

2021 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 in the 2018, 2019, and 2020 Addendums, there were exciting additions to the annual OCJP strategic planning process. The Office of Criminal Justice Programs held its annual Roundtable Forum in September. This meeting focused on work of the office around bringing the Start Program and the Cure Violence initiative to Tennessee, important work that began in the previous year's Roundtable but required additional community based planning and work with other state partners such as the Department of Children's Service and the Administrative Office of the Courts prior to getting underway. Through this work over the last year, the first initiatives of this nature were begun in the late fall of Fiscal Year 2020. Another major area of strategic planning during the Roundtable meeting was preparation for the continuation of domestic violence services statewide, albeit at a reduced level given the shrinking federal funding (ex., VOCA funding hit an all-time high with the 2018 federal award and sustained over a \$20 million dollar cut for the 2019 award.). The group acknowledged the need for these agencies and those that work specifically with child victims of domestic violence to prioritize early intervention to these children given the impact of domestic violence on child development and the need to intervene at this critical stage.

The Roundtable discussed the need to continue to expand sexual assault services across Tennessee. Members addressed the need to get more timely results for the forensic testing of sexual assault kits and then increase direct services to the victims as these cases move forward in the judicial system. Furthermore, the group explored the impact of childhood abuse (physical, sexual and exposure to domestic violence) within our prison and jail populations and stated that often these individuals have never received services to address these childhood traumas. This then impacts their successful re-integration back into our neighborhoods and communities.

As a result, the Members of the Roundtable voiced the need for increased services to youth first coming into the criminal justice system. The goal would be to divert youth as soon as possible to stop the revolving door of criminal justice involvement without adequate resources to address the underlying trauma, mental health and substance use disorders that perpetuate this involvement. Finally, the group explored the importance of local and state level criminal justice data in the planning of successful strategies to combat crime; the data that is available and that which is lacking and finally, what is needed to demonstrate the outcomes of programming targeting these initiatives.

Tennessee has had the leadership of the newly elected Governor Bill Lee since January of 2019. Director Brinkman attended meetings of the Governor's Criminal Justice Investment Task Force and its forums. The first set of its recommendations were released in December of 2019. This administration recognized the importance of the voice of crime victims, survivors and those community-based organizations that serve this population. There were three forums for feedback from victims and those who serve victims held in the fall of 2019, one in each of the grand divisions across Tennessee. The Forums were led by Anne Seymour, Consultant with the Crime and Justice Institute, (CJI). The Taskforce's initial findings that guided the discussions in the forums (per a summary memorandum from Anne Seymore) included the following:

- Tennessee's prison population has grown 12 percent over the last decade, impacted by a 23 percent increase in time served by felony offenders and a 28 percent decline in parole releases;
- Non-person offenses accounted for 74 percent of Tennessee's admissions to prison in FY 2018, including drug or property crimes;
- Approximately 5,000 admissions to prison in FY 2018 were the result of a parole or probation revocation, with over 50 percent of revocations in FY 2019 resulting from a technical violation or failed drug test;
- The number of offenders held in custody in state prison with a mental health issue increased 26 percent from FY 2016 to FY 2019; and
- The female prison population has grown 47 percent in the last decade, with 41 percent of the incarcerated female population serving in local jails where there are fewer treatment and programming opportunities.

The following priorities identified in the Forums aligned directly with OCJP's strategic planning (cited in the Memorandum dated December 19, 2019 from Anne Seymore):

- Every courthouse across the state should have designated, safe rooms for victims, survivors and their families to use during trials.
- Expanded services and support are needed to protect children in domestic violence situations, and to prevent re-traumatization when an offender returns home and continues the cycle of violence.
- Post-conviction victim advocates who can coordinate with court- and community-based victim advocates are needed to guide victims and survivors through the parole, reentry and community supervision processes, and offer survivor-centered reentry safety planning.
- Comprehensive programming that is gender-responsive and trauma-informed is needed to help justice-involved women while incarcerated, and in wrap-around services upon their return to the community.
- Improved oversight and expansion of Batterers Intervention Programs are needed to assess their overall effectiveness and any need for improvement.
- The unique needs of victims/survivors and offenders in rural communities should be recognized and addressed by collaborative efforts involving the community and the justice system.

As addressed in the 2017 Strategic Plan and updated annually in its addendums, OCJP continues to depend on a variety of taskforces, coordinated community response teams, advisory committees and professional associations to inform the annual strategic planning process. In addition to the

aforementioned groups, this past year, this strategic plan addendum was particularly informed by the following groups and meetings; the State Vulnerable Adults Coordinated Community Response group, the Building Strong Brains Public and Private Group (addressing ACE work in Tennessee); the Family Violence Advisory Committee; the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee; the Human Trafficking Advisory Committee; the Dangerous Drugs Task Force; and the collaborations with our state partners at the Administrative Office of the Courts, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation; Department of Children’s Service; Department of Correction, the District Attorneys General Conference; Department of Health; Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; the Tennessee Public Defenders Conference; the Tennessee Chiefs of Police and the Tennessee Sheriff’s Association.

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 FY 2018 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 64 law enforcement agencies using LAP (600 officers trained since July 2018), 16 Domestic Violence Service Providers. STOP funding through the Putnam County Friends of the Court, worked to develop an electronic LAP application that officers can use on their cell phones. This app is now in its second phase and 6 local law enforcement agencies are piloting this program with use of the app. It is anticipated the project will move to the on-going maintenance phase in July of 2020 with expanded use with other law enforcement agencies.

As discussed in the last Addendum; expansion of family justice centers across Tennessee and the afore described expansion of the LAP have resulted in an increased demand for domestic violence shelter and advocacy services. Many urban and rural areas are finding that there are insufficient number of beds to meet this demand and OCJP has responded. Through a combination of VOCA and the State Family Violence Appropriation, shelter beds were expanded in Shelby County and several areas of rural east Tennessee. Frontier Health and Center of Hope expanded shelter services into new communities as well. OCJP is continuing to monitor this ongoing need and will once again expand the number of beds available, especially in the counties surrounding our urban areas which often assist urban shelters when the demands rise beyond capacity.

The Violence Policy Center’s “When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2017 Homicide Data” released in September of 2019; Tennessee tied for fifth in the nation as 69 females were murdered by males in Tennessee in 2017 and forty-four (44) were shot and killed with guns.

According to the [Domestic Violence 2018 Report](#) by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation released in June of 2019, overall numbers reveal a decrease in domestic related crimes of 5.8% from 2017 to 2018. The report goes on to indicate that females are three times more likely to

be victimized than males; accounting for 71.1% of all domestic violence victims. Juveniles under the age of 18 make up 9.8% of all victims. Domestic Violence resulted in 98 murder victims (61 of these involving a firearm) in 2018 and a total of 73,568 domestic violence victims were reported into the TIBRS program. Furthermore, the report indicates that per the TIBRS data; women and children generally have the highest potential for domestic abuse victimization.

The Office of Criminal Justice Programs has continued to develop in collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, partnerships between Department of Children's Service employees and Tennessee's Domestic Violence Shelters and Family Justice Centers for case collaboration; enhanced safety of the victim and children and cross training between the disciplines. This will be a continued priority moving into 2021. Additionally, based on the February 1, 2019 Sycamore Institute's "The Economic Cost of ACEs in Tennessee"; over half of Tennesseans reported at least one adverse childhood experience between 2014 and 2017 and 29% reported experiencing domestic violence as a child. Ensuring appropriate training and services across service providers that work with children are an ongoing needs in Tennessee.

Infants and toddlers make up 31% of children in foster care, and this age group enters the foster care system at higher percentages than any other. This age group is receiving increased attention as the opioid epidemic has contributed to an influx of infants born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), often leading them and their families coming into contact with the child welfare system. Although very young children being involved in the system is unfortunate, intervening with this age group offers unique opportunities for mitigating the potential of ACEs. Addressing the needs of these drug endangered children will continue to be focus for OCJP.

System Weaknesses in Sexual Assault Responses: 2018 TIBRS data continued to demonstrate a slight increase in adult sexual assault victimization. Through work with our partner agencies in a variety of contexts (advisory committees; forums and task forces) OCJP recognizes the difficulty in receiving timely forensic evidence due to high demand which ultimately leads to delays for the victim seeking justice. Furthermore, victim support services are limited across Tennessee; community-based service providers do not exist in every county and victims may have to travel great distances to receive services. Addressing the trauma of sexual victimization requires enhanced training and specialization which has been limited. With limited service providers addressing these issues, secondary trauma and victimization is high for those who work in this field and there has been limited opportunity for peer support, mentoring and reflective supervision.

With the increased attention to and education about human trafficking across Tennessee; more is being done to support victims and hold offenders accountable. Preventative and outreach measures such as community-based training, training for educators and criminal justice professionals has led to identification of at-risk youth; increased demand for victim services and enhanced prosecution efforts. VOCA funding provided for shelter service expansion of 26 beds across Tennessee through human trafficking service providers in 2019 but this is a continuing need and issue for this population.

One need or gap that was identified was a statewide sexual assault hotline to provide victims an easy resource for referral, crisis support and to access services.

Data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction: The success of OCJP's Pre-trial projects have led to increased interest by other communities and across various professionals in the criminal justice system. Additionally, the Governor's Criminal Justice Investment Task Force is discussing pre-trial projects which seek to minimize risks to public safety while ensuring those at low risk can continue to work and care for their families while involved in the court system. The success of an automated court notification system in several communities has led to increased interest in expanding this system which seeks to ensure citizens are aware of their court dates and to minimize the negative impacts of failure to appear for both our citizen and our local jails. There has been increased community interest and request for training on how to expand these projects in new areas.

A continuum of services for those incarcerated or under community supervision: The Public Defenders Social Work pilot program's success has resulted in increased interest in expanding this initiative by many local communities. This program uses validated risk and needs assessments by social workers within the public defender's office to match offender needs with local community resources to enhance the success of offenders as they work and live within the local community and complete their supervision term. The goal is to provide the skills, treatment and resources necessary to enhance the offenders' engagement in society and decrease the risk of recidivism. Tennessee's jails continue to be overcrowded and programs such as these are one manner of addressing this need.

Additionally, as addressed in the strategic planning section of this addendum, Tennessee needs enhanced services to address offenders' trauma histories that negatively impact successful reintegration post release. There are a multitude of needs from trauma informed advocacy and treatment services for childhood abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault to expanded substance abuse treatment options such as medically assisted treatment (MAT) and peer support services. The theme and need to understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences; the increased risk those present to involvement within the criminal justice system without early intervention and the need to address all victimization, even that of our offenders; was present across various strategic planning committees, forums, advisory committees and task forces.

Meeting basic infrastructure issues such as criminal justice and victim service practitioners' training: Basic infrastructure needs are an ongoing concern for local communities and State Agencies where budgets are tight. OCJP continues to monitor these needs and where appropriate seeks out federal funding to replace outdated equipment and expand forensic testing capabilities that support the work of state and local agencies.

Many gaps in training are an ongoing need in Tennessee from year to year. The fields of forensic science, enhancements prosecution and criminal investigations and victim services are continuing to grow; and with technology advancements; these gaps remain ever present influencing the annual strategic planning. Expanding trauma informed responses by service providers, law enforcement and prosecution; enhancing and supporting ongoing law enforcement

and prosecution needs statewide; and enhancing the forensic testing capacity and forensic training remain as a continuous gap that must be addressed annually.

System Weaknesses in Crime Victim Responses: Over the past several years, the gaps in crime victim services have been identified with specific populations such as meeting the needs of child victims of domestic violence, child physical and sexual abuse and human trafficking; juvenile victims and their enhanced risk of entering the criminal justice system not as a victim but as an offender due to their unaddressed or unresolved trauma histories; and unserved and underserved victims such as rural victims, minority victims; elder victims and disabled victim. Each of these groups have specific barriers to receiving services from traditional service providers and traditional service providers have gaps in meeting these victims where they are and expanding their service provision to be more welcoming and open. Past strategies have been put in place to address this but there are still gaps and needs to be addressed with these populations.

Chapter 6 Tennessee's Priorities and Select Responses Addendum

As OCJP provides multi-year funding, a variety of past initiatives continue into the next several years. This chapter update will focus on the priorities and select responses OCJP undertook mid-fiscal year 2020 and those planned for fiscal year 2021. The structure of this year's addendum will vary slightly by outlining the responses as goals and the funding initiatives undertaken as the objectives to meet those goals. OCJP's VOCA funding has crested and future funding will sustain a multiyear significant decrease. Therefore, all state and federal funding planning will be integrated to continue the direction, momentum and efforts undertaken while the VOCA funding expanded to ensure onward forward movement across all strategies and initiatives. OCJP will continue to prioritize those strategies that undertake a multi-pronged approach to addressing issues which leverage various funding streams and bring together community partners to systemically respond due to the synergistic impact and enhanced outcomes this approach affords.

Goal: Responding to Violence in the Home: OCJP will continue to expand the collaborative approach of Family Justice Centers (FJCs) in Tennessee and priorities will look to strengthen this work through the following objectives:

- Ongoing and expanded VOCA funding to support local FJC navigators
- Expanded partnerships between the Department of Children's Services and Domestic Violence Shelters in family justice center communities
- Continued growth of fatality review communities in family justice center communities
- Expand the number of specialized domestic violence prosecutors

Domestic Violence community-based services crested with rise in VOCA funding and those services will continue at a higher rate than pre FY2016 funding, but with decreased funding; decreases in this funding will be felt across the State. OCJP will continue to expand shelter services in those communities reporting an ongoing request beyond capacity.

OCJP will continue its work with the Department of Children's Service to provide wrap around service to some of Tennessee's most vulnerable children. Connecting babies, toddlers and their families through early intervention with support and services they need to address childhood trauma and early drug exposure and promote healthy child development and family stability. This

initiative will enhance formal collaborations and partnerships in order to provide a stable support system for these families with the focus of implementing the START (Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams) model.

Training support for law enforcement and community-based service providers will be an ongoing strategy to address violence in the home.

OCJP is gathering recidivism data on batterer's intervention programs with the Domestic Violence State Coordinating Council to explore the impact of these classes on offenders.

Goal: Responding to Sexual Violence: Mid-fiscal year 2020; initiatives were undertaken to develop a statewide sexual assault hotline and increase victim awareness of this hotline and how to access resources and services through a Public Service Announcement project. Funding was prioritized to assist with the forensic testing of sexual assault kits and thus increase public safety and enhance victim services.

OCJP will take a multifaceted approach to expanding and enhancing local sexual assault services across Tennessee. VOCA and STOP funding will prioritize services to adult sexual assault victims; enhance trauma informed programming through education and procedures and enhance response to human trafficking.

In FY 2020, OCJP began working with a committee of community based and state level experts in human trafficking to develop the rules for Human Trafficking Victim Services. OCJP received assistance from the Office of Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center, to address provision of trauma informed care within human trafficking victim service agencies. The State Rules are being modeled after the Region 4 Guidelines developed in partnership with the Southern Region and the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. OCJP looks to wrap up the rule making process this summer.

For a number of years, Shelby County and the City of Memphis have worked to address the back log of sexual assault kits; enhance response to victims of sexual offences and provide ongoing victim service support to those impacted by these crimes. In the beginning of CY 2019, OCJP provided funding to enhance investigative efforts to address the sexual assault back log in this area. In 2021, OCJP will seek to enhance the breadth and depth of responses to victims of sexual assault in this community.

Goal: Enhancing Data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction: In mid-fiscal year 2020 OCJP prioritized state funding to provide regional pre-trial symposium to enhance criminal justice professionals understanding of pre-trial initiatives and the use of data driven risk assessments in this area. Furthermore, funding sought to expand automated notification of court dates to increase attendance and decrease the burden on the court and criminal justice system as a whole. OCJP will look to expand the impact of this work over the next year.

OCJP has worked with the regional U.S. Attorney's offices to seek out federal Project Safe Neighborhood funding to Tennessee. Each of the grand divisions have received federal funding the past two years to enhance data driven responses to violent crime.

Additionally, OCJP began piloting Cure Violence in Tennessee in FY 2020 which grew out of the FY 2020 Strategic Planning. Cure Violence is an innovative public health program designed to reduce inner city violence using the same methodology that doctors use in disease control. It aims to identify drivers of violence, isolate them through discourse and interaction, provide conflict resolution and community mobilization efforts, and change social norms. Tennessee is developing a play book to reproduce this program throughout the state by starting small in an urban location (Memphis, TN) and expanding as funding allows.

Goal: Enhancing the continuum of services for those incarcerated or under community supervision: Through the use of JAG funding, OCJP will seek to expand public defender social work projects in several new sites. These projects use a validated risk and needs assessment to identify offender needs in the areas of work and life skills, mental health and substance abuse treatment needs and other areas. The social worker then assists the offender in accessing community-based resources to address these needs. Additional JAG funding will assist offenders with transportation to interviews and community-based services.

VOCA funding will be used to expand and enhance the quality and quantity of services to victims of child abuse, sexual assault and/or domestic violence among offender populations prior to and upon release from incarceration in local adult correctional facilities. The goal is to minimize the long-term effects resulting from the past or recent victimization of individuals who are under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system and who are preparing to re-enter society. It is intended that the program will provide wrap around trauma informed services that allow for a successful transition back into the community to include individual or group therapy, housing, substance abuse treatment, transportation, and vocational development and employment.

State interlock ignition funding will seek to provide funding for a half-way house program.

RSAT funding seeks to break the cycle of drug addiction and violence by reducing the demand for, use, and trafficking of illegal drugs. RSAT's objectives are to provide residential substance abuse treatment for incarcerated inmates within the Department of Correction facilities; prepare individuals for reintegration into communities and assist individuals and communities through the re-entry process by delivering community-based treatment and other broad-based aftercare services.

OCJP will continue to prioritize funding towards juvenile restorative justice initiatives in Tennessee. The goal of these projects is to engage multiple systems to promote healing for victims, with priority given to programs utilizing evidence-based (such as Restorative Community Conferencing, Restorative Community Services, and Victim/Offender Dialogue), trauma informed models. These are voluntary programs and include both the person harmed (victim) and person who caused the harm (juvenile-offender) with activities that demonstrate a clear understanding of a victim centered approach to restorative justice. Although focused on the healing of the victim, these projects often benefit the offender as well and can serve as a catalyst to inhibit a juvenile from escalating even deeper into the criminal justice system.

Goal: Meeting Basic Infrastructure Needs and Criminal Justice and Victim Service Continuing Education: OCJP utilizes a variety of state and federal funding to enhance basic infrastructure needs with the criminal justice system; especially as it relates to compliance with NIBRS reporting, Criminal Histories Reporting and ongoing forensic science needs. OCJP works with its partners at the Department of Health to ensure training and technology needs of the local medical examiners are met using Coverdell and JAG funding.

Ongoing law enforcement equipment and training needs continue to be a priority of JAG and STOP funding.

OCJP is working with the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference to provide training opportunities and support to victim coordinators and other individuals who provide direct services to victims of crime for continuing education and development.

OCJP will continue to prioritize training for all victim service providers in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault; cultural competency, trauma informed service provision; and working with marginalized communities and victims. OCJP continues to support outreach efforts to link victims to service providers through community-based training, training targeting educators.

Goal: Response to Crime Victims in Tennessee: In addition to the interventions addressed above, OCJP will continue current funding to agencies addressing the most vulnerable of our crime victims. Ongoing VOCA funding will support child advocacy centers, CASAs, local law enforcement victim service advocates; and State and local victim witness coordinators. VOCA funding will prioritize ongoing funding to underserved crime victims such as rural victims, minority victims; marginalized communities, elder victims and disabled victims.