

LARRY B. MARTIN
COMMISSIONER

Request for Letters of Interest - Pretrial Risk Assessment Pilot Sites FY 2016

The State of Tennessee - Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) is releasing a request for **Letters of Interest** to be submitted by jurisdictions interested in the implementation and validation of a pretrial risk assessment instrument. The adoption of a validated pretrial risk assessment instrument is an evidence-based strategy supported by many national organizations including the Conference of State Court Administrators, the National Institute of Corrections, the National Association of Counties, the American Jail Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the American Council of Chief Defenders, the American Bar Association, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, and the American Association of Probation and Parole.

A validated pretrial risk assessment instrument should predict a defendant's risk of failure to appear and danger to the community pending trial. The goal of this project is to enhance public safety and improve the justice system effectiveness and efficiency through the implementation of a data-driven framework for pretrial release decision making. The benefits of risk-based decision making include eliminating unnecessary detention of low risk defendants while simultaneously allocating the more intensive and restrictive options (e.g., pretrial supervision, detention) for higher risk defendants. Additional information about pretrial risk assessment is available on the OCJP website at: <http://www.tn.gov/finance/section/fa-ocjp>. Technical assistance and evaluation services will be provided to selected grantees by the Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (CJI), a nationally recognized organization that works with local, state and national criminal justice organizations to improve public safety and the delivery of justice throughout the country.

Applicant jurisdictions must submit **Letters of Interest** for review **by August 31st**. Selected sites will progress to a full onsite review of jurisdictional capacity and readiness before the final selection of up to two pilot sites is made in late October 2015. Awards will be made for up to \$360,000 over a (42) month grant period. Allowable uses of grant funding will include:

- Support a local pretrial site coordinator who will staff a local policy team consisting of:
 - Director of Pretrial Services, Community Corrections/Chief Probation Officer (whichever is applicable to jurisdiction; this program does not require a standalone pretrial services program, department, or agency)
 - Chief Judge
 - Chief Public Defender and/or Leadership from the Private Defense Bar
 - Elected Prosecutor
 - County Sheriff and/or Jail Administrator
 - City Police Chief
 - County Executive
 - Court Clerk
 - Chief Supervising Magistrate
- Reimburse local expenses for data collection. This may include modifications to existing court or jail records management software in order to support the automation of the risk-assessment process, or the generation of program specific data for review by local policy team and funding agency stakeholders.

- Define relationships among policy team members through written agreements (interagency agreements, MOUs, etc.)
- Development of a jurisdictional pretrial justice vision statement, front-end system map, and agency level logic model for implementation by each policy team member.
- Support staff to perform risk assessments
- Support travel for the local site coordinator to trainings or site visits to other comparable jurisdictions either locally, regionally or nationally which have successfully implemented an evidence-based pretrial risk assessment process.
- Screen and refer cases to a local bond docket.
- Make supervision contacts, as appropriate, with released defendants.
- Sites will be required to continue to participate in webinars to keep them current with research and best practices in both pretrial and systems reform.

Pilot sites will work closely with the Crime and Justice Institute through four stages of planning and implementation to include: Exploration (6 months), Installation (4 months), Initial Implementation (32 months), and Pretrial Risk Assessment Validation (6 months).

In order to complete the Letter of Interest, you must complete a brief [informational survey](#) (Attachment 1) which includes applicant organization and jurisdictional stakeholder contact information along with questions about jurisdictional history of interagency collaboration, information sharing between stakeholder agencies, participation in program evaluation, and local resources that your community can bring to bear for the purposes of this project.

The [Letter of Interest](#) (Attachment 2) must be signed by at least one of the following stakeholders in the applicant jurisdiction in order to be eligible for review. Additional letters of support can be submitted by project stakeholders, but the formal Letter of Interest must be signed by either the:

- Chief Judge (General Sessions)
- District Attorney General
- Chief Public Defender or Leadership from the Private Defense Bar
- Sheriff

Additional information about the full application process will be distributed in September 2015 to selected jurisdictions. OCJP and CJJ will conduct a planning and site selection process during the fall of 2015 with executed contracts anticipated to be in place by January 1, 2016. Please contact OCJP Program Manager Tom Pitt, 615-741-9954, tom.pitt@tn.gov with any questions about this process. An informational webinar on the Letter of Interest is scheduled for August 7th at 9:00 AM. The webinar can be accessed at <http://stateoftennessee.adobeconnect.com/r3hj1ggiu9q/>.

Sincerely,



William J. Scollon
Director