



## **Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Minutes** **Tuesday, March 26, 2024**

**Members Present:** Dawn Baxton, Dr. Angeloe Burch, Sr., Nikki Harris, Alan Pitstick, , Ben Haas, Walter Tate, T.J. Cote, David Crispell, Quanesha Archer, Jesse Battle

**Guests:** Syreeta Hill, Aminah Thompson, Yaschia Lindsey, Irene Lawrence

**Staff:** Roshanna Parker, Robin Heath, Katie Conyers, Renee Shaw, Ontario Joyner

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair, Dawn Baxton called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Baxton asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the January 30<sup>th</sup> minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**E-Courts:** presented by Aminah Thompson, Esq., Clerk of Superior Court

Ms. Thompson reported that E-Court has been a massive undertaking for the Durham Courts. E-Courts is a package of new software applications and a technological infrastructure with improvements that will transition the court system from paper to digital. The components that are currently in effect are: CRAVE System, cameras, monitors, and e-warrants. Clients will be able to sign-in to receive updates on cases and pay fees/fines online. All attorneys will now be required to file their cases via e-file. Litigants without attorneys will be encouraged to use this system, however the clerk's office will still be available for assistance. The public will also have access to the portal (the Odyssey System) to search for information regarding various aspects of court cases. The clerk's office will continue to protect personal information by not making certain records accessible on the portal. Providing 24/7 statewide access to all judicial branch employees and enhancement of disaster recovery efforts are benefits of E-Courts.

A question was asked, will this system also apply to traffic court. Ms. Thompson replied that traffic court is included in using this system.

A question was asked if there will be fees associated for accessing this information for citizens, in particular accessing criminal record checks. Ms. Thompson replied that fees will still apply for certified documents requests.

A question was asked, what should this committee be concerned with to support Pro Se litigants who are not able to access this system. Ms. Thompson replied that just sharing instructional information with Pro Se litigants and those who do not have access to computers. These litigants will still have access to the clerk's office where assistance is still available.

A question was asked if there will be some type of public campaign where literature or brochures will be distributed. Ms. Thompson replied that it was uncertain if something like this is in place, however, feedback from the committee would be welcomed to see what that could or should look like.

**Stepping Up Initiative Update:** presented by Renee Shaw, Chairperson, Stepping Up Initiative

Renee Shaw explained that Stepping Up is a national initiative where the attempt is to reduce the number of individuals with mental health challenges in jails.

She reported that in 2019, JSD along with Durham County partners (the police department, shelters and community members) came together to discuss how individuals who are justice involved, move through the system and understand what resources are available to them by creating a 'Sequential Intercept Map'. The commissioner requested an update in 2022 which brought to light three (3) things the initiative is going to work on as follows:

1. Enhancing service capacity for those individuals with mental illnesses. The challenge is getting these individuals the service that is needed due to wait lists or lack of insurance.
2. Currently working on a forensic community support team to assist with acquiring affordable housing and how to integrate peers in each intercept.
3. Trying to establish what agencies have peer support and what that peer support has access to i.e. housing forms and assistance with purchasing work clothes.

**Familiar Faces Initiative Update:** presented by Roshana Parker, Director, JSD

Roshanna Parker reported that the Familiar Faces initiative was designed to identify individuals who have frequent contact with various systems and how to counteract this frequent interaction. The initiative consists of three (3) work groups:

1. Permanent Support of Housing Committee: most individuals in this target group are transient and/or homeless
2. Data Committee: how to share the data when people have contact with multiple systems
3. Pilot Committee: identify approximately five (5) familiar neighbors that the HEART Team and the Justice Services Department will service together

She also reported that this initiative is also meeting with other states by participating in the Familiar Faces Peer Exchange on June 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> in Orange County California.

It was discussed that the difference between NC 360 and The Familiar Faces Initiative is that this initiative is trying to minimize the red tape in accessing information regarding the individuals being served as opposed to NC 360 where multiple permissions must be acquired to grant information requests.

**Local Re-entry Council Update:** presented by Ontario Joyner, LRC Council Coordinator

Ontario Joyner reported the following updates:

- There were 36 referrals
- 48 intakes were completed since the last meeting
- Two (2) clients completed their Forklift Certification at Durham Tech

- Two (2) clients completed their Safe Serve Certification
- Nine (9) clients enrolled in GED classes at Durham Tech
- 22 clients gained employment with an average hourly salary of \$13.63
- 14 clients enrolled in JSD's Career Readiness Program
- 13 clients were placed in emergency housing; 15 clients were placed in short-term housing; 5 clients were assisted in securing permanent housing
- Currently interviewing for a Housing Case Manager
- Preparing for the Second Chance Month
- The LRC calendar of events will be made ready soon
- Finalizing the details of a career fair to be held at the Durham Public Library
- LRC will attend a Re-Entry Conference

A question was asked if there has been any collaboration with the Hayti Justice Reform Project that the county funds. Mr. Joyner replied that yes, he has meetings with this organization and is working on streamlining the referral process.

A question was asked if Hayti refers clients to LRC or does LRC refer clients to Hayti. He responded that the referrals go both ways.

**Vacant CJAC Positions:** presented by Roshana Parker, Director, JSD

Roshanna Parker reported that there are three (3) vacancies which are:

- Specialty Court Judge
- Justice Involved Individual
- Formerly Incarcerated Individual

The Specialty Court Judge application has been submitted by Judge Dorothy Hairston Mitchell and the other two (2) applications have not been submitted and are being worked on.

### **Brief Member Updates:**

Roshanna Parker requested that any partner agencies hosting events for Second Chance Month send in their information so it can be added to the JPC calendar.

### **Future Meeting Dates:**

- May 28, 2024
- July 30, 2024
- September 24, 2024
- November 26, 2024

Meeting Adjourned