



2015 Long-Range Plan for Iowa's Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems

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Introduction

The development of the long-range criminal and juvenile justice plan by the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP), Department of Human Rights fulfills the obligations outlined in Iowa Code §216A.135. The first plan was developed and issued in 1990. CJJP has utilized the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Advisory Council (CJJPAC) and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council (JJAC) to coordinate the planning activities.

In 1995, these two councils developed a new plan consisting of a set of long-range justice system goals to assist policy makers and justice system practitioners to plan and operate the justice system through the next twenty years. The statutory mandate for such long-range planning required the identification of goals specific enough to provide guidance, but broad enough to be of relevance over a long period of time. The long-range goals covered a wide variety of topics and offered a framework within which current practices could be defined and assessed. Collectively, these long-range goals were meant to provide a single source of direction to the complex assortment of practitioners and policymakers whose individual concerns and decisions collectively defined the nature and effectiveness of Iowa's justice system.

This year's 2015 plan was built from previous plans and continues much of the emphasis of the previous goals, with some new directions charted as appropriate.

The CJJPAC directed that the 2015 plan be developed with input from the public. A public hearing was held in October 2014, at the Des Moines Area Community College's (DMACC) Southridge Success Center. The hearing utilized interactive web-based and conference calling technologies to allow participation of citizens across Iowa who could not attend in person. In addition, written comments, including emails, were received and considered in formulating this 2015 plan. The plan's long range goals for Iowa's Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems are meant to facilitate analyses and direction for justice system issues and concerns in Iowa. The five-year goals set forth specific strategies identified by CJJP and its advisory councils, other criminal and juvenile justice entities, and public comments.

LONG-RANGE GOALS:

I. REDUCE VIOLENCE AND PREVENT CRIME

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to utilize best practices while seeking out new strategies that will result in the prevention and/or a reduction in crime and violence.

II. INCREASE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to publicize positive aspects and outcomes of the criminal justice system while attempting to increase the system's transparency.

III. DECREASE MINORITY OVERREPRESENTATION IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to seek effective strategies to reduce overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal and juvenile justice system, and implement those practices shown to decrease overrepresentation.

IV. EXPAND AND IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- **Five Year Goal:** Seek to fund state and local mental health services for individuals both in and outside of the criminal justice system.

V. EXPAND AND IMPROVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

- **Five Year Goal:** Seek to fund state and local substance abuse services for individuals both in and outside of the criminal justice system.

VI. EXPAND AND IMPROVE VICTIM SERVICES

- **Five Year Goal:** Increase the services available to victims of violent crimes, especially female victims of domestic abuse and/or sexual abuse.

VII. ENSURE APPROPRIATE UTILIZATION OF CORRECTIONAL RESOURCES

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to seek methodologies that will increase the efficacy of the Department of Corrections (DOC) programs, while seeking alternative programs to which offenders can be safely diverted as an alternative to incarceration/detention, thereby expanding available correctional resources.

VIII. EXPAND AND IMPROVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS -- PLANNING AND MONITORING

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue the Criminal Justice Information System Integration (CJIS) Project, and seek other technological applications that can increase the efficacy of the Criminal Justice System in a cost efficient manner.

IX. IMPROVE SANCTIONS, SUPERVISION, TREATMENT AND SERVICES FOR ADULT OFFENDERS

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to seek out/develop programs and policies that result in positive outcomes (a reduction in recidivism) for adult offenders.

X. IMPROVE SANCTIONS, SUPERVISION, TREATMENT AND SERVICES FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS

- **Five Year Goal:** Continue to seek out/develop programs and policies that result in positive outcomes (a reduction in recidivism) for juvenile offenders.

Long-Range Justice System Goals for Iowa

No single goal presented in the plan below is meant to take precedence over another. Just as the justice system is a complex system of many interrelated and overlapping components, these long-range goals should be viewed collectively.

Many officials, practitioners and others will need to agree with these goals and work towards them cooperatively. This plan, however, is primarily intended to serve as a guide to the Governor and General Assembly as they continue to respond to proposals and to develop initiatives to address immediate justice system issues and concerns.

It is recommended, as has been stated in the past versions as well, that no justice system policy or program change be made without a documented consideration of the extent to which the change will assist, and not hinder, the state's ability to attain these long-range goals. This recommendation is being reaffirmed through this new report.

Finally, it is recommended that all proposals to develop new laws or practices for Iowa's criminal and juvenile justice systems should include plans that ensure an even balance between demands on the system and the system's resources and ability to meet the demands. Also, the identification and monitoring of performance measures and other benchmarks for justice system operations and improvements are strongly encouraged as an essential part of managing justice system resources.

I. Reduce Violence and Prevent Crime

FIVE-YEAR Goal: Continue to utilize best practices while seeking out new strategies that will result in the prevention and/or a reduction in crime and violence.

Iowa should continue to utilize best practices for preventing crime and reducing crime levels through the following strategies:

1.) Evaluate and utilize early intervention and crime prevention plans which are evidence-based and research-informed to address:

- Domestic Violence
- Truancy and Dropouts
- Child Abuse
- Mental Health Service Needs
- Substance Abuse
- Criminal Gang Activities
- Teen Pregnancy
- Youth Participation in Gangs
- Parenting Skills
- Unemployment
- Family Stability
- Economic Opportunities
- Citizen and Neighborhood Empowerment
- Illiteracy
- Homelessness

2.) Increase law enforcement coordination to ensure improvements in crime prevention, investigation and the apprehension of law violators.

3.) Fund, implement, and evaluate prison and community-based services and treatments proven to reduce recidivism upon an offender's release from prison.

4.) Define structure, implement and evaluate secure and highly structured treatment settings for adult offenders based on the specialization of their needed treatments and their risk to reoffend.

5.) Focus correctional resources towards individuals most likely to reoffend by providing and implementing evidence-based practices for improved offender reentry.

6.) Continue to divert low-risk juvenile offenders from entering the juvenile justice system.

II. Increase Public Confidence in the Justice System

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Continue to publicize positive aspects and outcomes of the criminal justice system while attempting to increase the system's transparency.

Increased public confidence could be achieved through the following strategies:

- 1.) Appropriately align and clarify the responsibilities of local, county, state, and federal agencies as well as the executive and judicial branches of state government.
- 2.) Increase cooperation amongst law enforcement, adult and juvenile court services and correctional system staff to ensure a consistent and effective approach to serving Iowa's adult and juvenile offenders.
- 3.) Provide all indigent defendants in need of criminal defense with qualified attorneys.
- 4.) Report, identify and document effective policies, programs and sanctions and disseminate these efforts to the public.
- 5.) Encourage consistent and appropriate uses of sanctions that hold offenders accountable and provide restitution to their victims and their communities.
- 6.) Encourage consistent use of evidence-based offender programming, services and treatments that are proven to reduce re-offending.
- 7.) Explore more efficient ways to determine appropriate sentence lengths, terms of imprisonment and adult and juvenile justice system sanctions that enhance public safety and will reduce re-offending.
- 8.) Improve reporting and increase awareness of the actual volume and nature of crime in Iowa.
- 9.) Increase victim supports and participation in the system; extending services and outreach to crime victims, especially victims of violent crimes.
- 10.) Improve cultural competence throughout the justice system, including the provision of culturally appropriate programming and services for offenders and victims.

III. Decrease Minority Overrepresentation in the Justice System

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Continue to seek effective strategies to reduce overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal and juvenile justice system, and implement those practices shown to decrease overrepresentation.

Disproportionate minority contact (DMC) in the criminal and juvenile justice system has been documented and efforts to eliminate bias should continue through the following strategies:

- 1.) Identify and monitor statewide, local, and agency-specific indicators of racial bias to enhance public awareness of such issues.
- 2.) Increase public awareness of system policies, practices and operations which positively or negatively influence the rates of disproportionate minority contact.
- 3.) Utilize assessment instruments to limit the effect of bias in system decision making.
- 4.) Increase citizen participation in the system through community and neighborhood crime prevention groups, use of volunteers in system agencies, community leaders and public participation in the development and review of system policies and activities.
- 5.) Recruitment and retention of minority persons in all levels of employment and volunteer activities throughout the justice systems.
- 6.) Expand and increase the provision of criminal and juvenile justice system data by race and ethnicity to enhance the quality of decision making.
- 7.) Increase commitment and collaboration between the three branches of state government for reducing DMC in the delinquency system by convening summits to adopt strategies to reduce DMC in Iowa.¹
- 8.) Leaders of local schools and law enforcement agencies, county attorneys, chief juvenile court officers, the local office of the Department of Human Services, and juvenile court judges should coordinate and participate in local collaborative efforts to develop, implement, and sustain strategies to reduce DMC.²
- 9.) Leaders of all professional organizations whose members have decision-making authority in the delinquency process should develop and regularly conduct high quality education programs on issues related to DMC, including but not limited to: historical and cultural biases, cultural competency, and

¹ The following strategies were developed by the Community and Strategic Planning (CASP) Advisory Committee in November of 2014 as recommendations for reducing Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) in Iowa's juvenile justice system.

² Ibid

evidence-based strategies in Iowa and other jurisdictions for reducing DMC in the delinquency system.³

- 10.) Local school districts should develop policies and practices to fairly reduce their juvenile court referrals, especially for minor nonviolent misconduct, and to reduce DMC in referrals to juvenile court.⁴
- 11.) Local law enforcement agencies should develop policies and practices to fairly reduce DMC in juvenile arrests, especially for minor nonviolent misconduct. They should also develop pre-referral diversion programs for nonviolent offenders, while maintaining public safety as a top priority.⁵
- 12.) Train all juvenile court officers and detention staff to complete the new online Iowa Juvenile Detention Screening Tool. Juvenile Court Services is currently developing a “dispositional matrix” to assist with determining appropriate dispositional outcomes for youth. When it is finalized all judges should receive training on its implementation and consistently use this matrix to provide a more objective way to determine appropriate dispositions for youth.⁶

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

IV. Expand and Improve Mental Health Services

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Seek to fund state and local mental health services for individuals both in and outside of the criminal justice system.

As of June 30, 2014 the Department of Corrections documented that about 52% of prisoners have a serious or a chronic mental illness. Appropriate mental health treatment, both in community-based settings and in the institutions, can alleviate demands on the prisons, improve outcomes for offenders, reduce recidivism, and provide better long-term protection of the public. Addressing and improving the outcomes for offenders with mental illness should include consideration of the following:

- 1.) Ensure the identification of mental health issues a routine part of the pre-sentence investigation process and juvenile court intake process.
- 2.) Identify, develop, and expand evidence-based community resources to provide services to defendants with a mental illness.
- 3.) Provide a continuum of mental health services to offenders, including medication while incarcerated and proper referrals and support services once released into the community.
- 4.) Provide appropriate secure placements and/ or services for jail detainees with mental health diagnoses.
- 5.) Provide training to law enforcement personnel and other criminal and juvenile justice personnel to recognize potential mental health issues or problems.
- 6.) Continue to work within the juvenile justice system on issues of mental health identification, assessment and staff training to improve outcomes for juveniles with mental health issues in view of the needs of the increasing population of children with mental health issues in the juvenile justice system.
- 7.) Expand mental health services for specific issues, such as dual-diagnosis and co-occurring to ensure appropriate treatment and supervision.
- 8.) Expand the availability of mental health treatment courts.
- 9.) Increase the number of qualified providers of evidence-based mental health services to older adults.⁷
- 10.) Integrate health and supportive services to improve accessibility to mental health services for older Iowans.⁸

⁷ The following are mental health service goals established by the Iowa Coalition on Mental Health and Aging. <http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icmha/overview/goals.html>

⁸ Ibid.

V. Expand and Improve Substance Abuse Services

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Seek to fund state and local substance abuse services for individuals both in and outside of the criminal justice system.

As of June 30, 2014 the Department of Corrections documented that about 28% of all prison inmates in Iowa have some type of substance use disorder, and many more are in need of substance abuse treatment. Adequate diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse problems can lead to reduced recidivism and improved public safety. Addressing and improving the outcomes for offenders with substance abuse problems could be achieved through the following strategies:

- 1.) Expand the use of drug treatment courts using evidence-based approaches and methodologies for offenders with substance abuse problems or co-occurring disorders.
- 2.) Identify and develop community resources to provide services to defendants with substance abuse problems.
- 3.) Provide a continuum of substance abuse treatment services to offenders, including pre-incarceration services while incarcerated and proper referrals and support services once released into the community.
- 4.) Provide treatment alternatives to incarceration when appropriate.
- 5.) Support the development of a continuum of services that follow youth with substance abuse issues from the community to placement and from placement back to the community.
- 6.) Reduce the percentage of 11th graders who are current users of drugs and alcohol, as one of the keys to reducing substance abuse is keeping kids from ever starting.⁹
- 7.) Improve the percentage of Iowans who are employed post substance abuse treatment as employment is an important factor in moving forward with sobriety.¹⁰

⁹ The following are goals made by the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy as submitted in the 2014 Iowa Drug Control Strategy. <http://www.iowa.gov/odcp/docs/2014StrategyFINAL.pdf>

¹⁰ Ibid

VI. Expand and Improve Victim Services

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Increase the services available to victims of violent crimes, especially female victims of domestic abuse and/or sexual abuse.

Justice is served when all those affected by crime are considered in the system. Victim services should be a component of criminal justice proceedings. This can be accomplished through the following strategies:

- 1.) Ensure victim supports and participation in the system and extend services and outreach to crime victims.
- 2.) Ensure that victims of domestic violence have access to emergency shelters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week within close proximity to their residence.
- 3.) Ensure that all counties implement all the provisions in current victims' rights legislation.
- 4.) Enhance prison and jail work programs to provide inmates with income with which to make restitution, and strengthening community-based programs' activities to facilitate offender restitution, community service and other forms of victim/community reparation.
- 5.) Ensure access to crisis response services for sexual assault victims and victims of violent crime.
- 6.) Advocate for short and long-term changes in the criminal justice system to better meet the needs of victims and witnesses.¹¹
- 7.) Educate professionals to provide more sensitive services to victims and witnesses.¹²
- 8.) Advocate for quality victim services through the establishment of a professional certification program for victim service professionals in Iowa.¹³
- 9.) Provide a forum for crime victims and witnesses to voice their concerns and grievances.¹⁴

¹¹ The following are strategies developed by the Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance (IOVA) to pursue awareness and support of crime victims' rights in Iowa.

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

VII. Ensure Appropriate Utilization of Correctional Resources

FIVE YEAR GOAL: Continue to seek methodologies that will increase the efficacy of the Department of Corrections (DOC) programs, while seeking alternative programs to which offenders can be safely diverted as an alternative to incarceration/detention, thereby expanding available correctional resources.

The Iowa prison population has decreased by 458 inmates in the decade (FY 2005 - FY 2014); however the population is projected to increase by 3,198 within the decade.¹⁵ Iowa should continue to pursue the goal of reducing the prison population as well as engage in other efforts to ensure appropriate utilization of correctional resources. Possible actions include:

- 1.) Iowa's continuum of corrections sanctions seeks the appropriate level of supervision to meet the needs of public protection and provide evidence-based sanctions commensurate with the seriousness of offenses, while facilitating use of the most cost-effective sanctions and thereby maximizing the return on investment for each corrections dollar spent.
- 2.) The Public Safety Advisory Board (PSAB)¹⁶ supports the continued use of the Results First model in Iowa's correctional system. The Results First model assesses the "return on investment to tax payers from criminal justice programs utilized by the State of Iowa".¹⁷ Identifying offender programs which provide the most return on investment could be advantageous in the appropriate utilization of correctional resources.
- 3.) Advocate for optimal staff levels at existing prisons to improve the safety of staff, offenders and the public.
- 4.) Explore the provision of less restrictive, medically appropriate placements for medically incapacitated inmates.
- 5.) Increase reliance on Community Based Corrections (CBC) as an alternative to prison and adjust CBC appropriations to accommodate increased populations should this strategy be utilized to greater degrees.
- 6.) Reform of Iowa's sentencing laws to permit more discretion by judges and the Board of Parole.
- 7.) Utilize validated assessment instruments to insure standardization and fairness in decision making.

¹⁵ <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/cjip/images/pdf/Forecast2014.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/cjip/images/pdf/PSAB%20Report%202013.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://publications.iowa.gov/13320/>

VIII. Expand and Improve Information Systems-Planning and Monitoring

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Continue the Criminal Justice Information System Integration (CJIS) Project, and seek other technological applications that can increase the efficacy of the Criminal Justice System in a cost efficient manner.

- 1.) Continue to develop, improve and integrate information systems. Such information systems should include:
 - Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)
 - Criminal History Records (CCH)
 - Prosecution Activities and Outcomes
 - Iowa Court Information System (ICIS)
 - Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON)
 - Various Department of Human Services Information Systems
 - Division of Substance Abuse and Health Promotion Information Systems (I-SMART)
- 2.) Work to acquire information needed from data systems. Such data should include:
 - Investigations and arrests
 - Background checks
 - Release/custody decisions
 - Adult court charges, convictions and sentencing decisions
 - Juvenile court system processing
 - Supervision, service and treatment planning and monitoring
 - Program and service eligibility determinations
 - Linking and tracking activities involving an individual involved with multiple systems
 - Provision of data by race and ethnicity
- 3.) Work to acquire and integrate state, local and program-specific aggregate data for
 - Budget development and resource allocation
 - Policy & program evaluation and monitoring
 - Linking and tracking activities involving programs and groups of individuals involved with multiple systems
- 4.) Support the use of advanced technologies to maximize efficiency and promote effective and equitable justice services.
- 5.) Further develop the capacity of state and local law enforcement bodies to identify and prosecute computer crimes.
- 6.) Improve the accuracy and reliability of criminal justice data.
- 7.) Develop policies and safeguards to ensure the appropriate dissemination of public information while protecting private information.

IX. Improve Sanctions, Supervision, Treatment and Services for Adult Offenders

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Continue to seek out/develop programs and policies that result in positive outcomes (a reduction in recidivism) for adult offenders.

Strategies that have been documented as effective can help address such concerns as 1) deterring offenders and potential offenders from engaging in future criminal behavior; 2) protecting the public and managing offender risks in a cost-effective manner using the least restrictive measures; 3) providing adult offenders with requirements and opportunities to make reparation and restitution to their victims; and 4) providing adult offenders with the opportunity to maintain, regain or achieve the capacity to remain in, or return to, the general population as law abiding, contributing citizens.

Achieving this goal will involve the continuation or development of a variety of activities and initiatives including:

- 1.) Determining the relative deterrent effects of various sanctions comprising Iowa's corrections continuum, and determining how such deterrent effects vary for people with different backgrounds, education and skill levels, impulse control and rational-thinking capacities, ties to family and community, etc.
- 2.) Establishing or strengthening risk assessment and risk management procedures for all stages of justice system decision-making.
- 3.) Supporting the use of intermediate sanctions and improving offender monitoring services and tools to help court, parole, and correctional officials select and provide sanctions, supervision, treatment and other services that are appropriate to offenders' needs and the public safety risks they present.
- 4.) Ongoing review and improvement of the ability of prisons and jails to serve as deterrents to offenders, and to provide treatment and services needed by incarcerated offenders who will be returning to society to increase their skills and capacities to be law-abiding, contributing citizens.
- 5.) Provide services which offer victims and communities reparation opportunities. Such services would include prison and jail work programs which provide inmates with income with which to pay restitution and community-based activities to facilitate offender community service.

X. Improve Sanctions, Supervision, Treatment and Services for Juvenile Offenders

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: Continue to seek out/develop programs and policies that result in positive outcomes (a reduction in recidivism) for juvenile offenders.

Achieving this goal will involve the continuation or development of a variety of activities and initiatives including:

- 1.) Expand the current capacities of the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative (JJRRI) that evaluates the effectiveness of sanctions, supervision, treatment and other services to juvenile offenders.
- 2.) Ensure an enhanced level of quality care and treatment is available for female juvenile offenders who require structured services, due to risk to public safety, which includes trauma-informed care, single gender environments, and reentry planning and services.
- 3.) Strengthen risk and need assessment procedures for juvenile justice decision-making.
- 4.) Establish a uniform statewide transitioning process for youth exiting the juvenile justice system.
- 5.) Study the impact of extending juvenile court jurisdiction allowing juvenile courts to have an option to retain juvenile offenders, who are in the juvenile justice system, under the jurisdiction of juvenile court until the age of 21. Additional resources are needed to serve such youth between the ages of 18 and 21.
- 6.) Establish a process to ensure the confidentiality of records of juveniles taken into custody (arrested) and referred to juvenile court services, and an automatic sealing of juvenile records when a juvenile offender becomes 18 years of age.
- 7.) Allow for the standardized provision of data to improve and enhance the effectiveness of decision-making.
- 8.) Study the use of a dispositional matrix by juvenile court judges. A dispositional matrix is a form of structured decision making which weighs offense severity along with risk to reoffend. It is an approach that will assist system officials in determining the most appropriate level of supervision and type of services for youth, thereby maximizing recidivism reduction.