

2019 Addendum

Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs Statewide Five Year Strategy



Prepared by:



Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs
312 Rosa R. Parks Avenue
Nashville, TN 37243

Overview

The Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Program's (OCJP) five year strategic plan began in state fiscal year 2017 and will continue to be the overarching guide for the agency during its duration. In an effort to provide the most current information related to OCJP's ongoing planning process, each year OCJP will briefly outline updates in the following Chapters: (3) Strategic Planning Process, (5) Newly Identified Resource Needs and Gaps, and (6) Priorities and Select Responses. All annual updates will be in the form of an addendum to the five year strategic plan, from this point forward referenced only as the [2017 Plan](#).

Chapter 3: Strategic Planning Process Addendum

In addition to the annual methods described in the 2017 Plan and the [2018 Addendum](#), there were some additional task forces and collaborative meetings that helped to inform the 2019 planning process. The [2017 STOP Implementation Plan](#) was finalized. Much of what is included in the STOP Implementation plan is also found in the more comprehensive OCJP strategic plan.

As part of OCJP's ongoing strategic planning efforts, OCJP has assembled a Youth Working Group comprised of community partner experts in the field of working with youth; particularly those serving young adults age 17-25. Partners include representatives from the Department of Children Services, Nashville After Zone Alliance, Tennessee Voices for Children, Nashville Career Advancement Center, Tennessee Child Advocacy Center and the Sexual Assault Center. The working group was designed to discuss available resources, area(s) of greatest needs, and gaps in services to formulate ideas for supporting this population. This group began meeting monthly and has moved to quarterly meetings.

On September 13, 2017, the Tennessee Blue Ribbon Task Force conducted a roundtable discussion with ten victim advocates and allied juvenile justice professionals; including OCJP. Anne Seymour, National Crime Victim Advocate and consultant to The Pew Charitable Trusts facilitated the discussion. This roundtable informed OCJP's strategic planning process for the FY 2019 Addendum.

The annual OCJP Roundtable Strategic Planning Meeting expanded its membership this year to include those agencies that serve culturally specific and underserved communities in Tennessee. Representatives from Meherry Medical College and Conexion Americas were invited to participate in this event that was held on September 15, 2017 and brought their perspective regarding Tennessee's resource needs and gaps in the criminal justice systems as it relates to those populations.

Chapter 5: Resource Needs and Gaps Addendum

System weaknesses tied to domestic violence: Tennessee continues to prioritize the expanded use of the Maryland Lethality Assessment Program statewide due to the continued high rate of crimes against persons that are domestic related. This evidence based protocol reaches victims who may have never sought services and enhances the partnership between law

enforcement and local domestic violence shelters while on the scene of an incident to link victims immediately to services.

Domestic Violence shelters have reached out to OCJP and identified the following needs; an increase in victims coming into shelter with an opioid substance abuse issue and a lack of assessment tools for working with children who experience domestic violence.

While Tennessee has worked diligently to improve family violence systems approaches to serving both children and adults there is still additional work to be done with regards to other vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and other unserved and underserved communities. OCJP has committed to expanding services to these vulnerable populations. This work must focus on direct contact with victims and potential victims through prevention, advocacy and direct services.

System Weaknesses in Sexual Assault Responses: OCJP continues to recognize the system wide weakness in response to sexual assault; from specialized investigators and prosecutors, forensic interviewers, sexual assault nurse examiners for adult and pediatric patients; CPIT and SART coordinators; and comprehensive victim service providers.

Data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction: Across the state, mapping criminal activity has identified links between drug activity, gang activity and domestic and sexual violence. This will inform future strategic planning. In particular there is a need for additional drug diversion investigations related to our opioid epidemic and advanced gang analytics across law enforcement agencies to track the criminal behavior and uncover covert connections between groups and incidents.

Meeting basic infrastructure issues such as law enforcement equipment, and criminal justice and victim service practitioners' training: Law enforcement, courts, corrections agencies, and ancillary non-profit groups have a need for training in a variety of criminal justice topics. Issues not previously addressed extensively (underserved populations, non-profit capacity building, domestic violence, sexual assault and elder abuse) and new issues (prescription drug abuse/diversion, heroin, the increase of gang related criminal activity, and human trafficking) have created new needs relative to training. There is a continual need for domestic violence and sexual assault trainings as well.

In a press release, the Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts reported, “According to an August 2017 report published by the Sycamore Institute, in 2012 Tennessee had an average of 1.4 opioid prescriptions for every Tennessean — the second highest rate in the U.S. Prescription opioids have surpassed alcohol as the primary substance of abuse for treatment funded by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS). The epidemic in Tennessee has resulted in higher opioid-related health care costs, more drug-related crimes, decreased work productivity, more children in state custody, and a 10-fold rise in babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome.” A further impact of the opioid epidemic is the need for law enforcement to have access to the life-saving Naloxone medication both for their own safety when they encounter fentanyl and to rescue those they encounter in active opioid overdose.

Community-based crime prevention & education activities: Tennessee is among the leaders in the nation in developing a statewide plan for addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACE) and building strong relationships and healthy neuropathways. This has illuminated the need for increase community awareness of ACEs and reparative responses, and ensuring communities have options for children; especially juveniles.

Chapter 6 Tennessee's Priorities and Select Responses Addendum

Response to Violence in the Home: When faced with an alarming rate of crimes against the person that are domestic related, the State has to have a response. OCJP's response continues to be multifaceted and involves all areas of the criminal justice system. OCJP continues to see that the criminal justice response continues to need additional resources to increase offender accountability. In 2019, OCJP will look for additional projects that provide specialized prosecution and enhance offender accountability. The Nashville FJC has undertaken a pilot project to develop standardize policies and protocols for high risk teams and domestic violence fatality review both of which should lead to tools to decrease the homicide risk for this population.

OCJP will look to expand the number of communities with a dedicated domestic violence and sexual assault investigator through a competitive STOP Law Enforcement solicitation in FY 2019. In order to more fully support the growing number of law enforcement agencies implementing the Maryland Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy will hire a STOP funded LAP Coordinator to facilitate training and oversight of the LAP program with local law enforcement agencies and domestic violence agencies and expand this statewide initiative. This position will not only increase the number of local law enforcement agencies who are implementing the LAP, but also build in sustainability and fidelity to the LAP model program. With the current expansion of the LAP, the demand for emergency housing for domestic violence victims has increased. In FY 2018 and FY 2019, the number of domestic violence emergency shelter beds available in Davidson County/Nashville Knox County/Knoxville and Hamilton County/Chattanooga will be increased to meet this demand.

OCJP has worked diligently to identify underserved populations that are affected by crime, with the goal of increasing victim services to the community based organizations that serve these populations. In 2018, OCJP funded a statewide technical assistance provider to work with our FJC communities and in FY19, OCJP will fund a position at each of our FJC sites to work with culturally specific and underserved communities in their service area, thus expanding the reach of services to some of our most vulnerable populations.

Through an ongoing supportive partnership with the TN Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, OCJP is equipping Tennessee's Domestic Violence Shelters with tools and resources. This has been accomplished in a number of ways. To address the opioid crisis, shelters are being supported by their local anti-drug coalitions for substance abuse training and emergency medication (naloxone). Shelter programs are receiving training on related mental health issues and how to access services for victims of domestic violence.

Responses to Sexual Violence: As part of the FY 2019 STOP Law Enforcement competitive solicitation; colleges and local universities are encouraged to apply for a sexual assault investigator that will develop and strengthen the young adult victim's access to services by implementing strategies to prevent, investigate, respond to and prosecute these crimes.

In FY 2018, OCJP provided additional funding for training and technical assistance to sexual assault programs to enhance skill levels and to provide remote programs with a level of support, supervision and mentoring that had been lacking. In May 2017, the Sexual Assault Center hosted a Tennessee Sexual Assault Training Institute: Healing Sexual Trauma and Fostering Communities of Wellness. The institute targeted direct service provider agencies' leadership and staff. Participants were provided theoretical frameworks and practical approaches during the 2 day event focusing on how trauma affects brain functioning; the neurobiology of trauma recovery through mindfulness, compassion and bodily awareness; vicarious trauma, and cultures of wellness in the workplace.

In FY 2019, OCJP will continue to grow the services for victims of sexual violence across the state. Currently funded programs and new organizations will have the opportunity to hire additional staff for SART and CPIT Coordinators; Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and forensic equipment.

CPIT and SART Coordinators work to increase collaboration amongst agencies to better serve sexual assault victims. These positions will coordinate a community response to sexual assault by bringing together key partners: prosecution, law enforcement, sexual assault advocate and sexual assault nurse examiner. There is a dearth of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) across the state, for working with both the adult population and those specializing with the pediatric population. A certified SANE or SANE-P performs the sexual assault examinations, forensic interviews, provides expert testimony and services on a sexual assault response team. But having a SANE is only half the battle if they don't have the proper space and equipment to perform their job. Therefore in FY 2019 it will be a priority to establish or improve existing forensic facilities for adult and/or child victims of sexual assault for collection of rape kits and forensic interviewing needs.

Data-Driven, Location-Based Strategies to Crime Reduction:

The City of Memphis is piloting a targeted community crime reduction based project that has four approaches: prevention, enforcement, offender intervention, and victim safety. The project addresses instances of domestic violence and uses GPS as a deterrent for domestic violence. Evaluation of this project will determine if this enforcement intervention does increase victim safety. This project will be further enhanced in FY 2018 and 2019 through a STOP grant to assist with holding offenders accountable to the limits of the release through GPS tracking.

Meeting Basic Infrastructure Needs: In FY 2018, OCJP provided a grant to the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to distribute naloxone proportionally to law enforcement agencies throughout the state based on epidemiological findings and geographical distribution ensuring access to naloxone in all the state's high-risk areas. Law enforcement

agents will be trained in the administration of naloxone by local Regional Overdose Prevention Specialist (ROPS) and once trained the law enforcement agency receives the naloxone.

TBI provides a vital supportive role to local law enforcement through the various methods of forensic evidence evaluation and confirmation to man power support with investigations and crisis situations. An ongoing priority is to continue to work to upgrading the infrastructure of TBI, with improvements to their crime scene equipment, crime lab equipment, training equipment, TIBRS system and funding for specialized training for their investigators.

OCJP understands that quality victim service programming requires that agencies are able to pay employees at a level that is commiserate with the work they are performing. Many of these non-profit agencies are unable to keep pace with rising inflation and cost of living increases. Many non-profits are only able to offer minimal employee benefits, and when these programs do receive additional funding, often it is for new projects and new employees not to address the wage incongruity of their current staff. These agencies perform crisis intervention with victims from lethal situations. Not only do employees need the proper training but they also need to be reimbursed at a level that is reflective of this work. OCJP will work with its existing subrecipients to enhance employee training opportunities; strengthen the organizational wellness and support of these organizations for their employees and to ensure the agency's wages and benefits reflect the going rate for this type of work.

An additional need that has arisen across Tennessee is finding alternate methods of addressing severe trauma. One such solution was identified and requested frequently; the need for Therapy Dogs in court settings and shelters, sexual assault programs, and child advocacy centers. OCJP has begun discussions with UT Habitat, and will be expanding their program to Middle Tennessee in FY19.

Criminal Justice and Victim Service Continuing Education: OCJP will continue to support projects that educate professionals, such as law enforcement and social workers, as well as projects that educate the community at large, such as churches and local civic groups. This office has and will continue to fund training to all levels of practitioners within the criminal justice system, including victim service providers. The following new projects have been or will be funded:

- Mental Health First Aid training for all direct service providers, similar to 'First Aid' and CPR, 'Mental Health First Aid' teaches individuals how to help those experiencing mental health challenges or crises.
- Specialized investigation training for law enforcement and prosecutors.
- Increase the capacity of Tennessee's Children's Services by providing scholarships for child advocates and therapists to attend specialized training.
- Victim Witness Coordinator training for both state and local government employees.

Community-based crime prevention & intervention activities: Tennessee recognizes the importance of prevention on saving lives and giving our youth the best chance at a positive and hopeful future. Whether it be through the Building Strong Braining public awareness campaign addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences; building support around our youth that are living in high risk and high crime neighborhoods and those maturing out of the foster care system or

through the utilization of evidence based interventions when adolescents and young adults first encounter the criminal justice system to redirect their path toward a more positive outcome; OCJP's strategic plan will prioritize prevention and early intervention.

For fiscal year 2019, OCJP will give precedence to the following projects: community crime prevention and intervention programs and restorative justice programs. Community crime prevention and intervention projects target at risk youth and use evidence based models or programs that have a history of demonstrated success and may include, but not limited to: mentorship programs, community based intervention, support programs, and after school programs. Juvenile restorative justice projects engage multiple systems to promote healing for victims. These projects are victim centered with a voluntary approach to Restorative Justice that is highly collaborative and includes entities from the criminal justice system, victim services, and/or community based service programs.

Response to Crime Victims in Tennessee: OCJP will continue to address all types of crime victimization through a multitude of victim service providers throughout the state. This will be done with continued funding to agencies currently supported by the OCJP, as well as, new funding for agencies, communities, and community based organizations serving underserved populations that have not historically received funding from the OCJP. In fiscal year 2019, OCJP will work to expand the number of law enforcement victim coordinators; increase projects serving children who have experience trauma as a result of a crime; assist young adults with a trauma history as they transition into adulthood; and to reach our culturally specific and underserved victim populations that are vulnerable and more likely to be victims of crime, yet less likely to reach out for help.