



2022
Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs
Statewide Five-Year Strategy



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



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Executive Summary

The Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) manages a systematic, year-round cycle for tracking problems surfacing in the criminal justice system, monitoring trends in Tennessee's communities, assessing the condition of the state's resources, setting program priorities, making grant allocation decisions, managing those grant funded projects, measuring performance, and evaluating the results of those decisions. Our strategic program-management process looks several years ahead of daily grants management activities toward the changing needs of Tennessee's justice system. The process helps OCJP focus its future program descriptions, set its funding priorities, prepare its budget requests, and direct its limited resources to areas that promise the best return for the public's investment.

As in most states, the majority of Tennessee's criminal justice dollars continue to be raised from local taxes and spent on local and state criminal justice priorities and problems. Crimes are committed locally, and that is where offenders are apprehended, defendants are tried, sentences are determined and carried out, and where services are provided to the victims of crime and to offenders. The Statewide Multi-Year Strategy serves as the blueprint for all coordinated drug and violent crime control efforts in the state, the rehabilitative services for those that commit those crimes, and the reparative services for those victimized. Therefore, it is imperative that the state utilize a strategic planning process that reflects the diverse perspectives of practitioners and be as inclusive as possible. To that end, the Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) takes a data-driven approach and proactively seeks input from practitioners on the local, state, and federal levels to assist in influencing the strategy. OCJP gathers practitioner information through a variety of planned information gatherings, training conferences, and webinars, as well as through informal meetings and surveys. This strategy document is a reflection of this information gathered from across the state as well as data from across the nation.

This document will do the following: provide an introduction to the Office of Criminal Justice Programs and the state of Tennessee as a whole, outline the strategic planning process conducted by OCJP, review the current data related to crime, victimization, and services, identify the areas of greatest need tied to systemic weakness, and outline the plan moving forward to address those needs. The appendices provide an in-depth look at OCJP's robust strategic planning process and evaluation management style and Tennessee's criminal justice system.

This report will demonstrate that the data suggests the following six areas of need:

- Continued focus on domestic violence and sexual assault to continue the positive steps gained in the last plan and enhance progress in these areas
- Sustained use of a coordinated approach to apprehension and prosecution of drug offenses and violent crimes
- Data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction and addressing trauma
- Meeting basic infrastructure issues such as technology and equipment enhancements, criminal justice and victim service practitioners' training related to evidence based best practices and policies, and advancing access to data across the continuum
- Continued enhancement of trauma informed victim services, focusing on best practices and reaching unserved and underserved victims
- Incorporating systemic changes as a result of responding to the COVID pandemic and ongoing adjustments to the field to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the virus

As OCJP formulated this plan; there were many unprecedented events that influenced the work of this office looking forward. The impact of the pandemic on the criminal justice system and victim services, and the manner by which procedures and services are provided, will likely result in sustained changes to how these entities conduct business on a day-to-day basis. The mass violence incident on December 25, 2020 was of such magnitude that Tennessee may receive additional funding through various sources to assist the victims, first responders, and community to heal and repair. Finally, with the federal budget's expansion of state allocations of VOCA funding from the victims of crime fund culminating with the 2018 award and then contracting to approximately one-third of that amount within three years, this plan and Tennessee will see funding for victim services at the height of this federal funding roller coaster at the beginning of the plan and slowing to an austerity budget towards the end of this plan.

OCJP is excited about the opportunities this plan provides to address crime in Tennessee over the next five years. OCJP will continue to seek information and input from our local and state level peers to enhance our understanding of the current needs and issues Tennessee faces over the course of this multi-year plan. Each year, specific strategies will be developed to address the most pressing issues.

Introduction

The Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP), which is located within the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, continues to serve as the State Administrative Agency for several federal government funding agencies for Tennessee including, but not limited to, the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Program, Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) Program, Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) Program, Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP), National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), the NICS Record Act Improvement Program (NARIP), Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN), and the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program (Coverdell). For two decades, these programs have provided a vehicle for seeding and pioneering new projects as well as sustaining victim services across the state. This federal funding is complemented by various state fees, fines, and appropriations that further the initiatives of this office.

Tennessee's implementation of these programs continues to evolve along with its criminal justice system. The funding programs assist OCJP in stimulating evidence-based projects that are multi-faceted responses to crime and victimization in our state even as it supports our improvement of the infrastructure of the state's criminal justice system. With this Multi-Year Statewide Strategy, the state of Tennessee continues its commitment to reduce the incidence of drug use, drug trafficking, and violent crime within the state's boundaries while working to increase victim safety and reduce the impact of crime on victims.

At the close of the previous five-year plan, the Office of Criminal Justice Programs was at an all time high for the amount of obligations and number of subrecipients. From 2017 through the start of state fiscal year 2021, OCJP increased the number of agencies receiving funding from 194 to 304, and the number of contracts from 300 to 572. In 2021, OCJP was charged with the oversight of fifteen 2020 federal awards and sixteen state funding streams with the anticipation of another new state fund source in fiscal year 2022. At the beginning of state fiscal year 2021, OCJP obligated over \$8 million dollars in state funding and over \$74 million in federal funding. This was an increase of almost 150% from state fiscal year 2017. In the same time period, the monitoring reports more than doubled. OCJP anticipates this current trend in the amount of obligations, number of contracts and number of monitoring reports to continue at the FY 2021 level through state fiscal year 2022 and into the start of state fiscal year 2023, at which point the VOCA reductions will be implemented and the trends will move back towards 2017 levels.

In an effort of continuous improvement, updates have been made to the structure of the Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Process and Evaluation Management Strategy ([Appendix A](#)) and well as the Overview of the Criminal Justice System in Tennessee ([Appendix B](#)) have been enhanced and added as appendices to the plan. The following chapters will provide an overview of the day-to-day and annual structure of OCJP strategic planning, provide the recent data that has informed this multi-year strategic plan; and outline the goals, strategies, outputs, and outcomes of the plan. It is anticipated that OCJP will continue to provide an Annual Report highlighting the work of the past year as well as an annual addendum to this strategic plan document, as has been the standard for the past five years. It is anticipated that the output and outcome sections will be enhanced through the future addenda as this is an area of improvement for OCJP.

Strategic Planning Process

The Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) manages a systematic, year-round cycle for determining communities' needs, identifying the justice system's problems, setting program priorities, making grant allocation decisions, managing those funded projects, and evaluating the results of those decisions. *Strategic program management* is a structured process that looks three to five years ahead of daily grants management activities toward the changing needs of Tennessee's justice system. OCJP tracks problems surfacing in the criminal justice system, monitors trends in Tennessee's communities, assesses the condition of the state's resources, and measures the recent performance of OCJP-funded programs. All of this information helps OCJP focus its future program descriptions, set its funding priorities, prepare its budget requests, and direct its limited resources to areas that promise the best return for the public's investment. The process described in this chapter is a simplified version taken from [Appendix A](#).

In January 2019, Governor Bill Lee became the 50th Governor of Tennessee. Governor Lee signed Executive Order 6, Establishing the Tennessee Criminal Justice Investment Task Force (CJITF). The Task Force released its first set of recommendations in December of 2019, which have influenced OCJP's strategic planning. Some of the initial data that guided the work of the Taskforce came from the most recent decade of data included the following:

- A dramatic increase in the length of time spent incarcerated;
- An overreliance on incarceration for non-violent individuals and technical violators of community supervision;
- A stark increase in the number of women in prison;
- A steady growth in the mental health caseloads at TDOC facilities; and
- A deficit of treatment and re-entry supports necessary for individuals to succeed when returning to their community from a custodial sentence.

The CJITF resulted in a total of 23 policy recommendations to reduce recidivism and improve public safety, with the goals of:

- Strengthening responses to individuals with behavioral health needs;
- Ensuring equal opportunities to state individuals housed in local jails;
- Focusing state resources on violent and high-risk individuals;
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of community supervision;
- Minimizing barriers to successful re-entry; and
- Ensuring the sustainability of criminal justice reforms.

This administration further recognized the importance of the voices of crime victims, survivors, and those community-based organizations that serve this population and other local, state, and federal criminal justice officials. There were three forums 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 Seymour) included the following:

- Tennessee's prison population has grown 12% over the last decade, impacted by a 23% increase in time served by felony offenders and a 28% decline in parole releases.

- Non-person offenses accounted for 74% 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% 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 mental health issues increased 26% from FY 2016 to FY 2019.
- The female prison population has grown 47% in the last decade, with 41% 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 Seymour):

- 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-based and community-based victim advocates are needed to guide victims and survivors through the parole, reentry and community supervision processes, and offer survivor-centered re-entry 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.

OCJP's Strategic Planning Partners

Tennessee OCJP has developed a sophisticated ongoing process for involving state and local officials as well as local practitioners in criminal justice planning. The problems and needs OCJP gathers from these and other sources are translated into priorities for action, which are later linked to one or more of Tennessee's grant program areas. OCJP has regular and frequent communication with the Tennessee associations and professional organizations representing various components of the criminal justice system (see [Appendix B](#)). These contacts provide an important source of data and feedback for the planning process. Much of the information on problems and needs contained in next sections come from OCJP's direct linkages with criminal justice system practitioners.

In the fall of each year, OCJP conducts a Roundtable Forum comprising 2 to 3 local representatives from each region and each component of the criminal justice system (judicial, prosecution, defense; chiefs and sheriffs; probation, community corrections and local re-entry programs; juvenile justice; victim services, and culturally specific agencies). Each member is asked to serve a three-year term. Annually, this group meets to discuss continuing and emerging needs and gaps, reviews the ongoing initiatives from past planning sessions, and assists to identify what is working

in other communities that could be replicated, often with a focus on evidence-based programs. The calendar year 2020 Roundtable was the first virtual roundtable as a result of the pandemic. The roundtable was held on four consecutive Friday afternoons beginning September 18, 2020. The topics discussed included: Community Crime Prevention and Intervention; Re-entry and Reducing the Number of Incarcerated Individuals; Understanding the History of Trauma and Communities of Harm; Victimization and Trauma, especially as it relates to Crime Victim Demographics; and COVID Prevention, Responses, and Recovery (its impact on the criminal justice system as a whole but also as it relates to the primary topics of the roundtable).

Additionally, OCJP has worked with the Tennessee Voices for Victims to convene and facilitate a series of focus groups consisting of criminal justice professionals; victim advocates, and crime victims to engage in guided discussions around what is working well in the fields of criminal justice and victim service and to identify opportunities for enhancements. The [Executive Summary](#) from those meetings identifies successful practices and opportunities for enhancements in the areas of victim support and safety; offender support and education, and system coordination.

A few of the successful practices that should be continued and expanded include the following:

- Increase specialized courts with separate dockets, such as diversion courts for drug offenses, with an emphasis on restorative justice and recovery rather than punishment.
- Increase Victim Witness Coordinators within District Attorneys' offices and continue to support victim advocate court accompaniment.
- Improve on-scene victim advocate support for victims of violent crimes such as rape and homicide.
- Increase re-entry support for offenders for basic life needs, such as shelter, transportation, and jobs; as well as educational opportunities, including technical training and higher education.
- Increase opportunities for victims to participate in victim impact programming and expand access to these classes.
- Enhance juvenile mentoring programs working with individuals and the entire family unit, modeling healthy relationship skills and the family structure that will sustain beyond the intervention.
- Create peer support opportunities and communities for offenders, both while incarcerated and after their release.
- Improve restorative justice opportunities - those programs that address low level crimes to provide community intervention that works alongside the criminal justice system.
- Increase multidisciplinary, coordinated case review models (CPIT, CCR) applied to other types of crimes and victimizations.
- Increase victim access to services and resources in rural areas.

Other Sources Informing the Plan

OCJP believes that the leaders and practitioners of our local, county, and state criminal justice and victim service agencies know more about the needs, directions, threats, opportunities, and weaknesses of these operations than anyone else. This strategy is informed by their ongoing expertise. Accordingly, OCJP considers these organizations and the professionals they represent as its partners in planning. They include:

- Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference
- Tennessee Public Defenders Conference
- Tennessee Sheriffs' Association
- Tennessee Police Chiefs' Association
- Tennessee Narcotics Officers Association
- Tennessee Administrative Office of the Court
- Tennessee District Public Defenders Conference
- Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC)
- Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Tennessee Hospital Association
- Tennessee Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers
- Nurture the Next (formerly Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee)
- Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
- Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability
- Tennessee CASA Association

At the state level our partners include:

- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation
- Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy
- Department of Safety and Homeland Security
- Department of Correction
- Department of Children's Services
- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services; Adult Protective Services
- Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance

OCJP also serves on or attends regular meetings of numerous advisory groups which enable them to document information valuable for strategic planning purposes. Some examples of these routine meetings are:

- The Criminal Justice Investment Task Force (CJITF)
- The Integrated Criminal Justice Steering Committee
- The Human Trafficking Advisory Committee
- The Tennessee Chiefs of Police Association
- The Tennessee Sheriffs Association
- The Dangerous Drugs Task Force Meetings
- The Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force
- Building Strong Brains TN; Public and Private groups
- Domestic Violence State Coordinating Council
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of Tennessee
- The Tennessee Gang Investigators Association
- Tennessee Alliance for Drug Endangered Children
- STOP Implementation Plan Strategic Planning Group

All provide input directly to the Office of Criminal Justice Programs strategic planning process.

In following the premise that the practitioners are the backbone of our system, OCJP takes both a bottom-up as well as a top-down approach to planning. OCJP relies on practitioners at the grass roots level to identify the resources, needs, and gaps to be filled in their program specific areas. However, OCJP also takes advantage of the wisdom of state leaders in determining direction of the strategy.

OCJP gathers vital insight from frequent face-to-face contact grants managers have with practitioners. Grant managers also attend local community meeting such as community anti-drug coalition meetings. These contacts serve as a source of data regarding problems, priorities, and programs.

Public gatherings of different types are used to gather information on community needs and concerns. In addition to voices from the community, local law enforcement personnel, local prosecutors, defense attorneys, public defenders, and members of the judiciary also have a voice.

On occasion surveys are sent to other criminal justice experts to determine the needs and priorities of the broader criminal justice community and to identify specific information about needs for a certain type of victimization or specific crime problem. In the fall of 2019, 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, as well as 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 state corrections and community corrections representatives.

Victim Service representatives continued to identify children’s needs as primary challenges, especially those children exposed to violence, physical abuse, and neglect and those that are drug endangered. Family violence and interpersonal violence was the second biggest challenge identified 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. OCJP will continue to prioritize services to underserved populations. One of those populations are the justice involved crime victims. As in many other states, the justice involved population in Tennessee has a higher rate of past victimization and trauma, either in childhood or as adults, than the general population. This group of crime victims rarely seeks services from the traditional victim service providers. OCJP will be exploring avenues to meet the needs of these crime victims and ensure healing and recovery. Additionally, OCJP’s victim service agencies have reported an increase in victims that struggle with substance abuse or are otherwise impacted by the drug epidemic in this state. The results of this survey continue to inform OCJP’s strategic plan and aligns with the ongoing feedback from various roundtables and focus groups.

Furthermore, OCJP elicits plans directly from state departments and agencies involved in the criminal justice system that depict their own problems, issues, needs, gaps, and possible program/project responses.

Staff at OCJP frequently attend, and the office sometimes co-hosts, training events that identify problem areas within the system and possible mitigation techniques (programs). These training events may occur in Tennessee but may also be national events. It is from these training events that OCJP staff document issues, problems, concerns, gaps in services, and community or statewide needs. They also identify the various solutions. Some of the recent training events attended include:

- National Criminal Justice Association Annual Conference
- National Governors Association Public Safety Policy Academy
- National Institute of Justice Public Safety Summit
- End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) Conference
- California Center of Excellence for Trauma Informed Care
- Family Violence Prevention Services Administrators Conference
- Victims of Crime Administrators (VOCA) Conference and the VOCA Regional Meeting; Roundtable Discussion
- STOP Violence Against Women Administrators Conference TN Connecting for Children's Justice Annual Conference
- TN Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence Annual Conference
- TN Domestic Violence Leadership Institute
- TN Sexual Assault Leadership Institute
- Tennessee Narcotics Officers Association
- Tennessee Gang Investigator Association
- Tennessee Drug Task Force Directors Conference

OCJP is tasked with developing certain advisory groups and working directly with them to address topic-specific problem areas. The groups below are currently convened and facilitated by OCJP staff. A major part of the law enforcement and prosecution community enjoys organized input through participation in meetings the Tennessee District Attorneys Conference holds with the **Judicial District Drug and Violent Crime Task Forces**. OCJP, The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference, the State Comptroller of the Treasury office, and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security are often represented at these meetings. Quarterly meetings of the **Family Justice Center Advisory Committee** are held and attended by OCJP. OCJP convenes bi-annual meetings with the **Family Violence Advisory Committee**, made up of practitioners and state level leaders. OCJP also convenes, at least annually, the **Sexual Assault Advisory Committee**, made up of state and local professionals working in services for victims of sexual assault.

All of the above groups focus on problems, issues, and concerns related to system improvement, such as how these agencies can work together through information sharing, improved communication, and evaluation efforts. These meetings provide a formal source of detailed input on the problems facing the justice system and possible future interventions.

Federal Participation in Strategy Development

Federal participation in state and local law enforcement no longer means merely supplying money and the policy attached to it. Federal participants have become significant suppliers of expertise to state and local governments. OCJP considers it both desirable and important for all concerned to have federal participation in the strategy development process through the input of U.S. Attorneys and their Law Enforcement Coordinators. One such example of that participation is through the TBI's Dangerous Drugs Task Force meetings whereby many federal partners, such as DEA, attend the meeting and all three regional US Attorney's Offices (USAO) attend the meetings. Doug Overbey, USAO with the Eastern District most recently Chaired the Dangerous Drugs Task Force.

Another example is through the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) federal funding. OCJP works with the three USAOs in Tennessee to act as the fiscal agent for the PSN projects. PSN is a nationwide initiative that brings together federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and community leaders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in a community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. West Tennessee’s PSN, based in Memphis, focuses on a media campaign around prison time for gun violence, an academic research partner to analyze data, and overtime to arrest area “crime drivers”. Jackson recently joined PSN and is working on a media program in their first year. Middle Tennessee’s PSN is based in Nashville where the Metro Nashville Police Department utilizes overtime to allow detectives additional time to investigate National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) hits and perform searches and surveillance based on the intelligence returned from those NIBIN hits. East Tennessee’s PSN program is separated into multiple mini-grants to six agencies. The grants focus on forensic laboratory equipment, community and law enforcement officer training, license plate readers, and overtime for saturating high-crime areas.

Strategic Planning for PSN is completed via committee. Each regional USAO chairs a PSN committee comprising local law enforcement agencies and stakeholders who discuss area needs and statistics. The most pressing needs identified from applications between 2018 – 2020 are:

West	Middle	East
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIBIN lab equipment • Reducing violent gun crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overtime to investigate the hundreds of NIBIN incidents per year • Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New equipment to further investigations and investigative capacity • Training

Data and Data Analysis

Overview of Tennessee

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey for Demographics, Tennessee’s total population in 2019 was estimated at 6,829,174. Age, median age, and sex correlate with national ratios. White and Black/African American population ratios in Tennessee are greater than the national average, which results in a population percentage that has fewer Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, two or more races, and other races.

Tennessee Demographic Overview					
		Total Population			
		United States	Tennessee		
		328,239,523	6,829,174		
		Race			
		United States	Tennessee		
White	236,475,401	72.00%	5,272,910	77.20%	
Black or African American	41,989,671	12.80%	1,141,304	16.70%	
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,847,336	0.90%	20,431	0.30%	
Asian	18,636,984	5.70%	125,742	1.80%	
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	628,683	0.20%	3,469	0.10%	
Some other race	16,352,553	5.00%	109,072	1.60%	
		Age			
		United States	Tennessee		
Under 18 years	72,967,785	22.20%	1,510,752	22.10%	
18 years and over	255,271,738	77.80%	5,318,422	77.90%	
65 years and over	54,074,028	16.50%	1,138,965	16.70%	
		Sex			
		United States	Tennessee		
Male	161,588,973	49.20%	3,329,115	48.70%	
Female	166,650,550	50.80%	3,500,059	51.30%	

Tennessee has large swathes of rural areas, but two out of three Tennesseans live in an urban environment. With high population densities, urban areas are often the hubs for employment. As such, rural areas often face unique challenges with limited resources. In 2007, Tennessee reported 15 distressed counties, which are counties that rank among the 10% most economically distressed counties in the nation. As of 2019, there are 11 distressed counties in Tennessee: Lake, Lauderdale, Hardeman, Perry, Wayne, Clay, Grundy, Bledsoe, Scott, Hancock, and Cocke. Additionally, 27% of Tennesseans do not have an internet subscription and more than 600,000 have no access to a wired connection capable of 25 megabits per second (Mbps).

In Tennessee, COVID-19 has been a disruptive and destructive force. As of January 2021, the daily positivity rate was 12.3%. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the criminal justice system and the provision of victim services. It has infiltrated every aspect of daily life, touched every Tennessean in some manner and left the economy struggling to rebound from its grip. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Tennessee’s unemployment increased from 3.3% in December of 2019 to 6.4% December of 2020. Tourism continues to be a major source of revenue, Tennessee saw 126 million domestic person stays in 2019, up

5.7% from 119 million the previous year. Tennessee tourism was on a record track in the first three months of 2020 before COVID-19. The loss of revenue to this industry as a result of the pandemic will have a lasting impact on the economy of this state.

Criminal Justice Data

In this chapter, the Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) provides a synopsis of the pertinent crime data and criminal justice system issues facing Tennessee. Most references are to the most recent information available from the Tennessee Incident-Based Reporting System (TIBRS), data from state and federal partners, and OCJP's own monitoring.

As has been the policy at OCJP, care is taken *not* to allow macro-level data to drive the planning process *exclusively*; instead we “filter” the statewide incidence data through the experiences of our practitioner-partners, who contend with crime and disorder and the aftermath it leaves behind on a daily basis. Our strategy-development process uses that filtering to “feed” the problem identification stages of our planning. Therefore, this analysis includes observations made by local practitioners concerning the problems they face in their communities.

The scope of problems associated with drugs, violent crime, delinquency, recidivism, and our system's need for improvements has remained consistent since OCJP's last multi-year statewide strategy update. The state's major issues continue to be domestic violence, drug trafficking, juvenile crimes, sexual assault and other such crimes, court backlogs, victim services and victim's rights protection, recidivism, and the need for further criminal justice system automation and integration. The pandemic has added a layer of complexity to the needs and gaps originally identified and created new needs and gaps. It has also led to creative solutions, an increase in technology and virtual services and some changes in work systems that will continue beyond the pandemic.

Overall, progress has been made, but there is more to be done. The recent data demonstrates needs related to methamphetamine, heroin and prescription drug abuse, and the gang activity that surrounds drug trafficking, including not only weapons charges and issues but a significant increase in homicides. This in addition to the continued plague of domestic violence and sexual assault that harms families and communities, and the increasing magnitude and severity of human trafficking within our borders. Our vulnerable juvenile population, whose repeat history of trauma and victimization makes them prime targets for exploitation and leaves them ill-equipped to deal with those traumas, often results in early involvement in gangs, crime, and the criminal justice system. The magnitude of the prescription drug problem in the state is illustrated by the people it affects. Its impact transcends all socioeconomic classes. The methamphetamine epidemic has left the state with challenges to the economy as well as the ecology of the state and, despite the opioid crisis, continues to be number one drug problem in Tennessee. The major difference from the previous five-year plan regarding this issue is that the low cost and availability of crystal methamphetamine has nearly extinguished the clandestine lab issue in Tennessee, comparatively.

The current data demonstrates some significant decreases in crime in Tennessee, but our crime problems still place the state solidly among states in the highest tier of overall

violent crime through 2019. Additionally, a disproportionate amount of violent crime is attributed to domestic violence and homicide. Although significant progress has been made, those achievements must continue to be complimented with new evidence-based strategies.

The data on violent and drug-related crime suggest the following areas of concern in Tennessee, which correspond with the national strategy's priorities. Community responses to these trends are frustrated by budgets which have plummeted due to the pandemic. Trends in recent years include:

- 1) Overdose deaths in Tennessee have consistently increased from 2015 to 2019 per the Department of Health 2019 Tennessee Drug Overdose Death report (September 8, 2020); with a significant increase in simulant overdose deaths. More recent data, although not yet finalized suggests further increases.
- 2) Less than 50% (49.25%) of all Crimes Against the Person are domestic violence related (*TBI Crime in Tennessee 2019*) whereas this had been over 50% in the last five-year strategic plan but it continues to be too high.
- 3) Tennessee remains in the top ten (10) states for rates at which men murder women, however TN has dropped to 9th from 5th. The homicide rate among females murdered by males in Tennessee was 2.02 per 100,000 in 2018 (*When Men Murder Women 2020*).
- 4) Gun violence has increased during the last five years.
- 5) Human Trafficking Intelligence Analysts processed 829 tips in state fiscal year 2020; 535 of which involved minors (*TBI Annual Report 2020*).

Nature and Extent of Violence and Drug Crime

TIBRS data submissions address crime incidents and all the elements associated with them. An incident is defined for TIBRS reporting purposes as one or more offenses committed by the same offender or group of offenders acting together at the same time and place. Agencies submitting TIBRS information cover 100% of the state's population.

The criminal history repository and all associated files have been completed, providing a vast improvement in criminal history access, not only in terms of speed but also in terms of productivity. TBI data entry users are far more productive with the use of the new system, which translates to faster arrest information automation and accessibility.

Approximately 96% of fingerprint submissions are electronic and the arrest information submitted from Livescan devices is searched through the TBI's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). TBI receives approximately 25,000 criminal fingerprint submissions per month. A response message is sent back to the agency (Hit, No-Hit, Possible Hit-Wait for manual review, or reject). Then the information is submitted electronically to the national fingerprint and criminal history system, Next Generation of Identification (NGI). The information is also sent to the Tennessee Criminal History Repository and automatically added to the system. This process is completed in less than 15 minutes including time for data transmission. Reject messages are received in approximately 2 minutes or less and the poor-quality fingerprint and/or data error are identified. This allows editing and reprinting of incorrect data while the offender is still in custody.

TIBRS was certified by the Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1998. Tennessee remains one of only a handful of states reporting 100% of its crime statistics to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

Analysis of data reported by Tennessee into the NIBRS system reveals a downward trend in total Group A Offenses, but the specific data related to crime types tells a different story. A five-year snapshot in the table below indicates the following trends:

- **Overall Crime Rate:** Based on the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation’s Crime Report, Group A Offenses have increased 0.1% since 2015.
- **Murder:** The incidence of murder shows peaks and valleys over the past five years. The most current data shows a 22% increase from 2015. However, the trend is going down from a 2017 peak. Domestic violence murder decreased by 10% during that same span.
- **Forcible Rape:** The incidence of forcible rape has increased by 10% since 2015. However, the trend is going down from a 2017 peak.
- **Robbery:** The number of robberies has steadily declined since 2015 with a 17% decrease over the past five years.
- **Aggravated Assault:** The data shows that over the past five years the incidence of aggravated assault has increased by 5%.
- **Weapons violations:** The number of weapons violations has also seen a steady five-year increase since 2015. The total incidence of this crime increased by 18% during this five-year period.
- **Drug Violations:** Drug violations show an overall increase of 18% over the five-year period.
- **Human Trafficking (Commercial Sex Acts and Involuntary Servitude):** Human trafficking offences have increased by 21% since 2015.

<i>Crime Type</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
Murder	406	470	546	496	498
Domestic Violence Murder*	95	90	90	96	85
Forcible Rape	2,020	2,077	2,457	2,288	2,228
Robbery	7,537	7,855	6,216	7,244	6,210
Aggravated Assault	30,068	31,263	32,869	32,015	31,505
Domestic Violence Aggravated Assault*	11,218	11,464	10,644	10,883	10,604
Simple Assault	82,592	83,283	85,284	81,416	79,116

Domestic Violence Simple Assault*	51,880	51,906	48,007	49,387	47,969
Stalking	1,533	1,728	1,769	1,657	1,602
Weapons Violations	8,404	9,716	11,151	11,016	10,449
Drug Violations	46,965	52,839	58,157	58,230	55,855
Human Trafficking (Commercial Sex Acts and Involuntary Servitude)	38	60	95	36	46
Total Group A Offenses	528,894	542,968	570,381	552,110	529,524

*A subset of the overall offense category

- <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tbi/documents/tibrs/Crime%20In%20Tennessee%202015.pdf>
- https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tbi/documents/2016_CRIME_IN_TN_Final.pdf
- https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tbi/documents/2017%20Crime%20In%20Tennessee_Final.pdf
- https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tbi/documents/Crime%20in%20Tennessee%202018_Final_7-19-19.pdf
- <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tbi/documents/CrimeInTennessee2019.pdf>

Drug Manufacturing

In 2019, the number of methamphetamine labs in Tennessee continued to trend downward; however, in past years methamphetamine use is trending upward. The Tennessee Dangerous Drugs Task Force (TDDTF) assisted agencies in processing 45 clandestine methamphetamine labs seized in 2019, which is down from 104 in 2018 and 210 in 2017. Since the highest methamphetamine lab incidents of 2,082 in 2010 through the end of 2019, Tennessee has seen an overall 97.8% decrease in methamphetamine lab seizures. Within the United States, Tennessee ranked fifth in methamphetamine lab seizure incidents for 2019, according to data collected in early February 2020¹.

Drug Trafficking

The illegal drug market attracts the most ruthless, sophisticated, and aggressive drug traffickers. Law enforcement agencies are tasked with locating and arresting these individuals who bring cocaine, heroin, marijuana, MDMA, and methamphetamine to our neighborhoods and doorsteps. Diverse groups traffic and distribute these drugs across the Southwest Border and distribute them throughout the United States. The top three drugs trafficked across the United States, accounting for over 81.4% of all drug trafficking cases, are: (1) Methamphetamine at 42.7%; (2) Powder/Crack Cocaine at 26%; and (3) Heroin at 12.7%. In comparison to 2015, Methamphetamine trafficking has increased 31%, Powder/Crack Cocaine decreased 34.4%, and Heroin decreased 8%.²

With respect to Tennessee, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) Crime Lab's Forensic Chemistry Unit (FCU) has encountered a surge of methamphetamine, heroin, and certain opiates in submitted case samples. The TBI FCU reported dramatic increases in the number

¹ Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Annual TDDTF Report 2019

² United States Sentencing Commission <https://www.ussc.gov/research/quick-facts>.

of methamphetamine submissions to the laboratories for analysis. In 2012, there were 1,543 positive test results for methamphetamine compared to 12,072 in 2019. 2019 also marked the first year in which methamphetamine analyses surpassed marijuana, and methamphetamine became the top drug analyzed by TBI forensic scientists. The average growth of methamphetamine submissions analyzed each year has been 35.35%.

Furthermore, Tennessee continues to be a major pass-through state for drugs to be transported with relative ease from western states to the east coast and from the southern states to the north. As a result, the Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) felony drug arrests have steadily increased 90% between 2015 and 2019.³

The THP's Interdiction Plus (IP) team members continue to focus on the identification and arrest of those individuals trafficking illegal narcotics through the highway corridors of Tennessee. The annual report identified several THP accomplishments in 2019 including:

- Seized 391.81 pounds of cocaine, 821 units of ecstasy, 11.81 pounds of heroin, 797.26 pounds of marijuana, 50.03 pounds of methamphetamine, and 4,340 units of pharmaceutical substances
- Confiscated \$15.9 million worth of narcotics from Tennessee's roadways

The Federal High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) programs continue to provide assistance in Tennessee. Tennessee supports three HIDTA operational task forces to include Appalachia HIDTA, Middle Tennessee HIDTA, and the Gulf Coast HIDTA. Each task force is made up of TBI Special Agents and officers from regional law enforcement agencies. Their mission is to use a multi-disciplinary approach to deal with the ongoing threats to public health and safety, particularly related to the continued threats of illegal narcotics. This ideology requires unprecedented, multi-disciplined cooperation to effectively address the complex health and public safety problems that result from this daunting threat.

With regard to drug seizures throughout the state, Tennessee drug task forces participating in the HIDTA program were responsible for the removal/seizure of 54.6 kilograms of cocaine (to include crack cocaine), 7.25 kilograms of heroin, 0.5 kilograms of fentanyl powder and 61 fentanyl dosage units, 188.49 kilograms of crystal methamphetamine, 178 dosage units and 1.12 kilograms of MDMA (Ecstasy), and more than 11,645 kilograms of various types of processed marijuana, and 4,271 dosage units of diverted pharmaceutical drugs. Other investigative activity by the HIDTA Tennessee task forces for fiscal year 2019-2020 include 432 seized firearms, 20 wire intercepts, and 859 arrests and \$183,755.80 seized currency.⁴

Gang Activity

Some 33,000 violent street gangs, motorcycle gangs, and prison gangs are criminally active in the U.S. today. Many are sophisticated and well organized; all use violence to control neighborhoods and boost illegal money-making activities, which include robbery, drug and gun trafficking, prostitution and human trafficking, and fraud. Many gang members continue to commit crimes even after being sent to jail⁵.

³ Tennessee Dept. of Safety & Homeland Security <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/safety/annualreport/FY19>

⁴ Tennessee Bureau of Investigation https://www.tn.gov/content/TBI_AnnualReport_2019-2020.pdf

⁵ Federal Bureau of Investigation <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/gangs>

Tennessee continues to witness an influx of street gangs associated with the Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations. These gangs commonly distribute methamphetamine, cocaine, or other drugs, and have committed violent crimes such as assault and selling weapons on the black market. According to TBI's CJIS Division, a review of data submitted by agencies to TIBRS noted the following trends regarding gang-related criminal activity:

- Crimes involving assault decreased 36.1%
- Crimes involving a weapon increased 56.4%
- Crimes involving illegal narcotics increased 30.7%
- Crimes in the Western Region of Tennessee decreased 52.6%
- Crimes in the Middle Region of Tennessee increased 54.1%
- Crimes in the Western Region of Tennessee increased 486.2%

In October 2017, the Department of Justice reinvigorated [Project Safe Neighborhoods](#) (PSN), a crime reduction initiative targeting gun and gang violence in particular geographic hotspots. In conjunction with state and local law enforcement, a customized strategy was developed to prioritize prosecution of the most violent criminals in the most dangerous areas in their region and to support locally based prevention and re-entry programs to prevent additional violence. Independent academic research found that PSN successfully reduced violent crime by an average of 4-20%, and as high as 42% in some locations⁶. The program's effectiveness depends upon the ongoing coordination, cooperation, and partnerships of local, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies – and the communities they serve – engaged in a unified approach led by the U.S. Attorney in all 94 districts⁷.

Prescription Drug Abuse and Diversion

Over the past five years, drug overdose deaths in Tennessee have consistently increased. In 2019, 2,089 Tennesseans died of a drug overdose. This represents a 44% increase in drug overdoses from 2015⁸. Opioids are common contributing causes among drug overdose deaths in Tennessee. The increase in opioid overdose deaths appears to be primarily driven by deaths involving illicit fentanyl. Deaths involving stimulants other than cocaine, a category that includes primarily deaths involving methamphetamine, have also increased substantially over the past five years.

- Fentanyl related overdose deaths have soared with a 543% increase since 2015 with 1,087 deaths reported in 2019.
- With the impact of COVID, 2020 overdose deaths are on track to significantly surpass the 2019 rates.
- Opioid related overdose deaths also have steadily risen with a 49% increase since 2015 with 1,543 overdose deaths reported in 2019.
- Methamphetamine related overdose deaths dramatically rose with a 481% increase since 2015 with 651 cases reported in 2019.

Since the early 2000s, the incidence of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in Tennessee increased 10-fold, far exceeding the national 3-fold increase over the same period. NAS is a group of conditions caused when a newborn withdraws from certain drugs, often opioids, used during pregnancy. In 2013, Tennessee became the first state in the nation to require re-

⁶ U.S. Dept. of Justice <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/fbi-report-decline-violent-crime-rate>

⁷ Bureau of Justice Assistance <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/psn/overview>

⁸ Tennessee Department of Health https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/Overdose_report

porting of NAS for public health surveillance purposes. The Tennessee Department of Health is encouraged by the statewide collaborative efforts to curb the opioid epidemic and the associated number of cases of NAS per their Annual Report⁹.

- Instances of babies being born with NAS has decreased 15.0% from 949 in 2018 to 808 in 2019
- Rate of cases of NAS per 1,000 live births decreased from 11.7 in 2018 to 10.0 in 2019
- Geographic distribution of cases of NAS varied across the counties of Tennessee with eastern counties having the highest rate

Victimization Data

The data provided by the victim service agencies funded by OCJP in state fiscal year 2020 provides a snapshot of the types of victimization and the services sought by victims. During that time, the domestic violence shelters, which receive state and federal funding, served over four thousand (4,078) victims, occupying over one hundred forty-five thousand (145,339) bed nights; the average stay for victims in shelter was reported as approximately 24 days. The SASP funded agencies served 699 sexual assault victims and secondary victims; the STOP funded programs served 947 victims of domestic violence; 299 victims of sexual assault, and 113 victims of stalking.

The VOCA funded programs served a total of 118,079 victims. The selection of victimization categories and number served are reflected below, each victim can report more than one victimization type:

- Over 12,000 victims of child physical abuse
- Over 16,000 victims of child sexual abuse
- Over 66,000 victims of domestic violence
- Over 7,900 victims of adult sexual assault
- Over 2,600 victims of robbery
- Over 12,000 victims of assault
- Over 5,000 victims of homicide
- Over 870 victims of drunk driving
- Over 2,770 adult victims of childhood sexual assault

Crime Data Challenges

As discussed in depth in [Appendix B](#), Tennessee does not have a unified court system. Data collection methodology can vary by each state agency, judicial district, local and city government, affecting data definition, data collection methods and process, and how and when data can be shared. Although there are some state and federal laws that do address some requirements and standards; there is a lot of possibility for divergence. With each round of new elections and appointments, the possibility of variation or deviation increases, which leads to costly re-education and a re-tweaking of processes. Urban areas have the capacity to purchase their own records management systems which may or may not be compatible with the other systems across the state, resulting in a need to bridge gaps in data transmission. Despite the issues identified, Tennessee remains a national leader in collecting and reporting crime incidents and dispositions.

⁹ Tennessee Department of Health https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/nas/2019_Report

Despite leading the way in crime incidents and criminal histories, Tennessee continues to look to improve timely case disposition information. Approximately 55% of Tennessee records have final dispositions/case outcomes linked to arrests. An ongoing project exists to automate the disposition process. The TBI has worked individually with the four largest counties within the state to obtain dispositions electronically and with the Administrative Office of the Courts to receive electronic dispositions from the remaining counties. The four largest counties, Davidson, Shelby, Hamilton and Knox, have developed their own program as to dispositions. TBI continues to work with these counties. Currently, 42 of the 95 counties are participating. As a result of this process, a tremendous improvement in the timely completeness of the record has been noted. Until all counties can participate in the automated process, there will be a lag in the data.

Continued efforts are needed to connect old/current dispositions with missing charges (fingerprints) and identify missing dispositions that need to be collected. This effort is a long-term project that will continue to need attention now and in the near future. The addition of the outcome of the case (the final disposition) to the criminal history record enhances the quality of the record by allowing it to be used by authorized parties to make the best decision possible for firearm transfers, foster child placement, teacher hires, and more. The addition of the final disposition completes that part of the criminal history record. Once the record includes the disposition and is complete, it can then be accessed for any and all authorized purposes, and thus information accessibility is improved. With the availability of accurate and complete criminal history records, every associated process that uses the information, including background checks, is improved.

Records in the Tennessee Criminal History Repository are used for many reasons. When a decision needs to be made based on information from the Criminal History Repository and only the arrest information is available, it is difficult for the decision maker to reach the best, most logical, sound decision because s/he is forced to come to a conclusion based on limited information.

Education regarding laws and training associated with the fingerprint/disposition processes (domestic violence included) continues to be identified as an essential need to make sure the improvements occurring at the state level are disseminated to the appropriate personnel (clerk's offices, law enforcement agencies, etc.) throughout the state, thus ensuring the charges are reported in a timely and accurate fashion is also a priority of the state and the improvement of these processes.

Tennessee's Strategies for Addressing Needs and Gaps

As OCJP provides multi-year funding, a variety of past initiatives continue into the next several years. This chapter will focus on the priorities and select responses OCJP undertook as part of the last strategic plan that continue as part of this plan, and those initiated mid-fiscal year 2021, those planned for fiscal year 2022 and over next four years. OCJP prioritizes strategies that apply a multi-pronged approach to addressing issues, leverage various funding streams, and bring together community partners to systemically respond, as this approach affords synergistic impact and enhanced outcomes. This plan not only addresses the ongoing criminal justice and victim service needs impacting Tennesseans, but it considers the struggle of responding to the ongoing COVID pandemic and the unique challenges and opportunities it brought to the state. Although, OCJP began working on a statewide best practice response to Mass Violence in FY 2020; it was not complete when the Christmas Day Bombing disrupted the Nashville community. The aforementioned issues influenced this strategic plan and the responses will remain in flux, but this document will capture initial strategies, lessons learned, and opportunities capitalized on to as Tennessee moves forward.

Goal: Cultivate meaningful, ongoing coordination around communities' response to domestic violence by supporting evidence-based collaborative best practices

Domestic violence (DV) continues to be a significant source of violent crime in Tennessee. According to The Violence Policy Center's "When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2018 Homicide Data" released in September of 2020, Tennessee ranked 9th in the nation as 70 females were murdered by males in 2018. This 2018 ranking constitutes an improvement for Tennessee over 2017 data, in which the state ranked 5th; however, the rate remains too high and must continue to be addressed and prioritized. For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 68% victims (42 out of 62) were shot and killed with guns.

According to the Domestic Violence 2020 Report by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation released in March of 2020, overall numbers reveal a decrease in domestic related crimes of 2.6% from 2019 to 2020. 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 9.7% of all victims. Domestic Violence resulted in 90 murder victims in 2020 and a total of 69,385 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. OCJP is committed to applying evidence-based practices to reduce incidents of domestic violence in Tennessee, increase access to services for victims, and hold offenders accountable.

Tennessee strongly supports an increase in coordinated community response (CCR) interventions for addressing domestic violence, investing in a multidisciplinary approach that focuses on supporting systems-level improvements in the way communities respond to victims and offenders. Over the last five years, Tennessee has continued to refine the Family Justice Center (FJC) model, a co-location venue where victims can access nearly all of the services, they need in order to achieve safety and empowerment. The number of FJCs has expanded to thirteen operational centers across the state (Knoxville, Memphis, Nashville, Cookeville, Chattanooga, Jackson, Johnson City, Blountville, Huntsville, Oak Ridge, Brownsville, Tazewell, and Livingston). OCJP utilizes JAG and VOCA funding, along with specialized tech-

nical assistance and training, to foster the Tennessee FJC model in rural and urban communities according to their unique needs. OCJP has prioritized STOP funding for specialized DV law enforcement and prosecution positions, which complement the collaborative efforts in their communities and provide stronger focus on holding DV offenders accountable.

National data suggests that those that are murdered by an intimate partner often did not engage in services from a victim service provider. OCJP is using STOP funding to advance the statewide Fatality Review Team initiative, which creates training and tools for local multi-disciplinary teams to use when conducting adult fatality review assessments within their communities. It also funds the formation of a Statewide Fatality Review Committee, which tracks and reviews state-level data on DV fatalities. Additionally, 43 Tennessee law enforcement agencies have implemented the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) on domestic violence service calls in their jurisdictions. LAP allows for early detection and intervention in potentially lethal DV situations and cultivates stronger collaboration between law enforcement and DV victim service providers. OCJP continues to expand partnerships between the Department of Children's Services and DV shelters in communities across the state. These OCJP funded projects are intended to work collaboratively with one another to substantially increase the quality and frequency of coordination among the agencies addressing domestic violence in each community. OCJP believes this level of coordination yields stronger outcomes for victims, offenders, and the agencies providing services at the local level.

OCJP continues to look to stakeholders throughout the state for insight on strengths and weaknesses in the systemic response to domestic violence. The OCJP FY21 Victim Roundtables identified successful practices in the criminal justice system that could be replicated, as well as several practices that need to be changed or improved. Despite great progress over the last five years, coordination among DV agencies remains inadequate for many victims and their families, leaving gaps that compromise victim safety and offender accountability. Victims need early and consistent access to trauma-appropriate information about available resources and services, safe participation in the criminal justice process, realistic expectations about prosecution, sentencing and release protocols, and more. Underserved and Culturally Specific victims also face increased barriers to services due to lack of adequate training and resources. Real-time collaboration between victim advocates and law enforcement – from the first report through arrest, prosecution, sentencing, incarceration, and release – would clarify victims' understanding of their vital role in the process and increase trust in criminal justice institutions. Funding for such programs, while crucial, is only part of the solution. Agencies must commit to the practice of coordination, trusting their local partners to enhance and complement existing efforts.

Strategies: OCJP aims to support evidence-based interventions to achieve clear goals and objectives around domestic violence crimes in the state. The following objectives have been identified as priorities for OCJP:

- Continue to provide STOP funding toward DV law enforcement positions
- Expand STOP funded DV prosecutor positions
- Expand LAP to additional jurisdictions across the state
- Explore use of electronic monitoring programs for high risk DV offenders
- Expand access to DV shelters where it is needed most

- Increase trauma informed response across all settings
- Incorporate Building Strong Brains brain structure and resiliency practices into all services with DV victims
- Continue to expand FJCs to additional jurisdictions
- Implement system-level improvements through Fatality Review assessments
- Cultivate a culturally specific DV STOP project in Memphis to lead to best practices
- Develop a funding plan that is responsive to needs while adjusting to impending VOCA funding loss
- Continue to facilitate excellent training and technical assistance for all agencies working to address DV
- Continue to use of FVPSA CARES and VOCA funding to prevent and respond to COVID for Domestic Violence Shelter and Community services.

Outputs: OCJP will track the number of funded projects and the amount of funding for the above strategies. Additionally, each project area has specific outputs that demonstrate the activities and the impact of the project

Goal: Increase access to consistent, evidence-based sexual assault services for all victims and cultivate coordination of services, resources, and training.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs’ 2019 report on national-level victim data, sexual assault and rape victimizations increased significantly from 2017 to 2018 (the most recent available data), from 1.4 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 2.7. However, despite this increase in the rate of victimization, the percentage of victims who actually reported their violent crime to police dropped dramatically during the same period. According to the report, “the percentage of rape or sexual-assault victimizations reported to police declined from 40% to 25%, [between 2017 and 2018] while the percentage of robbery victimizations reported to police increased from 49% to 63%.” This decline in reporting reflects a troubling gap for sexual assault and rape victims’ trust in the criminal justice system’s ability to keep them safe and bring them justice. In 2019, the state of Tennessee saw over 6,000 reported violent sexual assault crimes, including rape, forcible fondling, forcible sodomy, and sexual assault with an object.

OCJP’s FY21 Victim Roundtables identified several opportunities for systemic improvements in addressing sexual assault. Lack of timely forensic evidence due to high demand continues to cause delays for victims seeking justice. Victim support services are inconsistent and limited across Tennessee, and community-based services are scarce and geographically inaccessible for many rural victims. Addressing the trauma of sexual victimization requires enhanced training and specialization, which is difficult to maintain reliably. 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. Preventative and outreach measures such as community-based training and training for educators and criminal justice professionals has led to identification of at-risk youth, increased demand for victim services, and enhanced prosecution efforts.

OCJP continues to explore and invest in evidence based sexual assault interventions with the goal of expanding services to underserved and inadequately served populations, including

rural and geographically isolated victims, as well as minority victims. OCJP will continue to use VOCA, SASP, and STOP funding to prioritize best practice interventions for sexual assault victims and enhance trauma informed programming through improved education and procedures. Tennessee currently has ten operational Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) in a variety of jurisdictions, with the goals of promoting and coordinating a community response to sexual assault and improving access to healing and justice for sexual assault victims.

OCJP uses VOCA re-entry funds to expand and enhance the quality and quantity of services to victims of sexual assault among offender populations prior to and upon release from incarceration in local adult correctional facilities, including the Hamilton County Mental Health Court Sexual Trauma Counseling pilot. The goal of this priority area 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. OCJP also continues to work with community-based and state-level experts in human trafficking to develop best practices for human trafficking victim services, and is funding a pilot project to address human trafficking trauma and histories with female offenders through a statewide collaboration between Tennessee Department of Correction, Board of Probation and Parole, and the human trafficking partners through the Tennessee Anti-Slavery Alliance (TASA) and Thistle Farms. The project will run through June 30, 2022 with plans to continue funding to sustain this victim support project statewide.

State funding supports the regional Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Forces in each of Tennessee's grand divisions. This funding provides technology, training, and overtime assistance to these specialized investigative units. The TBI has noted a large increase in CyberTips from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children related to societal changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. With so many children using technology for remote education, and increased time and access to the internet, the tips have increased. As a result, OCJP utilized CESF funding to enhance its technology and remote access to improve communication and collaboration for operations and allow greater capacity for ad hoc command posts to support the task forces.

Strategies: OCJP continues to explore and invest in evidence-based sexual assault interventions with the goal of expanding services to underserved and inadequately served populations, including rural and geographically isolated victims, as well as minority victims. The following strategies have been identified as priorities in sexual assault for OCJP:

- Continue to provide STOP funding toward SA law enforcement investigators and ongoing SA related law enforcement training regarding best practices
- Continue state funding for the regional Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces
- Continue to prioritize STOP funding focused on sexual assault victim services
- Continue to prioritize VOCA funding for adult sexual assault victims and secondary victims
- Continue to prioritize VOCA funding for Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)
- Expand SARTs and CACs to additional jurisdictions across the state
- Continue support of Human Trafficking agencies through VOCA funding

- Continue to explore sexual trauma focus and healing for justice involved individuals to support successful re-entry into communities
- Pilot partnership between TASA; Thistle Farms and TDOC Probation and Parole for enhanced trafficking education, resources, referrals, and victim services
- Continue to promote the statewide sexual assault hotline through public service announcements
- Develop Human Trafficking State Rules and best practices manual
- Provide ongoing victim service support to victims of sexual assault
- Enhance the breadth and depth of responses to victims of sexual assault through training and technical assistance on evidence based best practices for advocates and treatment staff

Outputs: OCJP will track the number of funded projects and the amount of funding for the above strategies. Additionally, each project area has specific outputs that demonstrate the activities and the impact of the project. Beginning in FY2022, sexual assault agencies will submit an annual report that will specifically track SA activities and outputs and help identify trends and areas of additional need.

Goal: Coordinate 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 overshadowed by dramatic increases in the use and availability of both heroin and fentanyl and the significant amount of crystal methamphetamine available in Tennessee. 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.

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.

Strategies: OCJP will continue to prioritize the use of JAG funding (Law Enforcement Priority Area) to support multi-jurisdictional drug and violent crime task forces. Additional support of these efforts comes through additional JAG funding that supports evidence-based training related to investigations and prosecution efforts. Continued support as the fiscal agent for the Federal Project Safe Neighborhood grants and the efforts of that funding to address violent crime in the most stricken areas of the state through investigative and prosecutorial efforts. These efforts are enhanced through the collaboration between local law enforcement entities within communities and the expertise, manpower, technology, and support they bring to bear on this work. Finally, funding to assist these projects with preventing and responding to the pandemic will be addressed through CESF funding.

Outputs: In addition to tracking the number of projects funded, amount of funding and amount of drugs seized, DTFs also report out the following measures:

- Number of investigations initiated and number that are drug related
- Number of cases closed
- Number of firearms seized, and the number added to NIBIN; numbers traced through ATF
- Number of individuals arrested on a misdemeanor charge; number that were drug related
- Number of individuals arrested on a felony charge; number that were drug related
- Number of gangs disrupted; Number of gangs dismantled

Goal: Enhance data-driven, location-based strategies to crime reduction.

While crime rates across the state are declining, there are pockets of high crime areas within many of the urban and suburban areas of the state; especially those that relate to drug trafficking, murder, and weapons charges. Evidence-based practices are increasing across the state but often are under-utilized or improperly employed even within the larger agencies. Although crime data overall is improving, there are issues to accessing data at the local and state level, including inconsistent definitions and collection of data points, as well as needed data that is not available for a variety of reasons (lack of unified court system, urban areas with their own CJIS, technology deficits and lack of access to broadband, the disruption in working processes when elections and turn-overs occur at the local level, and the need to bring new administrators and elected officials up to speed). The Office of Criminal Justice Programs has been working with criminal justice agencies throughout the state to promote evidence-based strategies wherever possible. Many of the strategies below address issues of communities with the highest violence rates, jail overcrowding related to pre-trial detainees, lack of coordinated responses, and needed technology improvements to assist with these issues. These priorities will also benefit from innovative public health programs that seek to reduce inner city violence using the same methodology that doctors use in disease control by aiming to identify drivers of violence, isolate them through discourse and interaction, provide conflict resolution and community mobilization efforts, and change social norms.

Strategies: Through braided state and federal funding, OCJP seeks to increase criminal justice data, increase the use of evidence-based programming that aligns with crime data, increase training on the use of evidence based programming and evidence based techniques, and support coordinated community responses:

- Use state funding to expand the pre-trial initiative
- Support expansion of automated notification systems for court dates
- Expand programs that seek to interrupt violence and victimization in high crime communities through VOCA funding
- Expand the use of Forensic Social Workers stationed within Public Defenders Offices through JAG funding (Prosecution and Court Programs) which 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
- Expand the evidence-based, automated court date notification system across jurisdictions
- Continue support of school-based interventions that promote healing from trauma and victimization
- Expand Community Crime Prevention programs to promote healing and engagement and decrease ongoing violent crime and debilitating trauma and grief supported with JAG (Prevention and Education) funding
- Expand equipment and technology in local law enforcement agencies to address gun violence to enhance investigations and prosecution of homicides and other gun related crimes through increased entries into the NIBN network

Outputs: OCJP will track the number of funded projects and the amount of funding for the above strategies. Additionally, each project area has specific outputs that demonstrate the activities and the impact of the project.

Goal: Enhance the continuum of services for those incarcerated or under community supervision (juvenile and adult).

As noted in the strategic planning sections above, Tennessee's incarceration rate is a topic for the Criminal Justice Improvement Task Force. OCJP will continue to identify evidence-based strategies to enhance programming within facilities (prisons and jails) and local communities, support the use of risk and needs assessments to inform re-entry planning, and support quality programming and interventions aimed at successful reintegration into the community, to include medication assisted treatments. Additionally, this population has a very high rate of trauma and past victimization which can negatively impact successful reintegration when that trauma is unaddressed. 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. OCJP seeks 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 or adult 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 or adult from spiraling even deeper into the criminal justice system.

Strategies:

- Continue to prioritize VOCA funding to expand and enhance the quality and quantity of services to victims of child abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking and/or domestic violence among offender populations prior to and upon release from incarceration in local adult correctional facilities
- 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 s 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
- Strategies to enhance and expand medication assisted treatment options will be addressed using CESF, RSAT and JAG (Mental health programs and related law enforcement and corrections programs, including behavioral programs and crisis intervention teams) funding
- Continue to prioritize VOCA funding towards evidenced-based juvenile restorative justice initiatives in Tennessee
- Seek assistance from federal technical assistance partners to develop an evidence-based model of restorative justice programming for Tennessee
- Continue to support the programming efforts of TDOC through wrap-around supports for transportation to increase participation in meetings; programs and support employment with JAG funding (Corrections and Community Corrections programs)
- Continue to support the response to the COVID pandemic through CESF funding to TDOC and local law enforcement entities through technology enhancements
- Competitive state funding to increase local jail facilities capacity to provide evidence-based programming
- Enhancing employment opportunities through supportive relationships with employers though JAG funding (Corrections and Community Corrections programs)

Outputs: In addition to tracking the number of projects funded, amount of funding based on project type and fund source, projects will report:

- Number served in the program
- Identify the evidence-based interventions
- Identify program component completions per project

Goal: Meet Basic Infrastructure Needs and Criminal Justice and Victim Service

This section breaks down into three overarching areas of focus: equipment and technology, continuing education, best practices and policy enhancement, and improve access to and collection of systemic data. These initiatives provide the software and hardware needed to serve the public in the most efficient and effective manner and keep Tennessee on the cutting edge of advancements in the field. Additionally, these enhancements fill the gap in basic data needed to evaluate new areas of need and the impact of implemented programming. As stated above, as a non-integrated court system, Tennessee is at the mercy of local elected officials and administrators to adhere to reporting statues. There is no state level oversight and

limited penalties; and as elections occur and general turn-over occurs, there is an ongoing need for training and technical assistance to get the limited data that is available.

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.

In the fall of 2020, the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy (TLETA) within the Department of Commerce and Insurance, brought together a group of professionals in the field to serve as an Advisory Council to ensure that law enforcement agencies received the best training to respond to the evolving needs of law enforcement and community policing. The Council works to:

- Seek opportunities to qualitatively and quantitatively track and measure progress and success of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Reform Partnership Findings and Outcomes of September 2020
- Solicit feedback from TLETA customers through surveys with assistance from Sheriffs and Chiefs associations as well as direct conversations with agency leaders
- Review TLETA's curriculum and training for enhancement opportunities and value-adds
- Increase collaboration among stakeholders as a venue to improve law enforcement training across the state

Finally, the COVID 19 pandemic brought additional infrastructure needs that were not on the radar. All areas of the criminal justice system needed personal protective equipment, support for overtime, additional cleaning and sanitizing supplies, technology for remote service provision, training and travel, staffing, and equipment to address the medical needs of inmates within state and local facilities.

Strategies: OCJP utilizes a variety of state and federal funding to enhance basic infrastructure needs with the criminal justice system that will enhance and improve data collection and reporting, increase opportunities for professional continuing education that equips practitioners with evidence informed and evidence based practices, and ensures cutting edge technology and equipment is available to all parts of the criminal justice system from the state forensic laboratories down to the local investigators and the community victim service providers. Some of the specific objectives include:

- Use of NCHIP and NARIP funding to improve criminal histories reporting and systemic equipment and technology upgrades
- Advance forensic equipment and testing needs and corresponding training, accomplished through Coverdell and JAG (planning, evaluation, and technology improvements) funding
- Advance the work of local medical examiners through ongoing equipment upgrades and training through JAG funding (law enforcement programs)

- Advance trauma-informed, evidence-based work in the criminal justice field across disciplines; especially as it relates to understanding trauma and brain science promoted through the Building Strong Brains initiative in TN; use of VOCA (victim service providers, JAG (law enforcement) and state funding (family justice centers)
- Continue to support law enforcement training on new policies and procedures, cutting-edge policing programs, leadership academies, and updated equipment through JAG (law enforcement programs)
- Provide state-of-the-art technology and training for regional internet crimes against children divisions through state appropriations
- Expand opportunity for video arraignment and video conferencing between defendants and their legal counsel and the space for these conversations through CESF funding
- 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
- Crime Victim Advocate annual training (Tommy Burks Academy) through state appropriation
- Increase criminal justice and victim service agencies' ability to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID.

Outputs: In addition to tracking the number of projects funded, amount of funding based on project type, and fund source, projects will report:

- Number of people trained
- Number of trainings provided or attended
- Participant training survey results per project
- Number and type of equipment purchased

Goal: A Trauma Informed Response to Crime Victims in Tennessee Over the past several years, 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 victims. 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 accessible. Strategies were started in the last couple of years of the previous strategic plan but there are still gaps and needs to be addressed with these populations.

Additionally, the Christmas Day Bombing in Nashville was a mass violence incident and OCJP partnered with the local community and the United States Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC-TTAC) to respond to the emerging needs of victims.

Strategies: In addition to the interventions addressed above in this plan (see previous goals with strategies and outputs) OCJP will continue current funding to agencies addressing the most vulnerable of our crime victims.

- Ongoing VOCA funding will support child advocacy centers, CASAs, Legal Aids, 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, immigrant victims, minority victims, marginalized communities, elder victims, and disabled victims
- VOCA funding will support the Nashville mass violence victims
- Continued support for increased evidenced based trauma-informed approach to all service provision with the expansion of and integration of Building Strong Brains (BSB) TN perspective on brain architecture, resiliency, and the importance of relational healing through serve and return interactions across the life span
- Expansion of evidence informed two generational programming that works with family systems to mentor and instill trauma-focused approach to the entire system as it relates to the trauma and victimization, thus building in capacity within the system for resiliency and relationship enhancement, including a pilot project to address children of incarcerated parents
- Prioritize VOCA funding to ensure crime victims have a safe and separate location within the courthouse while waiting for their case to be called
- Ongoing victim service funding providing advocacy, counseling, transportation, specific assistance, crisis support, therapy, emergency housing and transitional housing, civil legal services, court support and accompaniment, victim notification, and referral assistance.

Outputs: In addition to tracking the number of projects funded, amount of funding based on project type, and fund source, projects will report:

- Number of victims served total
- Categories of victimization with numbers
- Type of services received, all are captured quarterly and annual reporting systems

Outcomes: OCJP requires all victims service grants to survey victims related their experience in receiving services. There are four to five required outcome areas depending on the agency type and then four additional OCJP outcomes; agencies must report on at least one of those. These outcome surveys are built on a five-point Likert Scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The following areas are required for all victim service agencies:

- Increase in sense of safety and security
- Increase in knowledge of the services and community resources available
- Increased knowledge about the criminal justice system
- Satisfaction with services received
- Improved ability to plan for their safety (required for domestic violence shelters)

Agencies are encouraged to develop their own outcome measures in addition to those required and encouraged to share those with OCJP as well.

Summary

OCJP is excited about the opportunities this plan provides to impact crime in Tennessee over the next five years, thus increasing public safety and addressing some of the barriers to criminal justice data through funding. OCJP will continue to seek information and input from our local and state level peers to enhance our understanding of the current needs and issues Tennessee faces over the course of this multi-year plan; and each year, specific strategies will be developed to address the most pressing issues.

This plan starts with VOCA funding at an all-time high. The opportunities this increased funding affords in the systemic training, technology, and service delivery improvements will continue well beyond the limited funding. However, OCJP will immediately begin to brace for the decline in VOCA funding and develop thoughtful reductions.

The data demonstrates an overall reduction in domestic violence incidents and homicides in Tennessee over the course of the last five-year strategic plan. OCJP is eager to continue this progress, increasing victim safety and supportive resources and advancing accountability through prosecution and programming.

The advancements in brain architecture science and trauma responses are becoming ingrained in respectful and responsible response to victimization that focuses on supportive healthy relationships, mentoring, and resiliency. OCJP looks forward to the expansion of restorative justice initiatives, two-generation service delivery models, and community-based trauma resource centers built on collaboration and coordination between community partners at the local level and the impact this will have systemically in Tennessee.

Despite the tragic impact of the COVID pandemic, in many ways it was a catalyst for system process and technology improvements within the criminal justice system. Those changes will be evaluated and those with lasting benefits will be continued.