

Technical Assistance

Local Reform in a Realigned Environment *Data driven strategies to enhance public safety*

A product of the Jail Alternatives Initiative (JAI), a collaborative partnership with the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, the Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy at the University of California, Berkeley Law School, the Santa Cruz County Probation Department and the Placer County Probation Department.

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Introduction

On April 5, 2011, Governor Edmund G. Brown signed into law Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109), codifying one of history's most sweeping reforms of California's criminal justice system. This landmark legislation, commonly referred to as "Realignment," comes 35 years after Governor Brown signed the Determinate Sentencing Law (DSL) of 1976, ushering in an era of unprecedented prison population expansion. Under the DSL, there was a shift in policy to more punitive practices resulting in high rates of incarceration. This contributed to overcrowded correctional facilities with deteriorating conditions at the state and local level.

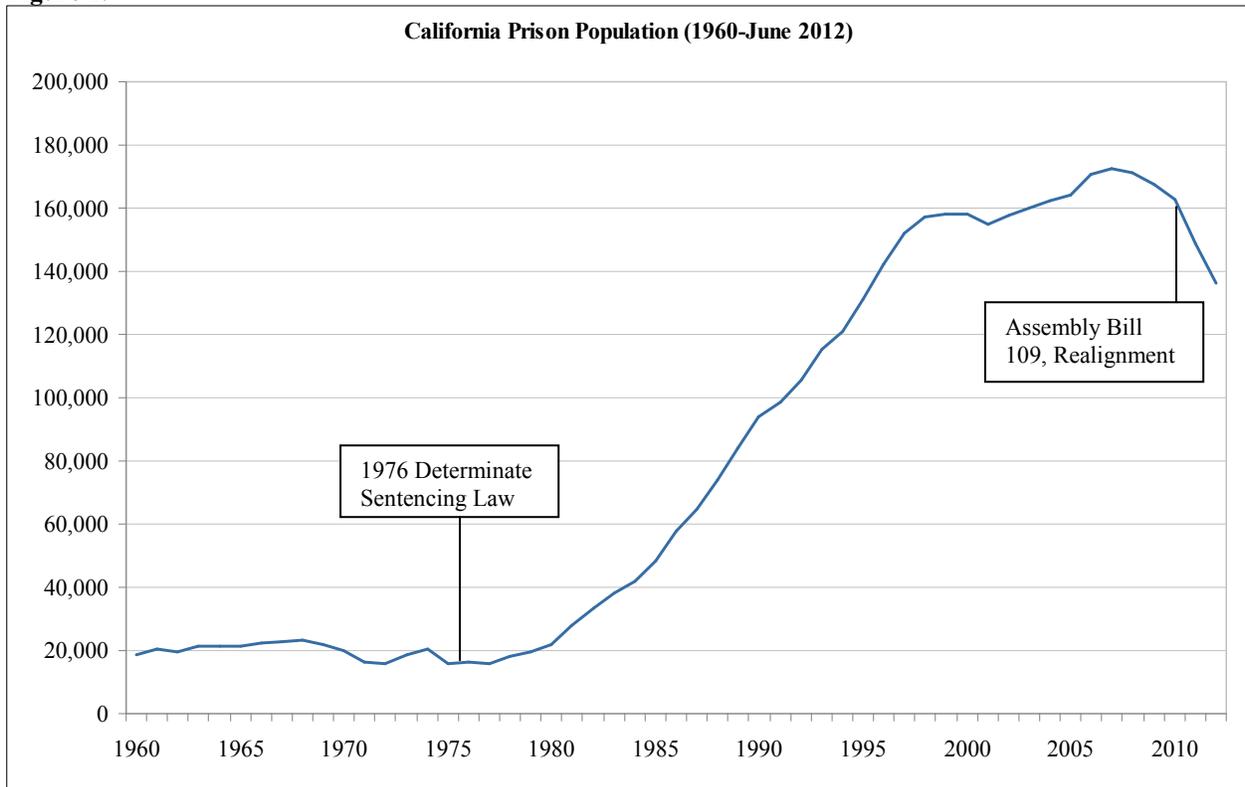
Implementation of AB 109 began on October 1, 2011, creating the need for California counties to examine existing policies and practices in order to optimize the use of limited jail space and expand community correctional options. The challenges seen by counties have varied because of historic state-dependent versus self-reliant county practices. For the past three decades, many counties have become heavily dependent on state prison and local jail commitments for a broad array of offenders and offenses while other counties became self-reliant by developing their own varied, community correctional resources.

To meet the requirements of AB 109, while operating within the constraints of existing jail space, counties must maximize the utilization of local sentencing options that minimize incarceration for certain types of lower risk offenders. Focusing on improving system processes like sentencing options maximizes the impact of incremental, low cost reforms. Realignment creates an opportunity for jurisdictions to examine targeted strategies that achieve public safety goals while effectively directing limited resources. This publication, beginning with a brief background followed by an analytical design and specific recommendations, will examine the value of data-driven techniques to deliberately restructure the local system.

History of prison and jail overcrowding

The current prison crisis is the result of over 1,000 sentencing enhancement bills that have passed in the legislature, initiating with the passage of the Determinate Sentencing Law (DSL) in 1976 (LHC, 2007). At the time, California had approximately 19,000 state prison inmates and 25,000 county jail inmates (Department of Corrections, 1979). By 1990, the state prison population ballooned to approximately 93,000 inmates and county jail populations increased to 70,000 (Department of Corrections, 1991; CSA, 2000). To accommodate this unprecedented rise in incarceration, California expanded prison and jail capacity. Since 1984, the state constructed 21 prisons with a total design capacity of 83,219 while the counties expanded jail capacity to approximately 76,000. Despite this prison and jail expansion, new state correctional facilities could not keep pace with the explosive growth in the number of offenders sentenced to a term of incarceration or held in jail pending their trials.

Figure 1.



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 2012.¹

The consequent overcrowding led to deteriorating prison and jail conditions resulting in a series of lawsuits and threatened legal actions. At least 32 county jails began operating under court ordered or self-imposed population caps (LHC, 2007). The situation at the state level became more urgent as two lawsuits, *Colman v. Brown* (filed 1990) and *Brown v. Plata* (filed 2001), resulted in California prisons being declared unconstitutional for their deleterious impact on inmate health.

Despite the state's acknowledgment of these unconstitutional conditions, its failures to address the problem led the federal courts to order California to reduce its prison population in 2006. On May 23, 2011, the United States Supreme Court affirmed the order of a three-judge oversight panel to immediately implement prison population reductions (*Brown v. Plata*, 2011).

Reflecting on the Supreme Court decision, the legislature passed AB 109 with the goal of reducing the prison population by 40,000 inmates through restricting prison commitments for certain categories of offenders. Current data indicate the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is 2/3 of the way towards achieving this institutional population reduction. Analyses of the first nine months of Realignment implementation indicate that the prison population was reduced by 26,480 inmates (CJCJ, 2012). This shift in responsibility for lower level offenders to California's 58 counties, has presented significant challenges and

¹ As of Sept 26, 2012 the prison population had fallen to 133,202. See: www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports_Research/Offender_Information_Services_Branch/WeeklyWed/TPOP1A/TPOP1Ad120926.pdf

necessitated a reconsideration of established sentencing practices and the development of a broader array of community sanctions.

Why jail and probation reform is critically needed

California has demonstrated an increased reliance on incarceration at both the state and local level over the past several decades. As described above, the state’s prison system is currently exceeding its design capacity despite Realignment efforts. There has been no clearly defined proposal on how to implement these population reductions.

Without a systems-intervention approach that provides data-driven strategies, California’s 58 counties will continue to present radically different sentencing and criminal justice practices that affect both county and state incarceration levels. Realignment presents an opportunity for frontline service providers to develop innovative localized strategies. A researcher-practitioner relationship provides a unique approach that combines both research and data-driven analyses with local law enforcement expertise. Existing model programming can be deliberately implemented to restructure the local justice system. A systemic perspective utilizes data analysis to apply model strategies to reduce unnecessary incarceration while promoting public safety.

The Jail Alternatives Initiative (JAI) provides a replicable systems level intervention approach that efficiently utilizes local resources to produce positive outcomes for adult offenders. This initiative is derived from Santa Cruz County’s experience that, after successfully becoming a model Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) site, began to implement similar strategies in the adult probation division. In a realigned environment, researchers and practitioners can work in unison to implement policies that achieve public safety goals while reducing reliance on local jail bed space.

Local and state corrections must provide the highest possible level of public safety with maximum benefit from available public funds.

History has shown that our dramatic increase in prison and jail for nonviolent offenders has had little discernable positive impact on public safety. In fact, the idleness, poor conditions and contagion factor of congregating individuals with deviant histories in confinement, combined with insufficient reentry supervision and support, has the unintended consequence of increasing recidivism upon return to society.

It is a new day in community corrections and we can do better. We must move past “tough on crime” stances that lack depth and instead become “smart on crime” and provide true public safety by relying on data driven methods to achieve both offender and system accountability. With a combination of strong leadership and sufficient technical support, these proven strategies can be replicated and built upon to provide safer communities over the long term at reduced cost.

~ Scott MacDonald
Chief Probation Officer
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Getting started: Establishing a jail alternative initiative

The necessity of jail reform in California is evident from the state's radically disparate sentencing practices; however, the impact of Realignment on each county will vary depending on their existing criminal justice practices (Males & Teji, 2009). Therefore, the urgency and form of county response also varies based on the particular processes of the local jurisdiction.

Implementation steps of the Jail Alternatives Initiative

1. Establish a collaborative partnership
2. Conduct a data analysis of jail and probation populations
3. Utilize existing research to locate appropriate strategies
4. Monitor the success of implemented strategies through continued data analysis

A component of the JAI initiative is collaboration across multiple criminal justice agencies. A collaborative planning process ensures all stakeholders are encouraged to voice recommendations and provide feedback. It is important to recognize that not all members of the partnership will find consensus on every matter; however, membership and dialogue within this collaborative are essential to the implementation of jail alternative strategies. Each of the collaborative partners share responsibility for the target population throughout the criminal justice process; therefore, being able to discuss policies and practices through the eyes of the District Attorney, Probation, Sheriff, Court, and Public Defender's Offices is essential.

Given that all justice administration departments can contribute to unnecessary incarceration through systemic inefficiencies, full partnership of all justice partners to critically examine system functioning is ideal. Unfortunately, full stakeholder involvement is not always a reality. This should not be viewed as an impediment to the process or dissuade jurisdictions from systemic improvements. As the primary agencies responsible for supervising the criminal justice population, probation and sheriff's departments together can collaborate on deliberate interventions that promote long-term public safety. It is important to recognize the direct correlation between jail and probation services, as a significant portion of the criminal justice population regularly progresses through both departments' supervision. At a minimum, it is necessary for these two agencies to work closely together to restructure the local justice system.

It is recommended that the collaborative partnership, discussed above, embrace the guiding principles listed below. These guidelines outline the framework for the implementation of JAI. First, the collaborative partnership, including at a minimum the probation and sheriff's departments, should be convened to discuss the current criminal justice system in their county. These meetings should include individuals with decision-making authority from their department as much as possible. This collaborative should be maintained as the primary forum for decision making throughout the implementation process.

Next, in order to fully understand the complexity of the county's criminal justice system, an accurate, consistent data analysis tracking both jail and probation data must be completed. This analysis will be utilized as a foundational tool to support recommended alternative jail population strategies. From this analysis, justice administrators can develop a continuum of

options that are rooted in research and existing successful models. The collaborative partnership should monitor the implementation of these strategies through continued data analysis to determine the success of each new option.

Guiding principles

JAI implements a structured decision making process that allows criminal justice managers to examine their county's practices as a whole rather than focusing on offender behavior. This systemic perspective is rooted in cultivating efficient and effective analytical and implementation policies. These involve local jurisdictions' becoming more self-reliant through the reduction of unnecessary incarceration. A fair and equitable system incorporates alternatives to incarceration that result in cost savings and benefits to public safety. Implementation of the JAI approach should be guided by a series of principles that direct jail and probation reform planning.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Systemic Self-Critique

Key leaders within the criminal justice system, including governmental and non-governmental agencies, must be willing to engage in an ongoing collaborative effort to dissect their county's criminal justice practices. These leaders must maintain transparency and recognize that system improvement does not happen in the absence of locating problems and inefficiencies within the local justice system. Justice stakeholders that are not willing to examine their own influence on efficiency and justice outcomes are apt to perpetuate and increase inefficiencies over time. Stakeholders should be praised for discovering inefficiencies as a powerful step toward system improvement. The voice of stakeholders from the agencies such as the Public Defender's Office, Courts, Probation and Sheriff's Department, Board of Supervisors, District and Attorneys Office as well as community-based organizations are essential to the successful implementation of institutional population reduction strategies. An element of system self-critique is necessary to fully examine how existing practices influence both the county and state incarceration levels.

Commitment to Data-Driven Practices

Objective data analysis that includes both the jail and probation populations is an essential component of JAI. The data analysis should include the full scope of an individual's trajectory through the local justice system, including pre-trial, sentencing, and community supervision. Examination of key decision points allows for the appropriate and most influential interventions to be devised. These data allow counties to develop targeted county-specific interventions that provide the most impact on reducing the current jail population. Recognizing that jail and probation populations change as a result of available alternatives and new policies and practices, a commitment to ongoing data analysis is necessary to determine if implemented strategies are successful or require modification. Further, the data analysis should be communicated to the various collaborating agencies and throughout the county to allow for a greater understanding of the chosen strategies. Shared data analysis increases transparency and accountability of the implemented strategies, as well as aids to cultivate stakeholder engagement.

Capacity Development to Provide a Continuum of Policy, Practice, and Program Alternatives

Not all adult offenders require secure confinement. Current practices in many counties have resulted in the unnecessary use of county jail bed space. Unnecessary incarceration, or incarceration that is not necessary to ensure public safety or court appearance, can be the cause

of a lack of viable program alternatives, or simply inefficient practices. Changing an inefficient practice often involves a low cost adjustment and can save significant public expense associated with excessive court litigation and jail costs. In addition to the low cost practice changes, cost effective programs can be developed. Developing a variety of community-based alternatives for adult offenders in the pre-trial, sentencing, and community-supervision phase of the criminal justice process will allow county stakeholders to reduce the use of incarceration while still promoting public safety.

Commitment to Research Based Practices

Data analysis of the local system is essential to the process, but justice stakeholders must examine the empirical body of research to understand the value of reducing unnecessary incarceration. Further, this research can demonstrate the impact on criminogenic risk factors as a result of exposure to jail and its concentration of offender populations. The intervention strategies discussed in this publication have proven to be successful in California and the nation. Local criminal justice stakeholders should utilize existing literature and research that depict the success of these various strategies. Often times it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel; therefore, to maximize efficiency, stakeholders should explore the strategies outlined in this report.

With these guiding principles, county stakeholders can develop a collaborative forum for analyzing their current jail and probation populations. It is essential that stakeholders recognize how these two populations intertwine, thereby allowing for the implementation of effective strategies to reduce jail bed days.

System diagnosis

The driving question in this analysis is: ***What are the current characteristics of the individuals in jail beds?***

The first stage in the planning process is to obtain a data “portrait” of the system and analyze accurate data about the current jail population. Obtaining and understanding the meaning of collected data is best done through a well coordinated partnership between technical consultants, researchers and practitioners who understand the meaning and reliability of the data elements that have been collected. Justice stakeholders should engage in a series of meetings that involve both information technology staff and practitioners to pinpoint where specific data elements originate. For example, sentencing data may be most accurately obtained from the court information system, whereas the number of prior arrests is best captured by probation. The variety of meeting participants will allow for all potential questions to be addressed.

This analysis will expose individuals who cycle repeatedly through the criminal justice system. The relationship between the jail and probation population is a critical component to explore, as both agencies are affected by the same offender population.

The data elements extracted for analysis should include a detailed depiction of the inmate’s background information. For example, necessary data elements are age, gender, racial identity,

residence, immigration status, and prior arrest history. This information will help create an accurate picture of the current jail population.

Additional information about the inmate's admission and release will help counties identify areas to target for alternatives to incarceration. These data elements include length of confinement, bail amount, arresting offense, charge, and entry type. This information, when correlated with the inmate's background information, will provide a basis for analyzing county incarceration practices.

Information about the facility's use of contract beds, whether within their own facility or in other jurisdictions, will also aid in the depiction of how jail bed days are utilized. For example, does the county utilize a significant portion of bed days for federal inmates as result of the fiscal incentive to do so? Does this practice result in an overcrowded facility or the early release of local inmates due to the existing federal cap on jail capacity?

Every county's jail population is unique. This is the reason for a data analysis of the current jail population as it will highlight the various population characteristics that are reflective of each county's incarceration policies and practices. The data analysis must be completed prior engaging in a decision making process on strategic interventions. The characteristics of the jail population will allow justice stakeholders to target specific areas that will make the most impact on their facility.

A menu of strategies

There are a wide range of programs and processes already in existence that provide local jurisdictions with models on how to reduce jail populations, from pretrial to reentry programs. The data analysis discussed above will help justice stakeholders target specific areas of their jail population and/or jail practices and procedures. The strategies described below have proven effective in many jurisdictions across the country. Through the deliberate implementation of community-based strategies, local jurisdictions can maximize limited resources and cultivate a cost effective system that does not jeopardize public safety.

Pretrial Services

Pretrial services are inserted into the local criminal justice system in a variety of ways. Some jurisdictions implement this service under the authority of the court, others under the authority of the Sheriff or Probation departments. These services can also be provided under contract by independent or private agencies. Pretrial service programs are designed to provide more information to decision makers about the defendant to aid in making an appropriate pretrial release or detention decision. This investigation relies on validated and objective criteria to identify individuals who are a public safety risk or are likely to fail to appear in court. Additionally, pretrial service programs offer monitoring and supervising services for individuals who are released prior to their trial. These programs provide a cost effective alternative to incarceration while minimizing disruptions to the individual's life that may otherwise exacerbate factors associated with reoffending. For example, a pretrial service program client may face losing his/her employment if incarcerated; engagement in the program allows the individual to

maintain employment, which is considered a pro-social activity. Pretrial services can be devised to provide a variety of services specific to each individual.

Own Recognizance Release, Supervised Release, Intensive Supervision

Individuals booked in the county jail can be assessed using a validated risk instrument to determine the level of supervision necessary prior to the court hearing. The risk assessment can be administered by pretrial staff, a community-based organization, or Sheriff Department staff. The results of the assessment can assist the probation officer's recommendation or be presented to the court independently. This assessment identifies the level of supervision necessary to maximize the chance that the offender will appear for their upcoming court hearing and not recidivate prior to the hearing.

In 1987, the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice initiated the **Supervised Misdemeanor Release Program (SMRP)** with the San Francisco Sheriff's Department to address chronic overcrowding in the county's jails.

SMRP focused on people held in custody on misdemeanor bench warrants. These are people who at one time were originally arrested for a misdemeanor offense not involving weapons or violence. They were released with a citation, or written promise to appear in court. In the case of failure to appear, a bench warrant would be issued and court approval was sought for non-financial releases.

Program staff identified all such eligible misdemeanants. Staff screened, interviewed, and checked references for these potential clients. Based on the derived information, recommendations for release were then submitted to the court. If the court accepted the release recommendation, SMRP staff monitored the offender's court compliance until the case was disposed. 84% of SMRP clients kept their promise to appear and returned to court. In December of 2009, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department successfully integrated this into their daily operating procedure.

Source: CJCJ, 2012a.

The individual can be released on their own recognizance, supervised release, or intensive supervision. Individuals under supervised release and intensive supervision receive a range of services and monitoring, including home and work visits, reminder telephone calls for upcoming hearings, and drug testing. Generally, individuals on intensive supervision are also placed on electronic monitoring.

Electronic Monitoring

Electronic monitoring (EM) is frequently utilized for detention, restriction, and surveillance of individuals in various stages of the criminal justice process. Program participants maintain an electronic bracelet, worn on the ankle or wrist, allowing the supervising agency to monitor program compliance. Jurisdictions vary in program criteria and design. Generally, the program is designed for pre-trial participants, as a primary sentence, or for early release. EM programs can be managed by a community service provider, the Sheriff's Department, or the Probation Department. The cost of this service typically is borne by the program participant, resulting in revenue generation for the supervising agency. Other services such as random voice recognition can be implemented as an additional strategy.

Citation Release Programs

The expansion of citation release programs is an effective way to divert arrestees from jail intake, thus minimizing or eliminating jail bed days for this population. The citation release stating the date one must appear in court is issued by the arresting officer. Most jurisdictions utilize this practice for nonviolent offenders who do not pose a threat to community safety, will

likely appear at the court hearing, and have valid identification on their person. This program allows individuals to maintain their daily activities (i.e. employment, education) while awaiting their court hearing.

Reducing Bail Amounts

In most jurisdictions, a significant portion—usually over half—of the jail population is unsentenced. Therefore, reducing bail amounts is one strategy to target a fraction of this population. In California, the bail schedule is established pursuant to the Uniform Bail Procedures Committee and then approved by the county judges of the Superior Courts of California. Bail amounts for the same type of crime vary by county due to this procedure.

A segment of the pretrial population, regardless of their likelihood to re-offend or appear for their court hearing, is confined to county jail due to the lack of financial resources to pay the bail amount. By modifying the current bail structure in tandem with establishing criteria for determining whether a particular arrestee is likely to appear for hearing and avoid reoffending, courts can work with the Sheriff's Department in collaboration to reduce the unnecessary use of jail bed space.

Case Expeditor

A case expeditor position can improve and expedite the movement of individuals through the court process. Some jurisdictions focus on special populations such as probation violators. The case expeditor is responsible for applying release criteria and making recommendations to the Court. The recommendations should include options for alternatives to incarceration.

Extended Pretrial Hours

In some jurisdictions, a significant portion of bookings may be occurring during a specific period of the day, including after standard operating hours. Extending the hours of pretrial services allows for more individuals to be processed, streamlining the judicial process. The eligibility of individuals for immediate release could be determined for those booked during these extended hours. An on-call judge could provide approval for releasing eligible individuals. Increasing the accessibility of judges for other populations such as probation violators is also a key strategy in reducing the use of jail bed days.

Warrant Reduction Program

Jail bed space is often utilized for individuals with bench warrants. Bench warrants are generally issued for individuals who have missed a court appearance or a probationer who has missed a meeting with their probation officer. A program design can be implemented to deal with the issue of missed appearances by establishing staff to contact individuals to inform them of the missed hearing and instructing them to reschedule at the courthouse. A similar program can be utilized to remind individuals of upcoming hearings, meetings, or probation conditions. This work can be conducted internally by the probation department or by a community-based organization.

Santa Cruz County's **Warrant Reduction Project** (WRAP) utilizes a local community-based organization, Friends Outside, to contact individuals on the verge of having warrants issued. Since the program's establishment in 2005, the county has averted over 390 warrants, saving an estimated 15,600 jail bed days.

Source: Santa Cruz County Probation Department, 2010

Day Reporting Centers

Day reporting centers vary based on the program design established by various jurisdictions. The intention of the center is to allow for nonviolent individuals to remain supervised in the community. Some centers require individuals to remain on the premises for a majority of the day, whereas other centers allow for individuals to check-in as required. Day reporting centers generally allow individuals to establish connections to various social services, whether on-site or in the community.

Community Work Service Programs

Community work service programs can be designed to aid probationers in successful reentry. Program criteria can be established allowing the court to order eligible individuals to participate in a work crew program. By targeting probation violators, justice stakeholders can help reduce cycles of recidivism and incarceration. Through this program, individuals participate in meaningful work in lieu of incarceration. Engagement in community-based services can also be incorporated into the expectations of the program.

Weekend Crew Operation

Similar to community work service programs, weekend crew operations can be established to provide judges with another option for probation violators. The general program design is for individuals to engage in work crews on Saturdays and Sundays. Each work day represents one day in custody. This program design allows for individuals with existing employment and other obligations to maintain their engagement in the community. Additionally, it allows for the various justice departments to partner with community-based organizations for work sites.

Program Development for Specialized Populations

Jurisdictions typically find that specific populations constitute a significant portion of their overall jail populations, such as homeless individuals. By designing programs to target specific populations, justice stakeholders can decrease the use of jail bed days. Program design and implementation should not be conducted until an accurate data analysis is conducted.

In 1991, CJCJ worked with the San Francisco Sheriff's Department to establish the **"No Local" Citation Project**. This project targeted homeless offenders charged with misdemeanor offenses or infraction warrants. These individuals were not eligible for release due to their homeless status. From 1991 to 1997, the "No Local" Project facilitated the release of more than 1,700 people on their "promise to appear" in court, achieving a compliance rate of 76%. Due to the project's extraordinary success, the SFSD changed their citation policies in 1997 to no longer exclude homeless individuals.

Source: CJCJ, 2012

Reentry Services

Recognizing that many individuals cycle through the criminal justice system, many jurisdictions place great emphasis on reentry services. These help to minimize probation violators returning to local custody as result of new offenses or violations. Access to community-based services is a necessary component for a successful reentry. Some jurisdictions have established reentry courts and councils to address the need for aftercare services for adult offenders. If this is not an option or remains a long-term goal, the provision of informational materials can assist individuals in the reentry process. Basic materials can include brochures, phone cards, and manuals highlighting

contact information for services such as general assistance, food pantries, and temporary housing assistance.

Deferred Prosecution Programs

Deferred prosecution programs can be managed by Pretrial Services or the District Attorney's Office. Programs established nationwide often target public inebriation, driving under the influence, drug abusers, and the mentally ill for these services. If the offender is selected for participation after meeting the program's eligibility criteria, the client will be released from jail to participate in the program. In many programs the offender must plead guilty to a deferred entry of judgment, which will be dismissed upon successful completion of the program.

San Francisco's **Back On Track** program, established in 2005, serves young adults 18 to 30-years-old for their first time felony low-level drug sale. This program that combines strict accountability with extensive community-based opportunities reports a 10% recidivism rate.

Source: Rivers & Anderson, 2009

Changing the Charging Standards

The charging unit within the District Attorney's Office often does not receive additional information about the defendant beyond the police reports. However, some district attorneys have established new procedures within the charging unit to ensure that individuals are charged with offenses that can result in a conviction beyond reasonable doubt. This procedure has the potential to reduce jail populations, as individuals may be more willing to accept plea deals resulting in reduced court time for low-level offenses.

Expediting Plea Agreements

Reducing unnecessary delays in court processing is a low cost institutional reduction option that promotes system efficiency and enhances public safety. By employing incremental procedural reforms, courts can maximize their resources to resolve cases in a timely manner without compromising due process. For example, jurisdictions can decrease court processing time for some low-level offenders by developing a process for the District Attorney and Defense Attorney to expedite plea agreements. Additionally, a special court can be constructed to address these cases once the individual has accepted the plea. Courts and jails can consider utilizing video conferencing technology to ensure the specialized court can be in session on a daily basis.

Expanded Police Diversion Programs

As a jail population management strategy, jail diversion programs must target individuals likely to be detained before trial or, if convicted, sentenced to incarceration. Limited research is available on the success of expanding police diversion programs. However, the Framingham Police Department in Massachusetts has been recognized for enhancing its diversion services through cross-training with trained clinicians. This increased understanding mental health needs has allowed police officers to more effectively divert individuals with mental health issues out of the criminal justice system through better ability to identify needs and available services.

From this menu of low-cost strategies, the collaborative partnership can assess what interventions will lead to the most significant impacts in their local jurisdiction. Using the data assessment made possible through the practitioner-researcher relationship, justice administrators can identify key decision-making points in their criminal justice systems that hold the most

potential for improving system outcomes. Then the justice administrators can implement a variety of the strategies outlined above, targeting those identified processes. In order to ensure the intervention is affecting the jail and probation population as hoped, on-going evaluation must occur. This approach is designed to ensure justice stakeholders are being effective with the available fiscal resources, while achieving the goals of public safety.

Conclusion

California is nearly one full year into implementation of the largest criminal justice reform in recent history. During this time of Realignment, practitioners will be challenged to rethink the nature of their work as they redesign the local system. This is an opportune moment for local practitioners to implement innovative strategies that cultivate sustainable restructuring of local justice systems. There are many procedural opportunities to improve local systems without the large costs associated with extensive program development or jail construction. It is imperative that county-based justice administrators control the future of their justice systems while not repeating the past mistakes at the state-level that created an ineffective structure relying on punitive practices rather than investing in self-reliant, local practices.

JAI is designed to utilize California-based expertise to implement data-driven strategies known to promote positive outcomes and cost-efficiency. This replicable approach can be effectively implemented through a practitioner and researcher partnership. Data analysis provided by California-based researchers affords counties an opportunity for critical examination and a basis for on-going examination of the local justice system. As such, JAI lays a long-term foundation for comprehensive reform that empowers local jurisdictions to best serve our dynamic state justice system.

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Please note: Each year, every county submits their data to the official statewide databases maintained by appointed governmental bodies. While every effort is made to review data for accuracy and to correct information upon revision, CJCJ cannot be responsible for data reporting errors made at the county, state, or national level.