

# 2020 Addendum

## Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs Statewide Five Year Strategy

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## 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 and 2019 Addendums, OCJP requested technical assistance from the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) to develop and implement a criminal justice system needs survey. NCJA assisted with the development of the survey, managing the results to provide OCJP with a summary of the findings and assisted with facilitating the annual round table strategic planning event which explored the results of the survey and possible solutions.

The 23-question survey ([see questionnaire](#)) asked respondents about services provided by their agency or organization; access to technology resources and information sharing partners to advance data-driven decision making; and prioritization of issues within each of the eight purpose areas:

- Law enforcement;
- Prosecution and court programs;
- Prevention and education;
- Corrections and community corrections;
- Drug treatment and enforcement;
- Planning, evaluation, and technology improvement;
- Crime victim and witness programs (other than compensation); and
- Mental health programs and related law enforcement and corrections programs, including behavioral programs and crisis intervention teams.

The Survey yielded 477 responses and represented the views of local law enforcement (Chiefs and Sheriffs), prosecution, defense, victim service agencies, courts, corrections, social service providers, behavioral health care providers and educational services.

The majority of respondents identified "Opioids/methamphetamine/other drugs" (75%) and "Mental health/substance abuse resources" (69%) as the biggest challenges facing their agency or organization per the NCJA Summary of the survey results.

When the survey asked about the most challenging issues facing law enforcement, crisis intervention/mental health/suicide and drug enforcement were the most significant issues identified, followed by training. Additionally, the top three equipment needs for law enforcement were on-car/body worn cameras, surveillance equipment and mobile data terminals.

Overwhelmingly, the results of the needs assessment reinforced that Tennessee's criminal justice system is struggling with the impact of the opioid epidemic. Law enforcement while working to combat gangs and those supplying the illegal drugs and the violent crime that comes along with it, are also besieged with insufficient resources to assist with those caught-up in the system as a result of their mental health and substance abuse issues and the lack of community based resources to effectively address these issues outside of the criminal justice arena. The court system representatives echoed this in their challenges. Prevention and education representatives similarly identified the challenge of substance abuse prevention and juvenile delinquency/at risk youth programs. Diversion/alternatives to incarceration, workforce/ability to hire and retain qualified staff and special population programming were the biggest challenges to the corrections and community corrections representatives.

Victim Service challenges continued to identify children's needs as primary, especially those children exposed to violence, physical abuse and neglect and those that are drug endangered. Family violence and interpersonal violence is the second biggest challenge to those working with victims in Tennessee. The survey identified the need to expand transitional housing, financial assistance to victims and shelter services to meet the rising needs of victims in Tennessee. Additionally, OCJP's victim service agencies have reported an increase in victims that struggling with substance abuse or are otherwise impacted by the drug epidemic in this state.

As a result of the outcome of the needs assessment and the trends OCJP has been monitoring in Tennessee over the last several years, this year's Roundtable looked in depth at two projects as potential solutions. The Roundtable attendees discussed what they were seeing and hearing from colleagues as to the greatest challenges facing Tennessee. The group heard from the Ohio START program that provides trauma informed services to families impacted by the drug epidemic as a way to intercede in the multigenerational transmission of trauma and explored how this might look if brought to Tennessee. Additionally the group heard from a Nashville based organization that is implementing the Cure Violence evidenced based program to address community violence as a health epidemic, repair community relationships and provide mentoring to youth. The annual OCJP Roundtable Strategic Planning Meeting expanded its membership again this year to include those agencies that serve at risk youth and those representing community corrections/juvenile delinquency populations. Their voices enhanced the dialogue around these issues and proposed tools to address them.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data fits into strategic planning for OCJP in a number of ways and has become another tool to assist in strategic planning. GIS allows for easier analysis of reporting data compared to already established census demographic data. GIS can identify correlations of victim data to population demographics; i.e. lack of jobs compared to higher areas of crime. Also, GIS will allow for further analysis of the specifics of the underserved and culturally specific populations for various funding sources handled by this office. GIS ultimately will create linkages between criminal justice and victim services and other community demographics that help strategically address the needs within a judicial district, county or community. OCJP is just starting to create some of these maps and become more adept at in the use of these analytics. Three recent examples of maps created are the following; [2017 Domestic Violence Non Shelter Site Map](#), [Rural Counties in TN Map](#) and the [2016 Poverty Census Data Map](#).

OCJP has recently (FY2017) formed an Inclusivity Committee of stakeholders including: victim service providers, agencies that support underserved, unserved, and inadequately served populations, and other agencies that assist victims of domestic and sexual violence. This committee is tasked with supporting the growth of meaningful relationships with culturally specific and underserved service providers. Additionally, it is working to develop an actionable goal and unified strategy that addresses culturally specific barriers to accessing victim services. Communication from this group informs OCJP's strategic planning process and is meant to improve access to services for all victims of crime in Tennessee.

The [2017 STOP Implementation Plan](#) is a four year document developed last year as part of the 2017 STOP application. Much of what is included in the STOP Implementation plan is also found in the more comprehensive OCJP strategic plan.

## **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 (LAP) 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. Through STOP funding beginning in CY 2019 and continuing through FY 2023, Tennessee has a TN LAP Coordinator housed at the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy (TLETA) to assist with this expansion. Currently Tennessee has 42 law enforcement agencies using LAP (450 officers trained since July 2018), 12 Domestic Violence Service Providers and with 250 LAP qualified Trainers to continue this training within their local jurisdictions.

As a result of increased use of the LAP and increased requested services, OCJP funded shelters are struggling to keep up with the demand in many of our communities. Shelters in Chattanooga, Knoxville and Nashville have been working to increase the number of beds available to victims in 2019. Frontier Health and Center of Hope expanded shelter services into new communities as well. Even rural communities which previously experienced low service rates are finding that they no longer have sufficient space to shelter those requesting the service. OCJP will look for opportunities to meet this growing need, especially in rural east Tennessee and in Memphis.

According to the [Domestic Violence 2017 Report](#) by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, overall numbers reveal a decrease of 1.8% from 2016 to 2017. The report goes on to indicate that females are three times more likely to be victimized than males; accounting for 71.5% of all domestic violence victims. Juveniles under the age of 18 make up 9.8% of all victims. Juveniles accounted for the highest age group category for rapes in 2017, at 46% according to this TBI report. The Report concludes with this final comment, "the current assessment of domestic violence in Tennessee exposes the need for continued and increased efforts in the battle against domestic abuse within our community."

As a result, Tennessee's Department of Children's Services is working in collaboration with OCJP to explore options to enhance their staff's awareness of domestic violence issues as it relates to the children with whom they work and improve collaboration with domestic violence shelter service programs statewide. There is an opportunity for cross training between these groups which can strengthen positive working relationships across staff and streamline service delivery to those children engaged with both agencies.

***System Weaknesses in Sexual Assault Responses:*** The increase in reported sexual assault crimes can be felt in Tennessee just as it is seen nationwide. The Universities are seeing an increase in incidents reported on their campus since 2013 (TIBRS data; 2013 through 2017) and they need advanced training to ensure their response is aligned with the Cleary Act and Title IX as well as trauma informed. The universities are not alone in this increase in reported sexual assault incidents; our local law enforcement agencies are also seeing this as evidenced in the TIBRS data, 2013 through 2017.

OCJP continues to attend the Tennessee Human Trafficking Advisory Committee and has become more involved with the human trafficking work through VOCA funded projects and direct appropriations funneled through this office. These agencies identify the need for additional emergency and transitional housing options, increased staff to build agency capacity and general supplies.

More generalized victim service providers (Victim Service Coordinators housed within law enforcement and prosecution and crime victims' centers) struggle with the unique challenges of sexual assault victims and report needing additional education, mentoring and peer support to address these difficult cases.

***Coordinated approach to apprehension and prosecution of drug offenses & violent crimes:*** In Tennessee as well as other areas of the country, the opioid crisis continues to plague our local law enforcement agencies. Recent TCA enhancements are demonstrating a positive impact on the prescription drug issue in Tennessee. But these improvements are being overshadowed by dramatic increases in the use and availability of both heroin and fentanyl according to Jim Derry, TBI, TN Dangerous Drugs Task Force Information Systems Manager. Advanced training in the investigation and prosecution of these crimes is essential. This is most impactful when there is a coordinated collaborative approach through the multi-jurisdictional drug and violent crime task forces and their work with HIDTA, DEA and USAO.

Although law enforcement is facing fewer methamphetamine clandestine labs, the amount of crystal methamphetamine being transported on our highway systems and peddled in our local communities continues to surge. This also benefits from a collaborative approach as this issue is even more significant than opioids in Tennessee per data received from the Dangerous Drugs Task Force Meeting in November of 2018.

***Data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction:*** The issue of Pre-trial Release data driven assessment tools has been one highly publicized nationally and received strong support. Over the last two years, OCJP has engaged a technical assistance provider to assist three sites

with their development of an assessment tool that is validated through local data to incorporate a risk based system that focuses limited resources on defendants who are more likely to obtain new criminal charges or fail to appear in court. Diverted costs relate to a reduction in the average length of stay within local jail facilities. There has been increased interest in pre-trial risk assessment tool usage across the criminal justice system. With local jails at or beyond capacity across Tennessee, this data driven approach has sparked much interest as a possible solution.

***Meeting basic infrastructure issues such as law enforcement equipment, and criminal justice and victim service practitioners' training:*** Basic infrastructure needs remain a high priority across criminal justice agencies. Law enforcement is continually seeking to keep one step ahead of the criminal activity in their community. According to the OCJP 2018 TN JAG Stakeholder Survey, the top three equipment needs for law enforcement was in-car/body worn cameras; surveillance equipment and mobile data terminals and accessories. Additional ballistic testing sites have been a top need as well as drug detection equipment for use in the field. State law enforcement entities have a host of additional needs such as forensic equipment focused on rapid DNA testing and improved drug testing, Narcan, bomb and hazmat suits, and ongoing training needs.

With increases in VOCA funding and agencies serving an increased number of staff, basic supplies for those facilities are experiencing more wear and tear and need to be replaced. Many of these agencies are at the place where they are looking to technology to support their work with victims; whether that is electronic RMS, security systems or increased use of social media platforms to reach victims. Additionally, with the expanded need for emergency and transitional housing comes the need to furnish those spaces.

New Tennessee laws have necessitated additional training within the court system around the Juvenile Justice Act and enhancing services to this population. The court system has recognized the intersection between human trafficking and domestic violence and seeks additional training in this area.

The Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference has noted a continued need for ongoing training and credentialing of their victim witness coordinators related to responding to and assisting victims of crime. This will not only improve the quality of services victims receive but increase the type of services provided to victims and expand the number of victims served by the Victim Witness Coordinators.

Numerous TCA enhancements passed during state fiscal year 2018 which will enhance public safety by improving NCIC reporting. Law enforcement, hospitals, sheriffs and county clerks offices all have adjustments to their reporting requirements as result and have begun training their professions on these changes.

## **Chapter 6 Tennessee's Priorities and Select Responses Addendum**

***Response to Violence in the Home:*** OCJP continues to focus its efforts on multipronged approaches to statewide problems, especially those that undertake a collaborative approach to address the issue. Family Justice Centers provide an opportunity to address domestic violence by providing a colocation where a victim can choose the services she/he needs without having to

travel to multiple sites to get a variety of needs met. OCJP hopes to work with three additional communities to implement a new family justice center within their counties. Additionally, OCJP reached out to current family justice centers to address any ongoing equipment and facility needs. The currently funded FJCs identified improvements to their agencies that fortifies the safety of those coming to the Center and enhances their trauma informed response to victims.

OCJP will look to fund a pilot project to develop a domestic violence court model, dedicated to the prosecution of domestic violence cases that provides support to victims of domestic violence, and is focused on offender accountability. This pilot would plan and implement a domestic violence court supporting the best practices in the field of domestic violence and prevention services by the United States Department of Justice. This project will include the training of all court personnel in best practices as well as the establishment of a batterer's intervention program focused on offender accountability.

OCJP looks to further strong collaborations built with the TN Department of Children's Service (DCS) and further the cross training between their staff and local Domestic Violence shelter staff. DCS has prioritized the Keeping Families Safe evidence based curriculum as it looks to integrate domestic violence education, awareness and interventions into its system. Through this collaboration and training, there is the opportunity to pilot how a strong working relationship between DCS and local shelter programs can positively impact the children caught in the cross hairs of this criminal behavior.

OCJP has continued its collaborative relationship with the TN Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and the two agencies are looking at ways our funded partners can better collaborate in local communities. Some of this work begins with cross training all involved to better understand the intersection of trauma, victimization, mental health issues and substance abuse. Additionally this population continues to struggle with the substance abuse and the Regional Overdose Prevention Specialists have trained 11 Shelter programs and provided Narcan to their facilities.

The increased use of the Lethality Assessment Protocols by TN law enforcement has increased the need for emergency shelter beds for domestic violence victims. OCJP will work with those communities with the greatest needs as evidenced by their annual data and reported needs to identify opportunities to expand these services over the next year likely in rural east Tennessee and in the Memphis area.

***Responses to Sexual Violence:*** There is more that can be done to address sexual violence within Tennessee. The University of Tennessee Law Enforcement Innovation Center will be working with all Tennessee secondary education law enforcement to enhance their understanding of the Clery Act and Title IX. In CY 2019, OCJP utilized STOP funding to address the growing number of cases in Shelby County related to new tested sexual assault kits. OCJP worked with this community to increase staffing for victim services and investigative activities to support the prosecution of these cases.

The judicial system also acknowledged the overlap of domestic violence and human trafficking and prioritized this training in FY 2019 through STOP funding. OCJP has recognized the need

to enhance and expand services to human trafficking victims beyond the previous targeted solicitation released in FY 2017 and will look to expand those grants in the coming year.

In FY 2020, OCJP will look to build upon the success of the training initiative through the Sexual Assault Center in their support of dual domestic and sexual violence providers. They will seek to further enhance their sexual assault services by targeting more generalized victim service providers such as crime victim centers, victim witness coordinators and law enforcement victim service providers to enhance their skills and knowledge as it relates to working with sexual assault victims. These are the primary responders to rural sexual assault victims where there are no dual programs and as such, can be isolated in both location and peer support.

***Coordinated approach to apprehension and prosecution of drug offenses & violent crimes:***

The possession, sale, and cultivation of illegal drugs have impacted communities in all areas of the state. The drug problem has exacerbated violent crime activity and gangs. Individual law enforcement agencies in Tennessee do not have the personnel or funding to combat the problem alone. As drug distribution activities spread over larger regions and ignore the artificial boundaries of individual jurisdictions, law enforcement (and prosecution) is forced to explore the need for task forces that can meld the talents of individual offices into an effective team.

There is also a need for specialized skills and expertise in rural settings where criminal enterprise takes place without regard to the size or experience of the office. Undercover work is more difficult, if not impossible, in smaller communities, where police officers are well known to the locals. For these and other reasons, the multi-jurisdictional drug and violent crime task forces fill the gaps between the traditional law enforcement organization and the need for responding to these new demands. Tennessee requires a prosecutor-led multi-jurisdictional task force model that is supported by TCA and funding these task forces continues to be a priority.

***Data-Driven, Location-Based Strategies to Crime Reduction:*** OCJP will build on the success of the Pre-trial projects in Nashville and Knoxville and will partner with the current TA provider to expand this project over the next year into new communities and jurisdictions. The previous pilot sites aforementioned were able to do the following; developed a data-driven pre-trial risk assessment to provide objective and standardized information to assist the pre-trial release decision, brought stakeholders together to determine pre-trial policies and how the risk assessment should be incorporated in the release decision; and began using the risk assessment to help inform their community supervision policies to follow best practices by focusing resources on individuals who are at a higher risk for failing to appear in court or obtaining new criminal charges. There has been considerable interest in expanding this to other communities.

***Meeting Basic Infrastructure Needs:*** OCJP has sought to expand the ballistic testing facilities within Tennessee through providing equipment in two additional communities in FY 2019. The multi-jurisdictional drug and violence task forces identified the need for crime scene drug detection devices that would enhance officer safety and save the lives of their precious K-9 officers and each task force has the opportunity to add this equipment in FY 2019. State Crime labs need additional equipment for drug testing and rapid DNA testing beyond what is sought through annual Coverdell funding.

Given the influx of VOCA funding and the growth of Victim Service Agencies, they are experiencing additional basic infrastructure needs as well. In the fall FY 2019, OCJP released an open solicitation with the goal of enhancing victim service delivery through expansion of transportation equipment, agency database and technology systems, sexual assault and forensic exam equipment and basic supplies and furniture for these agencies. As their services grow and they are reaching more victims, more is needed and this was seen in the volume of responses received.

The Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline has received an influx of calls related to increased awareness of this resource through targeted public service announcements, and as a result need more staff to address the increased demand. OCJP sought to expand the staff covering this hotline and to expand the hotline's ability to back up additional shelter programs through hotline coverage in the evening and week-ends. This smart solution enhances service delivery within local communities and decreases staff secondary trauma by providing the back up support to smaller agencies with limited funding, volunteers and staff while ensuring victim's needs are met.

***Criminal Justice and Victim Service Continuing Education:*** OCJP will continue to support projects that educate professionals, such as law enforcement and victim witness coordinators, 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 and is referenced in other headings throughout this document.

***Response to Crime Victims in Tennessee:*** Under the 2019 VOCA underserved/culturally specific solicitation, the Family Justice Centers in TN were given the opportunity to expand their staff and hire a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Coordinator with the specific focus of and charged with identifying and accessing underserved/unserved/inadequately served populations in their communities.

The Women of Color Network (WOCN) will be conducting a two-hour training to the Tennessee Family Justice Center Executive Directors and their newly hired CCR Coordinators. WOCN's presentation focuses on how to think about those populations and work within the CCR to create real access opportunities for them. The training includes several interactive activities that invite participants to question some of their preconceived notions of the various people that make up their community and how the needs of those unique populations are complicated by their trauma and victimization. The goal of the training is to energize and empower the FJCs with a better understanding of their role within this particular project and a concrete plan for engagement to bring back to their local CCRs.

Through input of the strategic planning meetings and various committees, OCJP has prioritized open solicitation funding to projects that provide services to limited and non-English speakers, to urban and rural victims, to victims living in poverty, to victims with disabilities and to victims with other barriers that impact how she or he might access services from victim service agencies. A recent priority for this funding was given to culturally specific projects that work with victims of sexual assault.

OCJP will work with the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Department of Children's Services to address the youngest victims of the child abuse and neglect through the Safe Babies Court Team approach. This initiative was legislated in 2017 to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers and families involved in the child welfare system according to the [Zero to Three, Early Connections Last a Lifetime](#) June 4, 2018 website post. OCJP will look to expand service delivery to this population to mitigate the impact of their victimization and adverse childhood experiences through the expansion of this model into new communities.

With the increased VOCA funding and in line with the results of the most recent needs assessment survey, OCJP sought to further expand services to child victims through an expansion of funded Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs in Tennessee. Six (6) CASA new to VOCA funding will expand services within their local communities.

In the fall of FY 2019, OCJP opened a competitive solicitation for Tennessee's Legal Aid agencies as civil legal services remain an ongoing need for victims of crime. The VOCA solicitation aimed to expand legal aid services to not only victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, but to victims of other crimes, as well. Agencies expanding services to victims in need of immigration, post-divorce, intellectual and developmental disabilities/elder abuse/disabled/and other underserved cultural populations received priority. Additionally, agencies expanding services to previously unserved or underserved counties in the agency's service area which also ranked high for crime and poverty were given priority.

Throughout the headings in the above sections, there are additional specific examples of responses to victimization to be undertaken by OCJP over the next fiscal year.