



Forging Partnerships & Driving Progress

2024 Year in Review

2023 Community Justice Council Members: Ismael Ozanne, *District Attorney, Acting Chair of CJC*; Jeff Okazaki, *Clerk of Courts*; Calvin Barrett, *Sheriff*; Jerome Dillard, *Community Representative*; Judge John Hyland, *Courts*; Myra McNair, *Community Representative*; Patrick Miles, *County Board of Supervisors*; John Jay Miller, *Community Representative*; Joseph Parisi, *County Executive*.

Advisory Members: Richelle Andrae, *Public Protection and Judiciary Committee*; Catherine Dorl, *Public Defender*; Troy Enger, *Department of Corrections Regional Chief*; Todd Meurer, *Municipal Judge*; John Patterson, *Assistant Chief of Madison Police Department*; Brent Plisch, *Chiefs of Police Associations*; Satya Rhodes-Conway, *Mayor of Madison*; Heidi Wegleitner, *Human Health and Needs Committee*.

A Renewed Vision for the Future

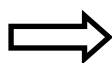
2024 marked a period of transition for the Community Justice Council (CJC) of Dane County. Although the CJC had been on hiatus for over a year due to lack of staff, it would be incorrect to assume that all of its critical work had paused. Key initiatives, such as the Community Court of Dane County, continued to move forward due to both federal and local requirements.

During this time, peer site visits to Eugene, OR, and Reno, NV, were conducted to learn best practices for community courts. Additionally, work on the CJC dashboards and data collection progressed smoothly. While some important work was completed, the CJC and its three subcommittees—Behavioral Health, Racial Disparities, and Pretrial Reform—were unable to meet and therefore the collaborative committee work was halted. This was particularly challenging due to the important new voices that had been recently added—those of community members with lived experience.

As we enter 2025, we are still in a phase of transition. The Office of Justice Reform, which supports the CJC and its subcommittees, is in the process of hiring and training new staff. The CJC of Dane County will once again meet regularly and work with the subcommittees to continue to drive improvements forward.

As we reflect on the past decade of impactful work—such as advancing data-driven decisions, fostering data sharing, launching the Community Restorative Court of Dane County, building local and national research partnerships, and improving the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice—we offer gratitude to past partners.

In the coming years, the CJC will focus on implementing new strategies, fostering new partnerships, and developing innovative programs and policies to make our county safer, fairer, and more equitable for all its residents. We invite you to be a part of this important effort.



Subcommittees of the Community Justice Council will start in early spring! (Racial Disparities, Pretrial, and Behavioral Health)



Use this QR code to visit the CJC website

<http://cjc.danecounty.gov>

Office of Justice Reform Adds Two Staff

The Office of Justice Reform has two new staff, who are excited to help OJR accomplish its mission to reduce incarceration and racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

Shar-Ron Buie, Data and Evaluation Coordinator, comes to us from Just Dane, where he served as Associate Director. A former teacher and leader in educational preparedness at Marquette University, Shar-Ron also has extensive experience supporting Veterans and justice-impacted individuals. His leadership roles include serving on multiple boards and councils focused on justice and reentry. Shar-Ron holds degrees in paralegal studies, electronics, a BA in business administration, an MS in criminal justice, and an Executive MS in criminal justice. He is currently finishing his Ph.D. program, with a defense scheduled for May 2025. You can often catch Shar-Ron singing karaoke and playing basketball when not advocating.



Shar-Ron Buie

Delia Young, Clerk I-II, dedicated 15 years to working in the Green Bay School District within the Special Education Department as a district-wide interpreter. Her responsibilities included attending IEP meetings, where she provided translations for parents and teams. She also collaborated with various community agencies to assist special education students effectively. She is proud of her Mexican heritage.

Prior to working with the Office of Justice Reform, Delia worked at the Job Center – Human Services Department as a Spanish Bilingual Clerk I-II. Delia studied Business Administration at the UACJ in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. In her free time, she enjoys biking and is passionate about yoga and meditation.



Delia Young

Community Justice Council Hears Results of Study on Efficacy of Pretrial Risk Assessment

In January 2024, the Community Justice Council heard the results of a [multi-year randomized control study assessing the impact of the Public Safety Assessment \(PSA\)](#), a risk assessment tool used in Dane County pretrial release decisions for in custody defendants.

The PSA analyzes nine factors to estimate the likelihood of three key pretrial outcomes: failure to appear in court, a new arrest, and a new arrest for a violent crime. Court Commissioners may use these scores to guide their decisions on pretrial release conditions during initial appearances, though they are not required to follow PSA recommendations.

To evaluate the tool's effectiveness, the CJC collaborated with Harvard University's Access to Justice Lab on a study where Commissioners had access to the PSA in half of initial appearances and no access in the other half.

The final report to the CJC found that the PSA had "modest" effects on Commissioner decisions at initial appearance hearings, in the directions of the PSA recommendations. The study also determined that the PSA did not impact failures to appear in court, new criminal activity, new violent criminal activity, pre-disposition incarceration, or measures of racial fairness. As the study authors concluded, the PSA "failed to achieve hoped-for improvements in criminal justice outcomes." The study did not identify any harmful effects from the PSA's use.

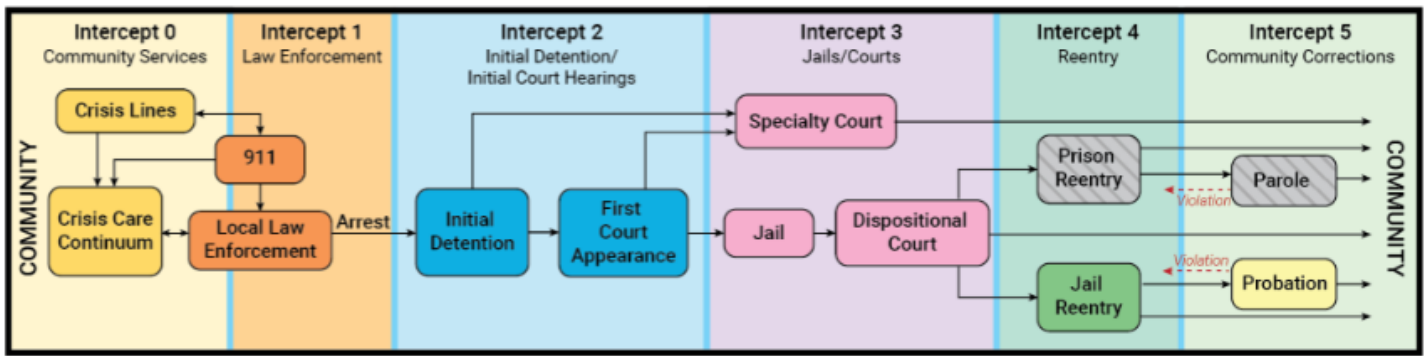
Changes to the pretrial process were made during the early stages of research and learning. One adjustment involved altering the timing of the initial court appearance to enhance the speed at which defendants were seen by a court official for a bail or release decision.

The work with Harvard, and work with subsequent peer learning platforms contribute to ongoing discussions about evidence-based decision-making in the justice system and how best to implement effective pretrial practices.

Deepening the Impact: Upcoming Work on the SIM Model

Dane County, Wisconsin has actively participated in local and national work addressing the intersection of behavioral health and the justice system. One such initiative includes working with national experts completing planning work using the Sequential Intercept Model.

The Sequential Intercept Model is most effective when used as a community strategic planning tool to assess available resources, determine gaps in services, and plan for community change. These activities are best accomplished by a team of stakeholders that cross over multiple systems, including mental health, substance use, law enforcement, pretrial services, courts, jails, community corrections, housing, health, social services, people with lived experiences, family members, and many others. Employed as a strategic planning tool, communities can use the Sequential Intercept Model to: Develop a comprehensive picture of how people with mental and substance use disorders flow through the criminal justice system along six distinct intercept points: (0) Community Services, (1) Law Enforcement, (2) Initial Detention and Initial Court Hearings, (3) Jails and Courts, (4) Reentry, and (5) Community Corrections.



© 2020 Policy Research Associates, Inc.

Dane County has invested in a number of critical programs and initiatives since the 2018 SIM model training. These include: developing a collaborative mobile crisis response program, data sharing agreements, embedded 911 crisis counselors; medication assistance treatment (MAT) in the Dane County Jail and more. The CJC has used the structure of the original 2018 SIM model to explore new alternatives—working collaboratively with stakeholders, those with lived experience, and service providers.

In December of 2024, the CJC was granted a technical assistance award from the MacArthur Foundation-Safety and Justice Challenge, to once again bring national experts to work with Dane County on addressing the critical intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice. Currently in the planning stages, the CJC will host a SIM model training later in 2025. More information soon!

The Future of Dane County Community Court

Dane County is making significant progress toward launching its Community Court, an initiative aimed at expanding alternatives to traditional criminal case processing. Funded by a federal grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in 2022, the Community Court will focus on promoting well-being for victims, those who have caused harm, and the broader community.

In 2024, Dane County partnered with the Center for Justice Innovation to advance the project. As part of these efforts, two county staff members and two community representatives participated in peer learning initiatives at established Community Court sites. Their experience provided valuable insights into risk assessment strategies, restorative justice approaches, and effective intervention models. Site visits included: Cook County, IL; Reno, NV; and Eugene, OR.



Looking ahead, Dane County will host technical assistance staff from the Center for Justice Innovation in March 2025. This site visit will help integrate best practices into Community Court operations, and will include a presentation to the Community Justice Council.

The hiring process for a Community Court Coordinator is nearing completion, with the new staff member expected to start this spring. The court will be presided over by Judge Nia Trammel once it pilots.

We look forward to this impactful initiative!

Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant paid for travel: # BJA-22-GG-03874



Judge Nia Trammel

Key Takeaways from the Community Court Site Visits

Iterative Process	Courts often start small and grow in their allowable offenses and catchment region.
Quality of Life Offenses in central districts were common	Disorderly Conduct; Criminal Trespass; Thefts; Open containers/consumption; etc.
Unique Partnerships	Engaging local residents, business, social service providers, Veterans Services, Housing Services, Behavioral Health, Tattoo Removal (San Francisco) and more co-located oftentimes in a one stop shop.
Community Enhancement	Community enhancement (or community service) often used as a way to repay harm and take responsibility.
Restorative Practices	Restorative justice practices for both victim and offender (respondent)