. In Brooklyn, the branch chief is also a DJ and he developed a menu of arts services in which clients can participate. One of these services is a DJ class he teaches, and two clients he taught now have well-paying jobs as DJs.

Parent Peer Support Program

The NeONs also feature Parent Peer Support Programs that support the families of young people who are in the justice system. Former Commissioner of Probation Vincent Schiraldi initiated a survey with families and met with them to better understand their needs and the support they were seeking. This effort resulted in the discovery that parents do not understand how the system works or who the players are, and they struggle with the language/terminology used in the system. These challenges led to the creation of the Parent Peer Support Program.

The program provides parents with "peer coaches" to guide them through their child's involvement in the juvenile justice system. Community Connections for Youth trains the parents of system-involved youth to serve as "peer coaches" for parents who are currently navigating the juvenile justice system. Peer coaches are on site at the Bronx Family Court Probation Office from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, to help families navigate the juvenile justice system. Peer coaches also connect families to parent support groups and family strengthening programming, and are also available on call during evenings and weekends to support parents in crisis situations.



Washington, D.C.

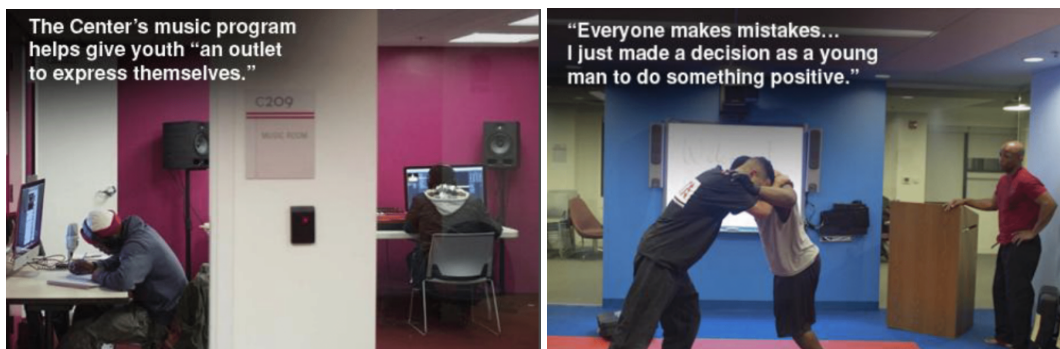
As noted previously, in Washington, D.C., DYRS brought in the community to actively participate in planning meetings to build recommendations for a community-based continuum of care. As a result of this process, they developed a regionalized continuum of care to reflect the needs of the city's communities. There are also two achievement centers to provide support in the community.

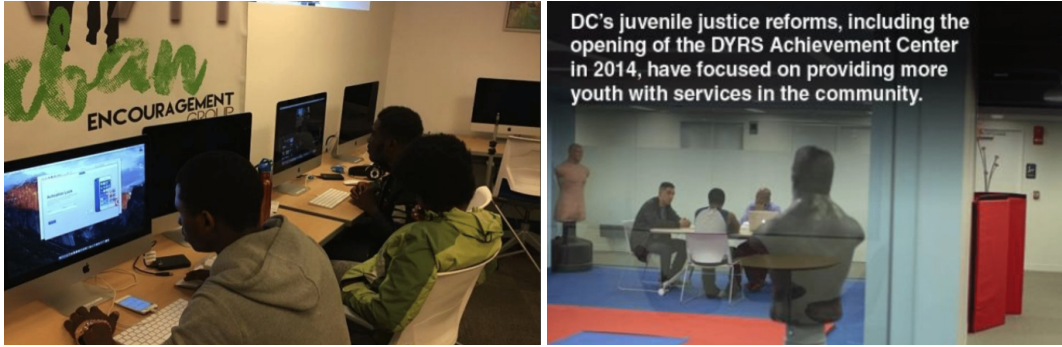
Achievement Centers

The Martin Luther King (MLK) Achievement Center is similar to the NeON model, and according to Director Clinton Lacey, the MLK Achievement Center exemplifies “what love looks like” in juvenile justice, with a focus on care, compassion, and commitment and an emphasis on identifying and developing young people’s strengths. The center partners with vendors to provide an array of programs that are tailored to at-risk youth and their families. These programs are intended to stimulate and empower participants by fostering education, career development, life skills, and healthy living. These partnerships with community organizations, agencies, and educational institutions yield a collaborative effort to reduce high-risk behavior in guiding youth as they develop a capability to navigate the world around them in positive and productive ways.

The MLK center contains a larger computer lab (with various classes offered by the University of the District of Columbia), barbershop and cosmetology studio, a culinary kitchen, and two conference rooms dedicated to the most current programming, and also hosts events throughout the year for youth and their families, including: career and health fairs; family nights; guest speaker panels; substance abuse education classes; movie nights; groups that cater to gender-specific or other issues; and support groups, among others. The MLK Center also provides resources such as “The Closet” which offers youth options ranging from basic clothing to professional attire for job interviews. Beyond programming and services, the Achievement Centers are a safe space where young people are provided food, drinks, and the most basic life essentials.

Figure 5. The MLK Achievement Center in Washington, D.C.





In addition to case management staff and social workers, Youth Engagement Specialists, Youth Peer Advocates, Program Managers, and other employees with a background in addressing high risk youth work with individuals on probation. These employees, assigned to specific wards throughout D.C., work collaboratively with the agency's Case Management Division and Group Homes to facilitate each young person's enrollment and participation in Achievement Center programming. According to Director Lacey, youth who routinely engage with Achievement Center programs demonstrate improved outcomes. Participants are more likely to secure gainful employment and identify temporary and permanent housing options, which promotes overall stability.

Credible Messenger Program

DYRS funds six Credible Messenger programs, which are operated by community-based organizations. As noted above, Credible Messenger mentoring is a process through which individuals from similar backgrounds engage youth in structured and intentional relationships that help them change their attitudes, beliefs, and actions. During the procurement process, DYRS prioritized authenticity and reach into the community to allow individuals and organizations with less formal experience with RFP processes to demonstrate their ability to be a part of the Credible Messenger program.

DYRS's Credible Messenger programs have the following key components:

- ❖ Transformative mentors hired to work with youth;
- ❖ Family engagement specialists hired to work with families;
- ❖ Restorative justice/Covenant of Peace curriculum;
- ❖ Economic and educational opportunities and capacity building for community organizations; and
- ❖ Safe spaces in neighborhoods with positive youth development activities.

According to DYRS leadership, Credible Messenger programs benefit youth and their families, as well as the mentors themselves and the larger community. The programs, as implemented in D.C., are set up to effectively meet the needs of youth to prepare them to succeed and improve their life outcomes. They also provide mentors with opportunities for personal growth, professional development, and employment. The community benefits because the program helps build the capacity of community providers while also cultivating outlets for restorative justice.



Juvenile Diversion

As noted in RDA's *Review of Best Practices in Probation*, research reflects a shifting juvenile justice paradigm acknowledging that youth should be diverted from formal processing to the greatest extent possible. This is because youth on probation experience higher reoffending rates than comparable youth whose cases are diverted rather than processed in juvenile court.³⁸ The following sections highlight the emphasis that is placed on juvenile diversion in Wayne County and Multnomah County, respectively.

Wayne County

Wayne County's Juvenile Services Division relies largely on prevention and diversion programs to provide services for youth. Prevention programs are intended to eliminate court contact for at-risk youth altogether, while diversion programs provide court-involved youth an opportunity to stop further penetration into the juvenile system.

Cases referred to prevention programs are typically for school truancy or referrals from the Human Services Agency, while those referred to diversion programs are felony offenses. The Juvenile Assessment Center, which oversees all of the County's prevention, diversion, and adjudicated cases, works with the prosecutor to identify cases for diversion. For cases that make it past the prosecutor, the court can, and often does, refer youth for diversion. In fact, the former Director of the Juvenile Services Division expressed that sometimes, in more serious cases, the prosecutor will pass a case through to the court in order to generate court buy-in on the case.

Each year in Wayne County, thousands of cases that previously resulted in detentions, petition filings, and placements are now handled through referrals to Youth Assistance Programs. Youth in these programs have very high success rates, as do youth who are formally processed in Wayne County. Approximately 1,200 referrals to diversion programs and 7,500 referrals to prevention programs were made in the 2013-14 fiscal year. At the same time, the state ward caseload dropped to approximately 620 youth, compared to approximately 3,400 youth in 1999. Recidivism also dropped from above 50% to 16% and the County incurred drastic cost saving through the reduced reliance on state training and residential care facilities.³⁹

Multnomah County

Multnomah County's DCJ offers several diversion programs in an effort to redirect youth who have committed delinquent acts from the justice system through programming, supervision, and supports. To promote the goals and values of the Department, DCJ has collaborated with community partners to engage youth in services and programs that address some of the root causes of delinquency.

Youth who have committed low-level offenses for the first time are typically diverted and referred out to the Community Healing Initiative (CHI), a community-centered collaborative partnership. CHI is designed to decrease violence by providing culturally appropriate community support to youth and families. Such services include case management, advocacy, counseling, parenting classes, mentoring, and rehabilitation. While at CHI, youth work with a team that includes representatives from public



safety, social services, and community-based agencies. Together, the team and youth plan and implement activities focused on positive youth development, family support, and community protection.

Some youth aged 12-17 with first time, low-level offenses may be referred to a Four Cities Peer Court if they agree to make an admission to a law violation. Youth who enter the Peer Court are required to engage a parent, guardian, or other pro-social adult in their pre-court interview and Peer Court proceeding. While in Peer Court, the youth will be assigned a volunteer student defense attorney and a student prosecuting attorney. Once the case is heard, the jury (also peers) decides what type of accountability fits the law violation. The presiding judge, an adult attorney who is licensed in Oregon, maintains order, guides the process, and oversees sentencing. The goals of the project are to keep youth in school, support drug/alcohol-free youth, deter high-risk behavior, and provide education about the legal system.



Chapter 4: Facilities

As highlighted previously, probation departments should implement SDM in order to determine whether youth should be detained and/or placed in out-of-home placement, and these options should only be used as a last resort with youth. When youth are incarcerated they should remain in the communities where they live (or near where they live) so that they remain close to their prosocial supports and their lives are interrupted to the least extent possible. Facilities should be clean and safe, and offer youth appropriate living conditions. Facilities should not look like jails; instead they should be developmentally-appropriate environments conducive to the rehabilitate goals of the probation department, and all staff personnel should be trauma informed.^{40 41} In addition, there are several examples of well-run co-ed facilities that successfully house both girls and boys.

Key Findings

1. Creating opportunities for youth placed out of home to remain in or near the communities they live helps to keep them connected to their family and prosocial supports, as well as attend schools in their communities.
2. All juvenile facilities should be safe, physically appealing, and provide a rehabilitative environment that is open and well lit. Juvenile facilities should not look like jails.
3. Probation staff in juvenile facilities should be trauma-informed and utilize a positive youth development approach to help target criminogenic risk, and work to help youth develop tools and skills that they will need to address personal challenges.
4. To the greatest extent possible, youth placed out of home should sleep in open, dorm-like spaces rather than locked cells and also attend school in the community, accompanied by staff who travel with them to and from school.
5. Having accredited single-subject teachers and small class sizes, as well as an emphasis on social-emotional skill building, relationship-based teaching, and high expectations for students attending schools in locked facilities can help motivate youth who were not engaged with education prior to placement.

Location

When jurisdictions commit to keeping young people close to home and probation departments make a commitment to using SDM in determining recommendations for placements, they typically also need to build out a local continuum of supports and services, as well as less secure placement alternatives. This section highlights some of the work that took place in New York under the Close to Home Initiative which realigned New York's juvenile justice system so that New York City, rather than the state, is responsible for supervising all justice-involved youth.

New York City

A key goal of NYC's Close to Home Initiative was to keep young people from New York City who are put in placement near their families and home communities. Previously, young people who had been adjudicated as juvenile delinquents were placed in facilities hundreds of miles away, where it was



difficult for them to visit with their families, remain connected to their communities, or earn school credits. Under Close to Home, young people are placed in or near the five boroughs, close to an array of resources that can support their rehabilitation and their safe re-integration into local communities. Youth who are sentenced remain within New York City facilities operated by the Administration for Children Services, and attend a Department of Education program. The Close to Home Legislation allows youth to stay in the Department of Education and continue earning credits towards graduation with little interruption to their education.

Under the Close to Home Initiative, New York needed to develop a new, locally operated system and continuum of community-based interventions. In order to plan for and implement a new vision for juvenile justice they formed a Dispositional Reform Steering Committee. The stakeholder group was comprised of representatives from Family Court (the equivalent of a delinquency court in California), Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Office, the Law Department (which provides the City with legal representation), the Legal Aid Society, the Police Department, the City Council, the Administration for Children's Services, the DOP, the Department of Education, the Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, the Health and Hospital Corporation, and members of the advocacy community. Together, the stakeholder group came together to create a vision and plan for developing the supports and services necessary to support New York's justice-involved youth.

Juvenile Detention and Placement Facilities

This section highlights three model facilities from New York City, Washington, D.C., and Santa Clara County respectively. New York's Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement facility, Washington, D.C.'s New Beginnings Secure Placement Facility, and Santa Clara County's William F. James Boys Ranch are described below.

New York City (Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement Facility)

Prior to New York State's Close to Home initiative, youth placed at the Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement Program would have been placed in a secure state-run facility. Youth placed at Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement Program are between the ages of 12 and 17, deemed medium and high-risk, and typically stay for approximately 12 to 18 months. Youth placed here have often been through many prior programs and alternatives to placement.

Leake & Watts Non-Secure Placement Program follows the Missouri Model. Immediately upon entering the facility, it is apparent that the physical layout and environment is very different from a typical juvenile facility. Rooms are open and well lit, and the walls are painted vibrant colors with pictures and motivational quotes interspersed around the facility. Youth sleep in dorm-style rooms with their own beds in an open space.

Residential practices emphasize order and safety. Youth line up quietly when transitioning between activities. They are expected to make their beds every morning and attend school. Staff often see unmade beds as a sign that a youth might be having issues. When that is the case, staff follow up with the youth to assess the situation. Youth at Leak & Watts are allowed one hour of recreation each day,



which might include television or pool, and there are video games in the recreation room that youth are allowed to play during recreation time on the weekend. Staff work in shifts and are never allowed to sleep while they are on-site.

Youth placed at Leake & Watts attend school each day at Passages Academy in Belmont, which is operated by the New York City Department of Education. Staff from the facility travel with youth to and from school, and also accompany youth at school throughout the day. At Passages Academy, youth earn credits towards graduation in a learning environment that is designed to be safe and educational. At the end of the school day, youth check-in at Leak & Watts immediately upon their return from school.

A key element of the facility is that program staff target criminogenic risk and work to help youth develop tools and skills that they will need to address personal challenges. Youth are given the YLS assessment pre- and post-adjudication, at placement, and upon exit. They are provided services such as substance abuse treatment and mental health services in order to address their criminogenic risk and needs to the greatest extent possible – although youth with acute mental health diagnoses are not placed at this facility. Motivational enhancement therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy approaches are used in individual and group clinical treatment. Circles and group processes are also used extensively to build community and cultivate positive peer relationships. For youth at this facility, transitional and after care planning begins 75 days into placement, and one case manager, from the City's Administration for Children's Services, oversees each client's case from the beginning to end of supervision.

Washington, D.C. (New Beginnings Youth Development Center)

In Washington, D.C., the primary secure post-adjudication facility is the New Beginnings Youth Development Center (New Beginnings). It is a new 60-bed co-ed secure campus located about an hour outside of the District in Laurel, Maryland.

New Beginnings is built on land that previously housed the Oak Hill Detention facility, which had a rated capacity of 208 but often housed as many as 260 youth. A 1989 inquiry found that Oak Hill staff had beaten youth under their care with bricks, knives, chairs, milk cartons, and fists, causing broken teeth and noses, a dislocated shoulder, kidney injuries, and eyes swollen shut. The Oak Hill facility, however, remained in place with few changes to staff or practices until 2009, when New Beginnings was constructed as its replacement at a cost of \$46 million.

The current staff at New Beginnings is a mixture of new employees and staff who used to work at Oak Hill. All New Beginnings staff receives training in Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Moral Reconation Therapy, Reality Training Therapy, and LGBT competency training, among other areas. ART group leaders also receive ongoing coaching from outside consultants. Staff performance reviews and measures are not yet tied to observable skill development associated with the trainings listed above, but DYRS is moving in that direction. DYRS, rather than Probation, oversees custody of confined youth and handles services in the community for system-involved youth in Washington.



At New Beginnings, staff are called "Youth Development Representatives," and room confinement is not ever used as punishment. Youth may be placed in a locked room only for brief cool-downs of 10 minutes, and a law passed in Washington, D.C. in April, 2017 prevents punitive confinement, although this was the philosophy of New Beginnings long before the law change. The director of DYRS, Clinton Lacey, explained that "Love here is explicit," and believes that, "Nobody should be judged by their worst day or the worst thing they've done." The philosophy at New Beginnings is guided by what they call the "Covenant of Peace" which includes the following elements:

- ❖ My life matters
- ❖ Forgiveness
- ❖ Family
- ❖ Honesty

While New Beginnings is a locked facility and youth are confined in very small dormitories, the dormitories at this facility are decorated nicely and every room has a chalkboard wall, desk, bookshelf, bed, colorful bedspread, and rug. Doors are metal and locked, but painted to look like wood. Bedtimes are staggered, and sleep time is the only time youth are confined to their rooms. There is a large open grass lawn at the center of all living units, as well as a cafeteria with an open salad bar, fruit, and other healthy foods prepared on-site and a medical center which has nurses 24/7, a doctor, and mental health clinicians on duty during the day. Finally, there is also a large gym where youth can play basketball and get exercise, and where marathon weekends with credible messengers are held. During these marathon weekends, credible messengers from the community lead discussions and exercises around the Covenant of Peace.

Figure 6. The New Beginnings Youth Development Center





The school at New Beginnings, the Maya Angelou Academy, is operated by a nonprofit charter organization. The educators see it as their responsibility to help address the barriers to learning that their students present, including trauma and poor social skills. Youth participate in pull-out meetings with therapists and service providers during the school day. Classes are co-ed and are designed to be as enriching as the classes youth would receive if they were at a high-quality community-based high school. They have authors, poets, and young playwrights come in and present on-site, as well as mentors from American University. Every month, youth go on college tours.

Students at Maya Angelou get "PR points" for their participation in school. If students meet their weekly PR point expectation, they receive \$25 that gets banked each week during their stay. This, along with the small class sizes, emphasis on social-emotional skill, relationship-based teaching, and high expectations, motivates students who may have been disengaged from their education prior to their arrival. Students also have access to certification programs in barbershop/cosmetology, auto shop, construction, digital schooling, and culinary arts at the New Beginnings facility. There is also a lawn-mowing training and service programs that allow youth to go out into the community and provide lawn care during the summer. For the auto shop and summer lawn care programs, youth leave the confines of New Beginnings and are outfitted with ankle bracelets.

According to the school director at New Beginnings, there are eight teachers who are single-subject credentialed (secondary credential). At baseline, the youth generally have a 5th grade skill level, and on average they move up two skill levels while they are enrolled at the school. Post-release, students are paired with advocates employed by the Maya Angelou Academy who help them with the transition back to high school. The school follows students with support, scholarships, and success plans until they graduate from college, and there is a college and alumni support position to maintain this effort.

Santa Clara County

From 2004 to 2013 in Santa Clara County, under former Chief Sheila Mitchell's leadership, the average census in juvenile hall dropped from nearly 370 youth per day to 140 youth per day, and the Department's use of community alternatives increased by over 500 percent. The County operates co-ed facilities, and in alignment with the Missouri Model, implemented the Enhanced Ranch Program (ERP) model at the William F. James Boys Ranch, moving from prison-style barracks to small family-like settings with a therapeutic atmosphere (as seen in Figure 7 below).⁴²



Figure 7. William F. James Ranch after Implementing the Enhanced Ranch Program



After recognizing that the previous model was not fostering youth development and resulting in a high number of behavioral incidents, Santa Clara County's Probation Department implemented the ERP, an evidence-based cognitive behavior model, to improve service delivery and outcomes for youth at James Ranch.⁴³ The ERP serves high-risk, high-need youth with gang affiliations and substance abuse histories. Under the ERP there has been a decrease in the ranch population and an increase in the ratio of staff to youth (1:6 for days and evenings and 1:12 at night; previously it was 1:15 for days and evenings and 1:30 at night). The program has demonstrated success, helping to reduce the number of probation violations by nearly 60 percent since implementation.⁴⁴

While the ERP drastically improved conditions and service delivery at James Ranch, the aftercare component of the model was significantly limited in its ability to provide youth the support, services, and supervision needed to make a successful transition back into the community. To address this gap, SCCPD implemented the Reentry Assistance Program (RAP) to provide wraparound services for youth exiting James Ranch. The model hinges on an integrated, multi-agency, community-based process grounded in the philosophy of supporting both youth and their families in order to provide the most effective continuum of care.⁴⁵

In RAP, a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meets with youth 60 days and 30 days prior to their release. Utilizing the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS), a validated youth risk and needs assessment, the team-based approach allows for all MDT members to collectively determine the needs,



services, and supervision strategy with each youth. Upon release, an assigned probation officer begins “high-touch” case management with RAP youth. RAP probation officers carry small caseloads (15 cases maximum) and spend considerable time with the MDT planning and meeting with children and their family members, which has led to significantly fewer violations amongst RAP youth over time.^{46 47}



Chapter 5: Fiscal Operations and Financial Management

Regarding fiscal operations and the financial management of probation departments, it is important to note that there are few, if any, model jurisdictions or jurisdictions that are comparable to Los Angeles County. However, there are a number of practices and an emerging body of research to inform a study of financial management. Methodologically, RDA conducted an extensive, but focused literature review and interviewed several probation leaders from California and New York to gain from their experiences.

Key Findings

1. Alternatives to traditional financial management practices can be effective means of circumnavigating bureaucratic burdens and more effectively partnering with communities. These alternatives include public-public partnerships, public-private partnerships, and thinking outside the box when it comes to implementing standard processes.
2. Participatory management approaches to fiscal operations can transform a department to be more effective. Steps toward participatory management include: developing a clear vision; creating a team environment; empowering and communicating with employees; putting clients first; cutting red tape; and creating clear accountability.
3. Implementing strategies to manage change within fiscal operations can support the effective delivery of services. These strategies include using a crisis as a catalyst for change by developing a shared vision; overcoming conflict by creating a team dynamic; emphasizing quality improvement by prioritizing high-quality client services; finding opportunities to partner with communities; and devolving decision-making authority to empower and communicate with staff.

Community Partnerships

Formalize Structured Partnerships

Challenges with lengthy contracting and regulatory processes are not unique to any one jurisdiction, and RDA found a range of practices employed by various jurisdictions as means of more effectively partnering with the communities they serve. These practices also show solution-oriented strategies that help jurisdictions circumvent bureaucratic requirements and realize their goals and objectives. One alternative is an agency-to-agency partnership. Said one former Deputy Probation Commissioner from New York, procurement and contracting is “always a nightmare... one area most places do have a fair amount of flexibility is in government-to-government contracting.” The City University of New York (CUNY) is part of the local government structure, and the NYC DOP leveraged the skills and expertise of a fellow government agency to provide substantive services for the department. CUNY not only provided direct services to the Department by training POs but also indirect services by hiring subcontractors that would have otherwise been held up in NYC DOP’s lengthy processes. “In some ways you are getting around the procurement processes, but, on the other hand, these are the [services] that universities do.”

Public-private partnerships can also be an effective means of reducing barriers in contracting and procurement processes, although they are more difficult to approach and take political buy-in and



leadership to achieve. Now in its third round of funding, Alameda County's 'Innovation in Reentry Grants Program' represents a unique collaboration between the public sector and philanthropy. The County's Health Care Services Agency contracted with Philanthropic Ventures Foundation to administer the grants and to act as a fiscal repository so that CBOs would more quickly receive grant funds. This enabled the County to implement new and innovative programming without the lengthy processes of scope development and contracting.

Another way to formally partner with the private sector is through master contracting with a CBO that can more easily distribute funds to the community or subcontract to other CBOs. Public organizations are typically slowed by requirements (e.g., the bidding process) not set by the organizations themselves. Agencies can more quickly fund community-based services through other vehicles such as master service agreements, intra-fund transfers, or partnerships with foundations.

Cutting Red Tape

One research study of several public agencies within a single metropolitan area revealed a number of strategies to deal with barriers to effectively contracting with community partners. This study found that "governmental agencies typically did more than simply issue RFPs and wait for responses. There were often formal and informal initiatives taken both before and after the RFP had been issued."⁴⁸ The staff took a more active, targeted approach to outreach as a means of engaging CBOs and persuading them to participate. Despite resource limitations, the government employees in this study "often provided technical assistance to potential suppliers through bidders' conferences or special workshops in which the RFP specifications were explained and questions answered. While this process may have helped to produce more suitable proposals from potential providers, it also required considerable investment of public agency staff time, which was generally in short supply."⁴⁹

As a means of overcoming a shortage of suitable providers, some governmental agencies took the initiative to provide assistance in establishing the necessary organizational structure. Again, while this is outside the typical roles and responsibilities of government employees, providing this level of initiative enabled the agency to achieve its goal of successfully contracting the delivery of needed services. "For example, as part of a community organization process, county staff helped citizens to establish facilities such as a halfway house for deinstitutionalized mental patients, a parent-child center, and a day treatment program for the frail elderly. Once incorporated as nonprofit, public-benefit corporations, such fledgling agencies were loaned staff and received technical assistance and consultation by governmental agencies."⁵⁰ This study also found that government agencies also provided loans to CBOs to invest in capital improvements or took measures to purchase buildings that they then leased to the CBOs. "Such efforts represent forms of public-private partnerships that are infrequently discussed, perhaps because they are departures from the conventional image of open, competitive bidding."⁵¹

In addition, there are ways to reform internal procurement or contracting processes to be more effective. This, in turn, enables the agency to be more responsive to community needs. For example, public sector leaders can more quickly implement decisions by empowering those that are the closest to the work to take action. Though the details and rules may take longer to catch up, in Australia, public



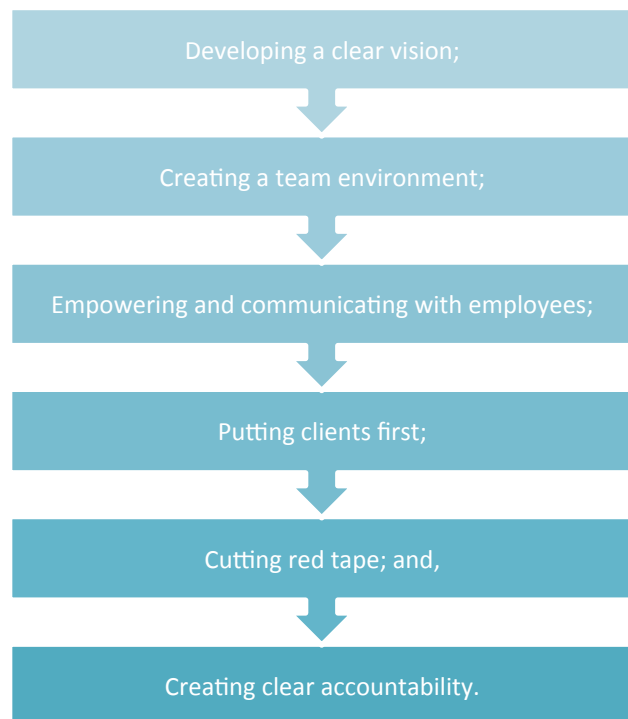
sector leaders circumvented lengthy procurement procedural delays by issuing government credit cards for small purchases.⁵²

When it comes to the contracting process, there is often tension between those that administer the process itself and those that are requesting the services. Operational knowledge, such as understanding the ins and outs of a particular service or approach to delivering services, does not qualify an operational subject-matter expert to develop the specific, measurable objectives and activities within a scope. At the same time, administrative knowledge, such as understanding the steps and requirements for implementing a technically compliant contract, also does not qualify an administrative subject-matter expert to develop a scope. A lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities for developing scopes for new services can lead to tension. In San Francisco, former Chief Probation Officer Wendy Still addressed this challenge by hiring specialized contracts staff whose jobs were explicitly designed to focus on developing of new programs and working with operations to develop scopes of services. By leveraging their expertise in researching and identifying evidence-based practices and integrating them *into the contracts unit*, Chief Still noted that San Francisco Probation was able to make the process more efficient.

Participatory Management Approaches

In a participatory management framework, staff have more opportunities to partake in decision-making that relates to their own work and working conditions. The Clinton/Gore-era 'Reinventing Government' movement highlighted the benefits of participatory management from an administrative perspective. Research from that period uncovered the dysfunction of hierarchical, centralized bureaucracies. Reinventing government under a participatory management framework meant envisioning new roles for public sector leaders. These roles included:

7. Developing a clear vision;
8. Creating a team environment;
9. Empowering and communicating with employees;
10. Putting clients first;
11. Cutting red tape; and
12. Creating clear accountability.



Implementing these six practices can transform the culture of governmental bureaucracies to be more inclusive of staff in decision-making processes. The literature has shown participatory management to reduce employee stress, increase job satisfaction, and reduce turnover.^{53 54 55} Conversely, not



empowering and not communicating with staff has the negative consequences of reducing staff connection to the agency's core functions and alienating them from agency-level decisions by limiting their involvement in the decision-making process itself.⁵⁶

Including staff in decision-making is essential to effectively coordinating within a large department. Jeanne Woodford, former Undersecretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), explained how she tried to increase administrative efficiencies at CDCR:

"At our meetings were the heads of all the divisions. If I was having a specific problem that required a budgetary response, they were in the room. I had a chance to explain it with the director right there and turn to them, in real time, in the room."

—Jeanne Woodford, former Undersecretary of the CDCR

The transformation of public management requires a wide, inter-disciplinary skillset, and the fastest way to gain all those skills is to bring the right people into the room at the same time.⁵⁷

Clear Visioning

Developing a clear unified vision is the first step toward making agencies more efficient and effective. For Erie County, New York, a fiscal crisis was the catalyst for system reform. Their cross-system response began with developing a clear vision, which paved the way for inter-departmental collaboration. In 2001, the County's Departments of Probation, Social Services, and Mental Health used the financial crisis as a catalyst for developing a common goal. Leaders from these three departments began meeting during early stages of the crisis to identify potential avenues for collaboration as a means of saving funds as well as moving to effective practices that directly benefited community members. They were united under a common goal — to mitigate the deleterious effects of the financial crisis on their departments' client services. As a result, they were able to develop a shared vision and plan of action that resulted in cost savings, enabled effectively blended funding, and strengthened their functional collaboration. Their success depended on their ability to forge inter-departmental agreements that allowed both blended funding and functions, moving beyond typical policy and regulatory constraints.^{58 59}

Team Environment

Among partners with different goals or practice objectives, such as those within different functional teams or even different agencies, conflict will inevitably occur during the course of doing business. However, conflict does not have to be a barrier toward effective collaboration. Instead, using conflict as a learning opportunity is a way to increase the strength of those relationships, and build a team-oriented trusting environment. Within the Erie County partnership, conflicts occurred when staff "held and acted upon stereotypical views of each other; when ideological, historical, or political differences allowed certain agencies to dominate partnerships whilst others were marginalized; where there was a lack of clear vision, sense of common purpose or clarified responsibilities and when there was a failure to communicate on a regular basis."⁶⁰ Those same opportunities for communication breakdowns, however, turned into opportunities for strengthening the relationship when the staff channeled the conflict into constructive opportunities for feedback and compromise. A relational approach focuses on



strengthening the relationships between two actors rather than focusing on opposing team priorities. “That is not to suggest that organizational priorities are not important but far too often the immediate priorities of different agencies become the driving force for inter-agency partnerships to the detriment of the long-term future of such arrangements.” Positioning the three agencies as one team, rather than three, helped create the environment for a successful partnership.

To overcome the inevitable conflict of interests within a cross-functional partnership, the actors should adopt a relational approach to collaboration that includes:

- ❖ Respect, empathy, and a valuing of diversity as a basis for relationship and communication;
- ❖ Willingness to negotiate, compromise, and be accountable and, where conflicts do occur, a readiness to use mediation focused practices to resolve them;
- ❖ Commitment to a common vision, agreed priorities and clear lines of responsibility and accountability;
- ❖ Clarification of the ideological, historical, and practice areas where disagreements may occur and tentative plans to address these;
- ❖ Genuine opportunities for participation and consultation—not only for agencies which have key responsibilities or financial interest but also for those which may have short-term and community-based interests; and
- ❖ Constant dialogue; even occasional friendly phone calls, rather than communicating only when something goes wrong.⁶¹

Following these guidelines contributes to the development of a partnership infrastructure that can overcome many obstacles and effectively accomplish agreed-upon goals. These guidelines were developed for probation partnerships with other public agencies, but can easily be adapted to guidelines for partnerships within a single bureaucratic agency that, in itself, operates as a set of functional teams—such as an agency that separates administrative functions such as budgeting or contracting from practice operations.

Client-First Approach

During a time when funding was evaporating, leadership from the Erie County partners increased investment in overhead rather than reducing it. They invested resources in real-time data dashboards and information systems to support their change process and ensure high-quality services for clients. Their investment in data-driven decision-making assisted with a) ongoing goal setting, b) monitoring of performance milestone achievement, c) learning opportunities for improvements in the efficacy of practice, and d) identifying and adjusting to emerging challenges.⁶² This framework is similar to the Plan-Do-Study-Act evaluation framework that is common within healthcare as a means of monitoring continuous quality improvement and assuring the delivery of high-quality client services. The success of any systems change requires continuous quality improvement, on-going oversight, monitoring, and routine quality improvement actions and program interventions based on timely, accurate data.⁶³ In Erie County, evaluation and data reports were central to the agenda at all standing meetings. The partners attended monthly and quarterly ‘system of care program reviews,’ monthly ‘system of care



management team meetings,' and a range of other regular meetings including family roundtables, contract management, and supervision. Although too many meetings can sometimes take away from the practice of service delivery, researchers on systems change emphasize the need to over-communicate. In Erie County, ensuring a wide-reaching range of stakeholders throughout all three departments had access to, and utilized, the same data was a central component to the success of their collaboration.

Empowering Staff and Creating Accountability

Department change is not easy, especially under the conditions of changing leadership. According to the "Ten-Step Guide to Transforming Probation Departments to Reduce Recidivism," long-term staff may feel anxious and resist changes to their familiar routines. Within administrative and fiscal teams, where regulations and rules govern work processes, organizational change is even more difficult to address.

Looking at transnational administration practices within the justice setting, one jurisdiction within the United Kingdom took steps to change financial management practices to bring those that are closest to service delivery closer to financial decision-making for their own teams. The West Mercia Police is the fourth largest territorial police force in England, covering nearly 3,000 square miles that include both densely populated urban areas and sparsely populated rural areas. As a means of addressing the broad range of needs across the territory, the West Mercia Police 'devolved' their budgeting process, decentralizing financial decision-making. Decisions for fund use are best held by the people who are responsible for implementing the services. "For devolved budgeting to be fully effective, the budget holder should maintain proper control of the costs being charged to him or her and be accountable for performance against budget."⁶⁴ This means on-the-ground program managers are involved in budgeting not only direct program costs but also indirect administrative and overhead expenses.

As previously noted, ensuring that financial processes are continuously scrutinized by both programmatic and administrative leaders is essential to success. The West Mercia police leadership achieved consensus through the accounting staff's understanding and integration of external accountabilities into their practices, which happened through ongoing meetings and continuous evaluation of budgeting practices. "The shift in power over resource allocation decisions to budget-holding police managers enabled them to address operational initiatives that were valued by the police ethos." In other words, the move to include operations in budgeting and accounting decision-making enabled the police department to more effectively achieve its priorities.

Summary

Financial management practices such as accounting, procurement, contracting, etc., are not neutral, disconnected, or weak activities that occur in a black box. Rather, when 'loosely coupled' with operational practices, financial management can be a mechanism imbued with the power to bring consensus between the competing drives of operations and administration.⁶⁵ As many accounting researchers have argued, financial management must be seen within the setting in which it is deployed.⁶⁶ Because the management of administrative functions is woven into the institutional fabric in



which it sits, the research and practices illustrated in the section above demonstrate that, when it comes to managing the finances of a large public agency, it is essential to unify operations and administration under the umbrella of a shared vision and common goal. If implemented, the practices outlined within this section can lead to more effective management of fiscal operations that both supports and enables probation departments to more effectively partner with clients and communities.



Appendix A. Solano County Job Description

COUNTY OF SOLANO CLASS SPECIFICATION DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER (ENTRY)

Effective Date:

04/12/2006 Effective Date of

Revision: 05/11/2016

CLASS SUMMARY

Under general supervision, performs professional level casework in the investigation, assessment, supervision, enforcement, diagnosis and treatment of adult and juvenile offenders; ensures community safety by monitoring offender accountability and rehabilitation. Incumbents of this class should demonstrate necessary knowledge and abilities to be promoted to Deputy Probation Officer within twelve (12) months of appointment provided they meet the other requirements for the journey level class. Some employees in the class of Deputy Probation Officer (Entry) may be assigned to an armed unit in order to supervise caseloads of high-risk offenders and therefore be, in accordance with department policy, authorized to carry firearms.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the entry level class in the Deputy Probation Officer series. Incumbents are expected to learn procedures and methods of effective probation casework in preparation for promotion to the journey level. This class is distinguished from the:

- **Deputy Probation Officer** class which works more independently and is expected to handle most work problems without direct supervision.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

- Receives general supervision from a Deputy Probation Officer (Supervising) and may receive lead direction from a Deputy Probation Officer (Senior).
- Exercises no supervision over other County employees; supervises offender case activity and progress.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES: This class specification represents the core area of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the department.

- Learns to conduct pre-sentence investigations of adults and juveniles by interviewing the offender, the family, and others concerned to assess potential for success under



probation supervision, to report progress while under supervision or to recommend sentences; maintains detailed records of visits with offenders; conducts in-depth information analysis and assessment of each case; reviews documents; evaluates violations of court orders; determines appropriate placement; recommends restitution; identifies treatment options; prepares reports.

- Learns to gather information for the court in making a pretrial release decision, including conducting an objective pretrial risk assessment to evaluate risk of flight and re-offense.
- Learns to prepare a social history of the offender for the Court; to interpret findings, to review the Penal Code to determine aggravating and mitigating circumstances of the crime; to recommend a plan of sentencing, placement and rehabilitation; and to compose correspondence and complex reports for Court use.
- Learns to contact victims to establish restitution and provide victims' rights information to offer guidance to assist offenders in their rehabilitation; and to use crisis intervention skills as needed.
- Learns to monitor and evaluate offenders' progress on a follow-up basis; to evaluate the extent to which probationer is making progress; to determine compliance with conditions of probation or pre-trial release; to re-assess the frequency of contact needed during supervision; to reclassify cases no longer requiring personal contact; and to secure remedial action from the Court or other competent authority if necessary;
- Assists in investigations and assessments of criminal behavior and personal circumstances; applies sentencing criteria and makes recommendations to the Court, entering reports into evidence.
- Learns field supervision techniques including conducting searches; works in concert with local law enforcement agencies to assist with investigations and conduct search and arrest operations; performs supervised investigations and assessments of offenders' criminal behavior and circumstances; reviews information from attorneys, police, criminal history reports, motor vehicle reports, probation files, and any other paperwork pertaining to the current offense; interviews the offender, the family, criminal justice persons, and others concerned; applies sentencing criteria and makes sentencing recommendations to the judiciary; enters reports into evidence.
- Learns to inform parents, guardians, minors and offenders about circumstances, terms and conditions of probation supervision; as needed, refers offender, family and/or victims to outside service agencies.
- Learns to coordinate functions between agencies.
- Maintains professional knowledge in applicable areas and keeps abreast of changes in job-related rules, statutes, laws and new trends in the field; makes recommendations for the implementation of changes; reads and interprets professional literature; attends training programs, workshops and seminars as appropriate.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature or level as assigned.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- **Education:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.



- **Experience:** No experience is required.

Note:

- While a degree in a specific field is not required, the possession of Bachelor's degree or higher in on the one following fields is desired and may be a factor considered during the rating and/or selection process: criminal justice, social work, psychology, sociology or a closely related field.

LICENSING, CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Possession of a valid Class C California driver's license is required.
- Employees assigned to an armed unit must obtain Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid certification prior to assignment and must maintain the certification while assigned to the unit.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Principles, practices and techniques of communication, interviewing, counseling, resistant-defensive behavior, personality theory and self-image, stress and change theory.
- Self awareness-objectivity techniques for understanding others; personality types.

Skill and/or Ability to:

- Operate office equipment including a personal computer to input and access data, copy and fax machines and printers.
- Use drug testing devices, physical restraints and radio.
- Learn and understand, interpret and explain laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures governing specific probation programs and operations.
- Learn assessment techniques as to causes of illegal behavior and personal circumstances.
- Learn to recognize personality types and varying behaviors and to diffuse hostile and aggressive behavior.
- Utilize firearms for self-defense, for the defense of others and/or to reduce the risk of threat in life-threatening situations when assigned to an armed unit.
- Effectively manage a caseload, prioritize a work schedule, and manage time effectively while addressing multiple tasks and deadlines.
- Input, access and evaluate data using a computer case management system.
- Communicate clearly both orally and in writing with offenders, attorneys, judges, health professionals and others
- Maintain objectivity; formulate decisions.
- Properly identify probationer-family interactions and provide necessary intervention.
- Learn and apply departmental assessment standards.



- Counsel and interview offenders and other concerned parties; intervene in crises.
- Determine the appropriate course of action in emergency or stressful situations.
- Learn to deal firmly and fairly with offenders of various socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments.
- Learn to recognize areas of need and make referrals to local and regional providers of social, medical and/or other specialized services.
- Maintain cooperative working relationships with peers, offenders, other agencies and other professionals.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- **Mobility and Dexterity:** Tasks require the ability to exert moderate, though not constant physical effort, typically involving some combination of climbing and balancing, stooping, kneeling, reaching, grasping, feeling (i.e. sense of touch), repetitive motion, crouching, and crawling. May be required at times to use force to restrain/subdue others. May involve prolonged standing. Lifting, Carrying, Pushing and Pulling – Light Work: Employees in this class will be exerting up to 20 pounds of force occasionally and/or up to 10 pounds of force frequently, and/or a negligible amount of force constantly to move objects.
- **Vision:** Positions in this class require the employee to have close visual acuity, with or without correction, to prepare and analyze data and figures, view a computer terminal, read, etc. Positions in this class also require employees to have depth perception in order to operate a motor vehicle. Employees in this class must have the visual acuity to make observations of surroundings and must demonstrate color vision sufficient to distinguish colors in order to describe events in an accurate manner.
- **Hearing/Talking:** Positions in this class require the employee to perceive the nature of sounds at normal speaking levels with or without correction, and have the ability to receive detailed information through oral communication. Positions in this class require the employee to express or exchange ideas by means of the spoken word. Detailed or important instructions must often be conveyed to others accurately, loudly, and/or quickly.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

- **Outdoor Work:** Employees in this class will often be working outdoors and thus will be subject to exposure to intense noises, fumes, odors, pollens, dust, inadequate lighting, and to unpleasant field conditions including rainy, windy, cold, or hot weather.
- **Work in a Jail/Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF):** Employees in this class will occasionally be working in a jail/JDF environment and thus will be subject to exposure to communicable diseases, intense noises, odors, blood and other bodily fluids.
- **Traffic Hazards:** Employees in this class will be required to operate a vehicle and thus will be subject to traffic hazards while driving.
- **High Risk Population:** Employees in this class may be subject to people with a history of violence and mental health disorders and with disruptive or confrontational people.



OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Probation Officer Requirements:
 - Incumbents must complete annual training in accordance with Title 15, Division 1 of the California Administrative Code.
 - Incumbents of this class have limited Peace Officer powers as delineated in the California Penal Code and must therefore meet training requirements with Penal Code Section 832 within twelve (12) months of appointment.
 - Peace Officers must meet minimum standards concerning citizenship, age, character, education and physical/mental condition as set forth in Section 1031 of the California government Code.
 - Must complete the Probation Core Course certified by the California Corrections Standards Authority within twelve (12) months.
 - Must pass a physical exam and psychological exam confirming fitness to be armed as a condition of hire.
 - Firearm Proficiency: Prior to assignment to an armed unit, employees must complete required firearm training which includes: an approved course on firearms pursuant to Penal Code Section 832; a review and acknowledgement of the Department's firearms policy; a Basic Force and Weaponry Course as selected by the Department; quarterly firearms qualification training; and other training required by the Department. Employees hired prior to this revision must pass a psychological examination confirming fitness to be armed prior to assignment to an armed unit.
 - Independent Travel: Incumbents are required to travel independently, for example, to meet with adult and/or juvenile offenders, their families, and other concerned parties.
 - Language Proficiency: Some positions allocated to this class may require the applicant to speak, read and write in a language other than English.

CLASS HISTORY AND CLASS INFORMATION

- Date Approved by the Civil Service Commission:
- Date Adopted by the Board of Supervisors: June 30, 2003
- Dates Revised: April 12, 2006, May 11, 2016
- Dates Retitled and Previous Titles of the Class: N/A
- Class Code: 512020



Appendix B: NYC DOP's Individualized Action Plan

**Adult Services
Individual Achievement Plan
Probation Officer/Client Contract**

Initial IAP Date: / /
Amended IAP #___Date: / /

Probation Officer's Contact Information		
Probation Officer's Name:	Telephone:	E-mail:

Section I. Demographics (Please provide the most current information)

Client's Information			
Client's Name (Last Name, First Name):		Case #:	Date of Birth: / /
Address:		E-mail:	
Phone #: () -	Cell/Alt Phone: () -		Gender:
Parent's/Guardian's Name:			Phone #: () -
Offense(s) for which placed on Probation:		Probation Start Date: / /	Probation End Date (MED): / /
Date of Initial Assessment: / /	Risk Score/Level:	Date of Reassessment: / /	Risk Score/Level:

Section II. Contact Requirements

Based on assessed risk and level of supervision, the Probation Officer and Client agree to the following:

Face-to-Face Monthly Contact Requirements:		
Number of Office Visits:	Number of Home Visits:	Number of Collateral Visits:

Section III. Service Plan

The Probation Officer and Client agree to address the following service categories (select the top three domains client will focus on during supervision, in addition to the fourth – staying crime free):

Check Top Three Categories:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Social Thinking/Anti-Social Peers	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Services & Support
<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Relationship with Positive Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Development	

Anti-Social Thinking/Anti-Social Peers (examples: Complete cognitive behavior restructuring classes, attend counseling, etc.)			
Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program		Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues-	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-	
Goals:		Services to Receive:	

Education (examples: Earn high school diploma/GED, enroll in college, attend literacy classes, improve school attendance/performance, etc.)			
Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program		Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues-	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-	



Los Angeles County Executive's Office

LA Probation Governance Study

Goals:	Services to Receive:
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Workforce Development (examples: Complete job training program, obtain employment or volunteer/internship, etc.)

Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program	Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues- <input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-
Goals:	Services to Receive:	

Healthy Relationship with a Positive Adult (examples: Participate in mentoring program, structured recreational activities, etc.)

Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program	Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues- <input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-
Goals:	Services to Receive:	

Behavioral Health (examples: Participate in individual counseling, mental health therapy, substance abuse treatment, sex offender services, etc.)

Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program	Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues- <input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-
Goals:	Services to Receive:	

Housing Services (examples: Referred to temporary housing program)

Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program	Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues- <input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-
Goals:	Services to Receive:	

Additional Services & Supports

Provider Contact Information:	Length of Program	Attendance Days & Times:
	Start Date: / /	End Date: / /
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sun- <input type="checkbox"/> Mon- <input type="checkbox"/> Tues- <input type="checkbox"/> Wed- <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs- <input type="checkbox"/> Fri- <input type="checkbox"/> Sat-
Goals:	Services to Receive:	



Section IV. Agreement

Contract Agreement:

The undersigned hereby agrees to abide by this contract. The Probation Officer (PO) and the Client agree that the above three completed domains, in addition to remaining crime free, will be the areas of focus throughout the supervision period.

The Client agrees to enroll, engage, and comply with all services, programs, supports, and opportunities agreed upon in the three focus areas. The Client further agrees to make all mandated contacts with the PO and keep the PO informed of any changes of address and progress or lack thereof toward these goals. The Client also agrees to abide by any and all additional conditions of probation ordered by the court and attached to this Individual Achievement Plan (IAP)/Contract.

The PO agrees to refer the Client to appropriate services and programs as agreed upon in the focus areas. The PO will assist, support and encourage the Client to take full advantage of all supports and opportunities and monitor Client's performance.

The Unit Supervisor agrees to assist and support the PO and the Client in fulfilling this contract and to review the progress of this IAP/Contract at least every 90 days.

This IAP/Contract is to be updated and amended as necessary by all parties.

Client's Name

Signature

Date

Probation Officer's Name

Signature

Date

Supervisor's Name

Signature

Date



Appendix C: Solano County Probation Juvenile Response Matrix



Solano County Probation Department Juvenile Division

Response Matrix



Response Matrix Overview

To operate a system that is effective, impartial, fair, and consistent, the Solano County Probation Department has implemented this Response Matrix in the Juvenile Supervision Division. Response Matrixes or Grids have been developed by several Probation Departments throughout the country in the past several years to ensure equal and consistent response to youth behavior as well as encourage compliance and success.

A group of 15 Probation Officers from across all units in the Juvenile Supervision Division held a series of meetings to develop the content of the Response Matrix. The Department has also received technical assistance through the Positive Youth Justice Initiative. With the input of our staff, a review of the research and best practices the Solano County Probation Department has developed this Response Matrix, which includes Graduated Sanctions and Incentive/Rewards Grids and guidelines on how to use them. A full training on the use of the Matrix has been provided to all Probation Officers.

There is a growing body of research in criminal justice that reveals that what is effective at changing offender behavior is a mix of swift and certain sanctions and incentive rewards. Even severe sanctions that are administered long after the behavior are not as effective as less punitive sanctions administered immediately following the behavior. And immediate rewards for good behavior, even with small incentives, can have significant impact on promoting continual good behaviors.

In their study, "Developing and Administering Accountability-Based Sanctions for Juveniles," the U.S. Department of Justice reports, "Consequences or sanctions that are applied swiftly, surely, and consistently, and are graduated to provide appropriate and effective responses to varying levels of offense seriousness and offender chronicity, work best in preventing, controlling and reducing further law violations."

A study of the renowned HOPE program in Hawaii, showed that alternative sanctions other than long terms of incarceration in response to non-compliant behavior can be more effective. Community service, increased supervision, earlier curfew, having to report to an Evening Reporting Center – are all examples of alternative sanctions that can be administered quickly and effectively.

Solano County Probation also wants to emphasize and distinguish intermediate responses to non-compliant youth behaviors that are meant to help young people as opposed to those responses that are purely punitive. The majority of the responses on the Sanctions Grid are helping responses, including writing essays, community service, referral to programs, and Interactive Journaling. Some of the responses for the very high and high risk youth are more punitive sanctions, including being placed on electronic monitoring or increased searches, but even those responses are meant to be corrective.

During quarterly Case Audits, Supervisors will review cases to ensure that Incentives/Rewards are distributed consistently and in accord with this Response Matrix.



Sanctions Grid Guidelines

- These grids must be used impartially, fairly, and consistently with all youth on each Probation Officer's case load.
- All POs will be trained in the use of the Response Matrix.
- When a PO gets a report of non-compliant behavior of a youth on their case load, they are to match that behavior with the below grid, identify what level of non-compliance the behavior falls into, and then consult the Sanctions Grid to review the list of possible sanctions. The PO should consider the behavior and the youth's background to determine which sanction within the corresponding level that the youth will receive. That sanction should be administered immediately and be clearly explained to the youth.
- The list of sanctions in each of the levels in the Sanctions Grid, are options within each level, only one of the sanctions are to be administered per non-compliant behavior.
- Most of the Very High Severity sanctions include changing the liberty status of youth and therefore require a filing of a Violation of Probation with the Court. Before filing a VOP, the PO is required to meet with their supervisor to ensure that intermediate sanctions were employed in accordance with the Response Matrix and the Supervisor signs off on the VOP.
- In accord with Best Practice, youth assessed as Low Risk should never be brought into custody or out of home placement due to a sanction or violation. The practice should also be rare for youth assessed as Moderate Risk.
- A youth's failure to comply with an ordered sanction may result in increase in sanction to the next severity level. But such an increase should not simply include "more of the same." For instance, a youth who fails to comply with 20 hours of Community Service should not simply be given more Community Service.
- A failure to drug test is equal to a positive test.
- When referring to a CBO for services as a sanction, ensure that the services provided are connected to the youth's needs or challenges from which the non-compliant behavior was derived.
- For youth in Vallejo City Unified School District schools, for any challenges the youth are having, refer the youth to the Student Success Team (SST) Meeting with the PYJI Liaison.



Solano County Probation - Juvenile Division Sanctions Grid

		Violation Severity		
		High	Moderate	Low
Risk Level	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Commitment (Challenge Academy)* Escalation of Supervision^ Increase in searches for youth DRC^ Placed on EMP* Remand intocustody^* Placement staffing^ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling Escalation of Supervision^ Increase in searches for youth DRC^ Placed on EMP* Remand intocustody^* Placement staffing^ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in drugtests Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Probation Mentoring Program Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling
	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in drugtests Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Probation Mentoring Program Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling Escalation of Supervision^ Increase in searches for youth DRC^ Placed on EMP* Remand intocustody^* Placement staffing^ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in drugtests Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Probation Mentoring Program Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New instruction not to Associate with Gang Write an Essay regarding the infraction Community Service Referral to Parent Project Interactive Journaling Written Behavior Contract
	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in drugtests Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Probation Mentoring Program Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in drugtests Increase in Office Visits and/or Contact with PO Weekend Academy Referral to CBO/Treatment Probation Mentoring Program Home detention with PO Written Behavior Contract Interactive Journaling New instruction not to Associate with Gang Write an Essay regarding the infraction Community Service Referral to Parent Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal Admonishment New instruction not to Associate with Gang Write an Essay regarding the infraction Community Service Verbal Behavior Contract Referral to Parent Project

* = Court order required

^ = SDPO Approval required

*** Use of THC or alcohol will result in a treatment response only and not a response that can lead to custody, unless there is a clear nexus between the THC or alcohol use and criminal/delinquent behavior of the youth.**

(Sanctions Grid Key, Behaviors & Levels on reverse side)



Sanctions Grid Key

		Violation Severity		
		High	Moderate	Low
Risk Level	V.	V.H	V.H/H	H
	High	V.H/H	H	M
	Mod	H	H/M	M

Sanctions Grid Behaviors & Levels

Non-Compliant Behaviors	Level
Unexcused absence from school (partial or full day)	L
School Discipline (grades, attendance, moderate behavior/willful deviance)	L
FTA Office Visit without valid excuse	L
Curfew violation	L
AWOL from home (less than 24 hours or not now actively AWOL)	L
Gang Association/paraphernalia (w/ no previous association)	L
Positive drug test for THC or Alcohol (first positive test)	L
Failure to obey PO	L
Violate no contact order	M
Failure to obey laws – arrest on non-filed charges/new misdemeanor filing	M
Failure to obey parents	M
Cont. unexcused absence(s) from school (full day(s) + failure to comply with lower level sanction)	M
School Discipline (Fighting, Threats of violence toward students/staff)	M
Second positive drug test for THC or Alcohol within 45 days (that show levels increasing and are not based on use that caused previous + test)	M
2 consecutive FTA Office Visits without valid excuse	M
Gang Association/Hanging out with known gang members (w/ no previous association)	M
Failure to respond to treatment	M
Sex Offender non-web based porn violation (i.e.: magazines)	M
Third or more positive drug tests for THC or Alcohol within 45 days (that show levels increasing and are not based on use that caused previous + test) or positive drug test for serious drugs (i.e.: Cocaine, Meth, Heroin)	H
Gang association/involvement (of a known gang member)	H
School Expulsion – Gang Related (i.e.: Gang Fight), Assaultive behavior	H
3+ consecutive FTA Office Visits without valid excuse	H
Sex Offender web based porn violation	H
Consistent failure to comply with Treatment or Sanctions	H
Actively (not retrospective) AWOL for more than 48 hours – Whereabouts Unknown	H
New Felony filing	H

** Use of THC or alcohol will result in a treatment response only and not a response that can lead to custody, unless there is a clear nexus between the THC or alcohol use and criminal/delinquent behavior of the youth.*



Solano County Probation – Juvenile Division Rewards/Incentives Grid

		Behavior Level		
		High	Moderate	Low
Risk Level	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Cards – \$20 or more[^] • Request Early release from EMP (Granted if Court authorized)^{^*} • Eliminate curfew • Recommendation for early termination of probation^{^*} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Cards – \$10, \$20 or more[^] • Request Early release from EMP (Granted if Court authorized)^{^*} • Eliminate curfew • Recommendation for early termination of probation^{^*} • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Gift Cards – \$10, \$20[^] • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction
	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Cards – \$10, \$20 or more[^] • Request Early release from EMP (Granted if Court authorized)^{^*} • Eliminate curfew • Recommendation for early termination of probation^{^*} • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Gift Cards – \$10, \$20[^] • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Card – \$5[^] • Verbal praise • Certificates
	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Gift Cards – \$10, \$20[^] • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease Office Visits and PO Visits • Decrease Drug Testing • Gift Cards – \$5, \$10, \$20[^] • Reduce Curfew • Waive Sanction • Verbal praise • Certificates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Card – \$5[^] • Verbal praise • Certificates

* = Court order required

[^] = SDPO Approval required

(Reward/Incentive Grid Behaviors & Levels on reverse side)



Reward/Incentives Grid Behaviors & Levels

Meritus Behavior	Level
Case Plan Goal accomplished	L
Clean drug tests when tied to offense/criminogenic needs	L
Good home behavior	L
Consistently Showing up for appointments	L
3 months crime & violation free	L
Improved school attendance	L
Academic Improvement – shown on progress report	M
Additional Case Plan Goals accomplished	M
Clean drug tests when tied to offense/criminogenic needs	M
Consistently Showing up for appointments	M
Improved School Behavior (decrease in suspensions, reports, defiance)	M
Cont. improved school attendance	M
6 months crime & violation free	M
Graduate from DRC Program/Completion of ISU/Specialty program & reduction in supervision	H
Academic improvement – semester report card grade point increase	H
Case Plan Goals accomplished	H
Compliance with Gang Terms	H
Involvement in positive/pro-social activities (church youth group, sports, volunteering, etc.)	H
Completing CBT/Group Counseling Program	H
Significant Increase in school attendance	H
Graduation from School	H
1 year crime & violation free	H

Every 30 days, POs are to review their caseloads to determine which youth are deserving of incentive rewards based on the Meritus Behaviors listed above.



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