

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COLLABORATIVE NETWORK:

SAFE AND SMART WAYS TO SOLVE
AMERICA'S CORRECTIONAL CHALLENGES

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DISCLAIMER

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Abstract

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN)—a network representing community corrections professionals—commissioned a position paper to explore the successes and challenges facing the community corrections field. The position paper, *Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways To Solve America's Correctional Challenges*, finds that community corrections is a critical part of the public safety system that supervises individuals under the legal authority in the community to reduce crime and victimization.

Community corrections is changing lives, reducing harm, and helping build communities, and it has strong public support. To succeed in the future, community corrections and its partners need to refocus resources on approaches that are proven to work; change laws, policies, and practices that do not work; target treatment and supervision only to those who need it; and reallocate resources appropriately. Also to succeed in the future, community corrections and its partners need to expand the capacity of the field to take on new challenges and designate resources appropriately.

CCCN comprises the leading associations representing probation, parole, pretrial, and treatment professionals around the country, including the American Probation and Parole Association, the Association of Paroling Authorities International, the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association, the International Community Corrections Association, the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, the National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies, and the National Association of Probation Executives.

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Introduction

There are 2.3 million people incarcerated in America. On the federal level, we should invest in best practices and evidence-based solutions to reduce recidivism and help ex-offenders as they return to our communities. Community corrections has an important role to play in promoting diversion and alternative sentencing models that promote public safety and prevent future generations from entering the criminal justice system.

—Senator Rob Portman (R-OH), 2014

Today, 2.3 million adults and youth are incarcerated in the United States. Prison and jail populations have increased by 500 percent over the last 40 years, rising from under a half million people behind bars, to 2.3 million people. With prisons and jails absorbing the lion's share of the \$50 billion that states spend on corrections (and the \$28 billion that local governments spend on corrections), the nation's multibillion-dollar corrections spending makes it hard for government agencies to sustain the services the nation needs.

Taxpayers are not getting the public safety outcomes they desire or deserve for this huge investment in prisons and jails: Forty-five percent of people released from prison in 1999 and 43.3% of those released in 2004 returned to prison within three years, either for committing a new crime or for violating conditions of their release. Researchers, elected officials, law enforcement personnel, and crime victims are beginning to recognize that incarceration is the least effective way to encourage long-term recidivism reduction, and it is the most expensive part of the public safety system.

While there are 2.3 million people serving sentences in adult prisons and jails and juvenile correctional facilities, incarceration isn't the only way to hold people accountable for their actions. In the community corrections system, 60,000 plus professionals are helping 5 million people connect to school, treatment, and job opportunities; repay crime victims for the harm that has come to them; and reduce overall system costs while holding people accountable for their behavior.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PLAYS A LEADING ROLE IN MANAGING PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLVING AMERICA'S MULTIBILLION-DOLLAR CORRECTIONAL CHALLENGES

Community corrections is a critical part of the public safety system that helps reduce crime and victimization by supervising people in the community who are under legal authority. Probation, parole, pretrial services, and community treatment organizations work together to match the right supervision and service to the right person at the right time. Together, these professionals work

with more than 5 million² juveniles and adults to help them break the cycle of crime and offending, saving untold human potential. Their efforts also help reduce the harm that serving time in jail or prison can have for people who can safely remain in the community, helping state and local systems reserve costly prison and jail beds for violent people.

Across the country—from Maine to California—state correctional leaders and elected officials are beginning to shift the way they think about community corrections, moving the field to the forefront of public safety work. The field is rising to the challenge, but to assume the role of managing five million juveniles and adults under its watch, community corrections will need to revamp its partnerships.

Matched with the right kind of training, research, and technology, community corrections can work with public safety partners in law enforcement and the courts and with policymakers to deliver the smart and cost-effective justice that the public needs.

When partners redirect funding, resources, and other support to community corrections, state and local systems can improve the caseload sizes for community corrections staff, which allows them to give more attention to people under supervision who need it most. Helping people at high risk of reoffending learn how to change their behavior while under supervision can be a less costly and more effective than providing these services solely as part of serving time in prison or jail.

With the right investment of public and private dollars, the Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN) can help states and local systems focus on proven approaches to change people's behavior and help save the untold human potential that is otherwise lost to the cycle of crime. CCCN—a network representing community corrections professionals—is working to help our field assume this leadership role, and CCCN wants to work with you as its partner to reduce recidivism, help taxpayers get better public safety results from community corrections, and help millions of people contribute to their communities.

THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COLLABORATIVE NETWORK

The Community Corrections Collaborative Network is a collaborative network of the leading professional associations in the field that have come together to develop and work on emerging issues facing the field. CCCN is working together on:

- *Communicating a Shared Message:* CCCN is working to develop a common message on the importance of community corrections to federal, state, and local policymakers and to the public.
- *Representing the Field:* CCCN is working to inform the development of community corrections proposals and policy at the federal, state, and local levels.

- *Prioritizing Research and Evaluation: CCCN is working to prioritize emerging areas of research from international and national operations that promote evidence-based practices and enhance the effectiveness of community corrections.*
- *Enhancing Professionalism and Sustainability in the Field: CCCN is working to develop the efficiency and sustainability of community corrections-related professional associations.*

CCCN comprises the leading associations representing nearly 90,000-plus probation, parole, pretrial, and treatment professionals around the country, including:

- ***American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)*** is an international association composed of members from the United States, Canada, and other countries actively involved with probation, parole, and community-based corrections in both adult and juvenile sectors.
- ***Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI)*** is the recognized voice for the highest professional standards of responsible parole practices.
- ***Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association (FPPOA)*** is a professional organization for federal Probation and Pretrial Services Officers. FPPOA works closely with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the Federal Judicial Center, the Bureau of Prisons, the Sentencing Commission and the Parole Commission, to promote professionalism within the federal criminal justice system.
- ***International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)*** is a membership organization dedicated to promoting community- based corrections for adults and juveniles to enhance public safety.
- ***National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)*** is the premier national membership, training, and advocacy organization for the Drug Court model, representing over 31,000 multi-disciplinary justice professionals and community leaders. NADCP hosts the largest annual training conference on drugs and crime in the nation and provides 130 training and technical assistance events each year through its professional service branches, the National Drug Court Institute, the National Center for DWI Courts and Justice for Vets: The National Veterans Treatment Court Clearinghouse.
- ***National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE)*** is dedicated to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness in the field of probation by creating a national network for probation executives, bringing about positive change in the field, and making available a pool of experts in probation management, program development, training, and research.
- ***National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies (NAPSA)*** is the national professional association for the pretrial release and pretrial diversion fields.

THE PARADIGM SHIFT CCCN WANTS TO SEE IN THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FIELD AND IN THE PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM.

The community corrections field wants to deliver an excellent public service for our clients and our communities. We want to take advantage of the new opportunities in front of us to advance a paradigm shift in how we do our business, and how our work fits with the overall public safety and human services approach to meeting the needs of our clients, and our communities. The paradigm shift CCCN wants will require:

- **Shifting the system to risk and need approach:** Shifting from a system that bases decisions solely on a defendant or offender's charges to a system that considers the individual's risk level and treatment needs to determine sanctions, supervision level, and intervention;
- **Incentivizing behavior change:** Moving from a system that punishes individuals for behavior to one that offers incentives for behavioral change, and holds individuals accountable;
- **Reducing reliance on monetary barriers to release:** Shifting from a pretrial process that is "cash-based" to one that is risk-based;
- **Limiting the use of incarceration:** Creating a new awareness that incarceration needs to be used strategically, and that community corrections plays a key role in helping the system manage the most expensive response to behavior. Community corrections represent alternatives to incarceration that can effectively hold them accountable while also protecting the public;
- **Keeping more people in the community whenever possible:** Generating greater understanding that individuals who can be safely supervised in the community are more capable of supporting themselves and their family when their employment and schooling are not disrupted, thereby reducing taxpayer expenses;
- **Expanding the role of victims:** Expanding the recognition that victims are an integral part of the justice process and that their involvement throughout the process is necessary;
- **Reducing bias, and increasing fairness:** Reducing institutional bias and ensuring that individuals receive fair and equal access to the justice system; and that includes equal opportunities for diversion and alternatives to incarceration;
- **Expanding opportunities for diversion:** Shifting from a system that limits diversion to a system that carefully assesses a defendant and offender's amenability and qualifications for diversion, and offers diversion opportunities from the point of arrest;
- **Focusing the system what is proven to work:** Securing a commitment from all parts of the criminal justice system that replaces a punitive approach to justice with a science-based approach will yield better outcomes and will reduce the number of future crime victims.



Chapter 1

The Five Core Domains of Community Corrections: Probation, Parole, Pretrial Services, Diversion Programs, and Community Treatment

Community corrections professionals supervise and serve young people, adults, and their families through two distinct systems: the juvenile justice system and the adult justice system. It comprises five core domains, including probation, parole, pretrial services, community treatment, and diversion programs.

PROBATION

While there are 2.2 million adults¹ in prison and jail, the largest number of people in the correctional system, about 4 million, are sentenced to probation. Probationers follow certain conditions set forth by the court, such as to find, get, and keep a job; get treatment; make restitution to victims; and stay free of crime. Probationers are often under the supervision of a probation officer. If they do not meet the conditions of the courts, a sworn officer can mandate changes in their behavior through the use of a series of swift and certain sanctions, including restrictions on where they can be in the community, mandatory attendance at programs, and incarceration when appropriate.

¹Correction population statistics are from. Glaze, L.E. (2011). Correctional Population in the United States. 2010. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

PAROLE

Over 800,000 people in the correctional system are on parole. When people serve a sentence in prison, they may be under supervised release before the completion of their sentence. Similar to people on probation, people on parole must follow conditions, such as getting or keeping a job, completing treatment, and paying restitution to crime victims. People on parole are often under the supervision of a sworn parole officer who can enforce the terms of parole by responding to someone's behavior with swift and certain responses that can include community service, mandatory treatment, and reincarceration when appropriate.

PRETRIAL SERVICES

Nearly 12 million people cycle through a jail every year. Pretrial services are community corrections programs that help guide judges and the courts in making decisions about whether someone can be safely monitored in the community while his or her case is being resolved. High-functioning pretrial systems use validated risk assessment instruments to aid the courts in making release-or-detain decisions, as well as selecting appropriate supervision conditions to mitigate risks should a person be released pretrial. With more than 60% of the nearly 750,000 people in jail on any given day in a pretrial status, pretrial services can help communities manage jail populations while maintaining public safety and the integrity of the judicial process. Probation departments, nonprofits, or other system stakeholders may run pretrial service programs.

COMMUNITY TREATMENT

Probation, parole, and pretrial services programs partner with community treatment organizations to deliver services to people when they are under criminal justice custody but in the community. Government agencies, nonprofits, and community organizations provide treatment, job training, skill building, community service opportunities, and victim restitution programs that help people pay back their crime victims, as well as help people find and keep housing. Nonprofits and community organizations play a key role in building on the strengths of families and communities to help individuals correct their behavior. Along with the service they provide to individuals under supervision in the community, treatment providers help probation, parole, pretrial services, and other justice system partners keep another set of eyes on individuals under custody. People can receive treatment in both residential and non-residential settings.

DIVERSION PROGRAMS

Diversion programs can provide the courts with alternatives to incarceration if those who are eligible agree to take part in treatment, services, and various conditions set by judges.

Law enforcement and the courts can divert individuals to community corrections prior to their arrest, after their arrest, or after they agree to plea to conviction. Specialty courts, like drug courts, veterans courts, and mental health courts represent ways that individuals can see their case resolved without necessarily facing the collateral consequences that occur in the traditional court system. Nonprofit and community-based organizations play a key role in developing a continuum of services and treatment for individuals who agree to complete a diversion programs.



Chapter 2

For many offenders, the research shows that correctional intervention is analogous to treating a patient: too little intervention and the patient receives little or no benefit; too much, and the treatment is ineffective or even harmful. Given this, we postulate that the length of supervision should depend on how long it takes an offender to achieve the dosage target—the type and amount of intervention that research tells us he or she needs in order to maximize the potential for behavior change and that is necessary in order to minimize risk to the public—rather than a fixed term of supervision.

**—excerpt from *Dosage Probation: Rethinking the Structure of Probation Sentences*,
Center for Effective Public Policy, 2014**

Reducing Reoffending, Recidivism, and Victimization in Your Community: Targeting Risk, Need, and Responsivity of the People We Supervise

CCCN's approach to public safety involves developing an individualized plan for each client backed up by scientific tools that allow professionals to target the risk, need, and responsivity of individuals under their custody. Community corrections uses assessment tools to get the right supervision and treatment to the right people at the right time in the most cost-effective way.

Risk assessments are scientifically developed tools used to identify the key factors that might lead to reoffending or flight. They are based on serving thousands of individuals over time and seeing what factors relate to offending, such as a long history of serious offending or a history of drug abuse and crimes to support an addiction. These tools help professionals tailor individualized

supervision approaches and treatment plans that are likely to change an individual's behavior. They can:

- Target supervision and services to those people who require the most help.
- Develop cost-effective responses for those who need less from the system.
- Identify which people are at high risk of reoffending and watch them more closely.

When community corrections can target resources based on a person's measured risk to reoffend, identify that person's treatment needs, and match both to his or her motivation and responsivity to learn better skills, the field can reduce reoffending by as much as 16%.³

RISK, NEED, AND RESPONSIVITY

- ***Individualized Responses That Reduce Offending in a Cost-Effective Way***

Assessment tools can help differentiate between people at high risk of reoffending, who need the highest level of services from the public safety system, and people at low risk, who need fewer services.

- ***Highest Risk, Highest Need—Intensive Supervision Combined with Treatment***

When combined with treatment, intensive supervision of individuals on probation and parole can reduce reoffending by 10% and can cost as little as \$7,000 per individual served.⁴

- ***Less Risk and More Need—Functional Family Probation***

Juvenile probation combined with treatment and services under the Functional Family Probation Therapy model is a form of supervision that engages the family and community in young people's rehabilitation. It can cost less than \$2,500 per individual and reduce juvenile reoffending by 15%.⁵

- ***Less Risk and Moderate Need—Drug Treatment in the Community***

Drug treatment in the community can cost as little as \$600 per individual and can reduce reoffending by 9%.⁶ Outpatient treatment for people with addiction challenges means they can work, pay restitution and taxes, play a role in families, and contribute to the community while under the supervision of a parole, probation, or pretrial system.

- ***Lowest Risk, Lowest Need—Pretrial Release on Recognizance with Court Reminder Program***

People ranked at the lowest risk to flee or be rearrested while on pretrial can be released on recognizance or commitment to return to court for trial without posting money. They can comply with a single condition of release—to return to court—by being reminded of their court date, much like people are reminded of doctor or hair appointments. Court reminders can be calls by an automated service, staff, or volunteers; post cards or letters; or, as some jurisdictions have begun to test, text messages and emails. They can cost as little as \$1.50 per person (if using postcards – automated systems may be even less), allowing courts and justice systems to focus more time, energy, money, and staff on individuals who have greater needs and are at higher risk to miss court. Also, research shows that court reminders are cost-effective not only with defendants, but with people who have court hearings, such as sentencing hearings and probation reviews, as well.⁷



Chapter 3

Community Corrections: Changing Lives, Reducing Harm, and Helping To Build Your Community

The “risk principle” that defines the community corrections approach to public safety says that when the criminal justice system pushes into prisons and jails people who could be safely supervised and held accountable in the community, the system can do more harm than good.

People who have spent time in prison and/or jail have a harder time getting a job, earn less, have trouble returning or connecting to school, and may have seen health problems worsen. Children of incarcerated parents will be more likely to be in the foster care system and more likely to engage in criminal behavior. While the cost of prisons affects all taxpayers, overreliance on incarceration has a concentrated effect among communities of color: The fact that two-thirds of those in prison and jail are African American or Latino means that the harm that comes with incarceration has a bigger effect in these communities.⁸

There will always be some individuals who need to be in prison or jail for a period of time to keep the community safe, but public safety is not enhanced when nonviolent individuals lose community connections to family, work, school, and housing as a result of incarceration. People under the supervision of the community corrections agencies can stay employed, pay taxes and participate in local economies, remain parents and be involved in their families, pay their child support, and earn funds to pay restitution to crime victims.

Particularly among young people, incarceration in either pretrial detention or a commitment to a juvenile facility can increase the likelihood that they will reoffend. Since many young people will engage in some form of youthful misbehavior or delinquency before their twenties, community corrections offers the opportunity for youth to avoid lifelong offending by keeping them connected to their parents and school and involved in the developmental activities all kids need to transition to adulthood.⁹



Chapter 4

A perfect storm may be coming together that will push community corrections into a more central role in how the corrections system will manage its resources and overall approach. The combination of tighter state budgets, a growing awareness that prison and jail are not the answer for everyone, a growing body of research on what works to change people's behavior, and the need to prepare for the return of 95% of state prisoners is leading to policy changes. From California to New York and from Texas to South Dakota, community corrections systems are assuming new responsibilities for the custody and treatment of tens of thousands of adults and youth who were once in prisons, jails, or juvenile facilities. These states are showing that community corrections can deliver a much more cost-effective public safety service and reduce crime and victimization at less cost than incarceration.¹⁰

CALIFORNIA

Responsibility for Adult and Juvenile Corrections Transferred to Community Corrections.

Over the past decade, California transferred responsibility for the supervision, treatment, and detention of tens of thousands of adults who were once under the custody of the state to the counties. California also transferred responsibility for the supervision of juveniles from the state Division of Juvenile Justice to county juvenile probation departments.

COLORADO

Overhaul of Bail Statute. In 2013, Colorado passed a law replacing outdated, schedule-based money bail practices with a risk-based scheme to enhance both public safety and defendants' appearance

in court. The state supported county pretrial programs in this change so that more people can remain in their community. The new law takes advantage of new resources in Colorado such as a statewide pretrial risk assessment tool and Colorado research showing that secured forms of money bonds lead to increased jail costs to taxpayers but without any gain in public safety or defendants' court appearance.

GEORGIA

Keeping more youth in the community. In 2013, Georgia made several changes to its juvenile justice system that increased reliance on community corrections. Such changes included expanding the use of alternatives to incarceration for youth who have committed status offenses or who are classified as low-to-medium risk, thereby increasing emphasis on risk assessment. Georgia established an incentive grant program of \$5 million state dollars to start in fiscal year 2014 (with an additional \$1 million dollars in federal aid) to help develop community corrections options for youth. The reforms also included a reclassification of several offenses so they would carry shorter terms of incarceration for young people.

KANSAS

Early Discharge from Probation. In 2013, Kansas lawmakers authorized early discharge from probation for individuals meeting certain requirements, including whether they were assessed to be at low risk to reoffend assessed as having few needs, paid all restitution obligations, complied with probation supervision for twelve months, and met other eligibility requirements.

KENTUCKY

Pretrial, Sentencing and Community Corrections. In 2011, Kentucky engaged in comprehensive reforms to corrections, sentencing and community corrections. House Bill 463 included a series of pretrial reforms, including the mandatory use of a research-based, validated risk assessment tool to drive release decisions, pretrial release for presumptive probation drug offenders, and statutory assurance of "own recognizance" bond for low or medium risk defendants. Reforms of drug statutes means more people convicted of drug possession will receive supervision and treatment rather than incarceration, and sentencing enhancements for low level drug offenses were reduced. Probation, parole and post-incarceration supervision were improved by relying on research-based validated risk and needs assessments, and the development of graduated sanctions to reduce revocations and reincarceration. Instead of a "flat" release, mandatory parole will exist for most individuals who have six months remaining on their sentence (with other changes to improve parole for people convicted of more serious offenses).

NEW YORK

"Close to Home" Community Corrections for City Juveniles and Drug-Involved Adults. In 2012, New York State Office of Children and Family Services Division of Juvenile Justice and the New York City Department of Probation recently developed a new partnership called Close to Home, where young people who used to be sent to state facilities will now be under the supervision of the city probation department. The state of New York also recently changed its drug sentencing laws and revamped treatment programs for drug-involved offenders over the past decade, so more offenders could be paroled sooner, receive supervision in the community, and get treatment.

MICHIGAN

Drug Sentencing Laws Eased, Community Corrections Options Added

Over the last decade, Michigan revised its mandatory minimum sentencing laws that kept people in prison for long sentences, and instead gave judges more discretion to reduce the length of time someone is in prison. Michigan also restructured its sentencing system so that more people could be referred to community corrections, and it increased state support for local reentry services for individuals on parole who need community treatment.

OREGON

Earned released from Prison and Community Supervision, and Increased Opportunities to Keep People in their Communities. As part of a multi-faceted 2013 public safety reform legislation, Oregon lawmakers increased the opportunity for individuals to earn early release from prison, and to earn their release from community supervision under certain conditions. The legislation also shortened the presumptive sentence for certain offenses, allows judges to sentence individuals to probation instead of prison for certain drug offenses, and allows judges to impose a downward departure from mandatory minimum sentences for certain drug trafficking offenses. Some funds were reallocated from the state to county community supervision departments to support the change.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Changes to Sentencing, and Modifying Probation and Parole Policies. In 2013, lawmakers allowed for presumptive probation for certain nonviolent felonies, limiting punishment to community supervision unless a court determines aggravating circumstances pose a risk to public safety, and allowed for more opportunities for people on supervision to earn their way to an early discharge. The law and related policy change approach was designed to allow probation and parole officers to focus on those individuals assessed to have higher-risk and higher needs, and reduce their focus on low-risk individuals where appropriate.

TEXAS

Reduced Prison Admissions by Shifting to Community Corrections

In 2011, Texas passed a law that said that if probation departments or other local agencies submitted a plan to the state to reduce the number of people sent to state prison, they could receive state funds to supervise, serve, and treat that person. The change was designed to support local, county-run probation departments and to reduce prison admissions and probation revocations.

Along with California, Michigan, Texas, and New York, in the past four years, Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Ohio, and South Carolina have enacted legislation that creates the opportunity for community corrections agencies to supervise more people in the community who were once in jail or prison.¹¹



Chapter 5

Community corrections professionals are on the front line for victims and survivors of crime whose offenders are being supervised in the community. They play a vital role in helping to ensure that victims are kept informed and safe, and that offenders pay their legal/financial obligations, including victim restitution. Important partnerships have emerged over the past two decades that unite victim assistance and community corrections professionals in efforts to together promote individual and community safety.

—Anne Seymour, National Crime Victim Advocate, 2014

Community Corrections Has Strong Public Support

The public supports a strong community corrections system that promotes public safety, holds people accountable, helps them get a job, helps them get treatment, pays back crime victims, and responds to offending in a swift and certain fashion.

Recent national opinion polls¹ have shown that the public:

- *Supports the community corrections approach to public safety.* More than 9 out of 10 (95%) of those polled support the most effective community corrections approaches to public safety, including approaches that use technology to monitor people's whereabouts and

requirements that people keep a job and perform community service.¹² When asked to rate terms used to describe a revised focus in the public safety system, about 6 out of 10 supported community corrections approaches such as intensive supervision (60%), alternatives to incarceration (60%), and swift and certain sanctions (58%). In a state whose criminal justice system was promoted for being “Texas Tough,” 7 out of 10 of those polled in 2013 say that probation and treatment were more effective for individuals than incarceration and other responses. More than 7 out of 10 of those polled in Texas say that individuals convicted of drug offenses should be sent to treatment and probation instead of prison. The public has a higher favorability rating of probation and parole in the criminal justice system compared with the American prison system.¹³

- *Sees risk assessments as effective ways to prevent crime, prevent flight, and ensure appearance at trial.* About three-quarters of those polled say that risk assessments are an effective way to protect the public (75%), prevent flight, and ensure appearance at trial (73%).¹⁴
- *Supports reinvesting current prison spending in community corrections.* More than half of those polled believe that America spends too much money on prisons. Nearly 9 out of 10 (87%) of those polled support reinvesting prison savings in community corrections by reducing incarceration for low-risk offenders, and 9 out of 10 (90%) support reducing the length of a prison sentence for certain low-risk, nonviolent offenders.¹⁵
- *Supports community corrections approaches that engage families in supervision and treatment of youth.* Nine out of 10 of those polled support community corrections approaches in juvenile justice that develop treatment and supervision plans that include a young person’s family. Nearly 8 out of 10 (79%) support requirements that youth be placed in facilities close to their families and communities.¹⁶
- *Supports community corrections approaches for youth that emphasize treatment and prevention instead of incarceration and punishment.* Three-quarters (75%) of those polled support a juvenile justice approach that relies more on prevention and rehabilitation than on punishment and incarceration. Eight out of 10 of those polled support expanding the use of incentives to follow rules, complete treatment, and stay involved in education as a way to help incarcerated individuals leave prison early. Eight of 10 of those polled think that criminal justice systems should provide non-prison alternatives, such as drug treatment, community service, or probation for drug and other victimless, nonviolent offenses.¹⁷
- *Supports community corrections approaches among crime victims.* When Iowa burglary victims were surveyed in the 1997 Iowa Crime Survey about their attitudes toward what punishments they preferred, they voiced stronger support for community corrections approaches—such as community service (75.7 %), regular probation (68.6%), treatment and rehabilitation (53.5%), and intensive probation (43.7%). Support among surveyed burglary victims for a short jail term (41.4%) and a prison sentence for more than a year (7.1%) received much less support.



Chapter 6

Community corrections agencies that incorporate practices supported by good research, are adequately resourced in staff and services, and enjoy the understanding and support of the courts and policymakers have the potential to achieve great results. ...These results, however, are only possible with adequate planning and resources.

**—The Potential of Community Corrections to Improve
Community Safety and Reduce Incarceration,
Vera Institute of Justice, 2013**

Helping To Solve the Nation's Public Safety and Correctional Challenges

Community corrections systems are already playing a critical role in solving America's public safety and correctional challenges. The community corrections professionals represented by the Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN) are helping millions of people leave crime and reoffending behind them, get the treatment they need, get or keep a job, stay in school or complete the training they need, and pay back their victims and the community.

Right now, community corrections professionals are helping state and local policymakers reduce spending on prisons and jails. The field is assessing, supervising, serving, treating, and holding people accountable for their actions in the community, freeing up scarce and costly prison and jail beds for violent individuals, and reducing the harm that deeper system involvement can have for some people.

The field is rising to the challenge put before us by our partners in public safety. But to assume an ever more critical role in driving correctional practices and managing public safety spending, CCCN believes that *community corrections* will need to work with *its partners* to improve how it does business so that the community corrections field can continue to deliver these results. 20

WHAT COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS NEEDS TO DO

- Embrace evidence-based practices as a “foundation” to improve community corrections work.
- Target research to identify what works.
- Target treatment and supervision only to those with assessed need.
- Embrace technology so the field can manage people effectively.
- Support workforce development, training, and skill building.
- Receive appropriate financial resources to support growing responsibilities.

WHAT COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PARTNERS NEED TO DO

- Revise laws, policies, and practices, such as sentencing and reliance on treatment for lower-risk, lower-need individuals so that they align with known risk reduction interventions.
- Partner with community corrections agencies to plan overall public safety approaches.
- Provide appropriate financial resources to community corrections organizations and programs.



Chapter 7

What Community Corrections Needs from the Field and Its Partners To Meet the Public Safety and Corrections Challenges

REFOCUSING RESOURCES ON APPROACHES THAT ARE PROVEN TO WORK AND CHANGING LAWS, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES THAT DO NOT WORK

Until recently, many prison and juvenile justice systems used Scared Straight programs, where older prisoners would lecture youth on what would happen if they get into trouble. The theory was that “tough talk” would cut juvenile crime. In 2011, however, high-level U.S. Department of Justice officials said of Scared Straight that “the research tells us otherwise: ‘[S]cared [S]traight’ is not only ineffective but is potentially harmful. In light of this evidence, the U.S. Department of Justice discourages the funding of [S]cared [S]traight-type programs.¹⁸”

Just as the field is moving away from Scared Straight-type programs, community corrections must reduce our reliance on approaches that do not work (or that are harmful) and focus on using approaches that are proven to work. To refocus successfully on what works and what does not work to change people’s behavior, community corrections needs its partners to join this shift.

Two key ways to shift the correctional system from practices that do not work are to:

1. *Adopt evidence-based practice as the foundation of the community corrections profession.* Many parole, probation, and pretrial service agencies are working with partners in the

treatment community to question at every opportunity what approaches to continue or enhance because they work and what approaches to stop doing because they do not work. For community corrections, this means developing continuous quality assurance systems that study what staff are doing, continually evaluate staff effectiveness, and target limited resources on a cost-effective basis. Rather than rely on one program, community corrections must rely on an approach and a continual process that enhances and improves its practices to get the best outcomes with the resources it has.

2. *Revise laws, policies, and practices that do not work or that do more harm than good.* Along with a range of other options, probation, parole, and pretrial systems will still use incarceration to hold people who have broken laws accountable and protect the public. The system is spending huge amounts of money on currently incarcerated individuals but receives virtually no public safety benefit from incarcerating them.¹⁹ If the system were redesigned to allow community corrections the opportunity to supervise those who otherwise could be safely managed in the community, taxpayers could save billions of dollars and the field could achieve desired outcomes. The community corrections field needs to work with its partners to revise laws, policies, and practices to allow systems to use risk assessments to guide their decisions about how to use the most expensive correctional resources.

TARGET TREATMENT AND SUPERVISION ONLY TO THOSE WHO NEED IT, AND REALLOCATE RESOURCES APPROPRIATELY

We all want to live in housing that is maintained and repaired, and we all want access to health care professionals who can keep us healthy. But you don't use a hammer to fix everything in home, and don't go to the emergency room for every medical issue. Justice systems should not, then, also use expensive and criminogenic (crime sustaining) tools like incarceration to respond to every law violation.

Based on the community corrections approach to analyze the risk, needs, and responsivity of people under supervision, as well as the field's reliance on evidence and quality assurance to improve our practices, we know that some individuals require minimal to no treatment and/or minimal supervision. When the system pushes people into treatment or supervision that they do not need, at best the system wastes scarce resources on individuals who do not need them, and at worst the system increases the chances that someone will reoffend and causes needless harm.

The community corrections field continually needs to revise its approach to the population it serves based on evidence, so that corrections can target the right supervision and treatment to the right individuals for the right period of time and help change their behavior. Community corrections needs to work with its partners to ensure that all stakeholders share a common understanding of the benefits of tailoring individualized treatment and supervision, and a common understanding about which individuals are low risk and low needs so corrections can serve them with the most minimal, cost-effective approaches. As part of ways to solve local public safety challenges, community corrections and its partners need to be part of collaborative processes that look at the whole system's needs, and partners must work together to target collective efforts in ways that meet common goals.

The rapidly growing number of people placed each year on probation, parole, and pretrial supervision pushes the caseloads of many community supervision agencies far beyond their capacity. In an effort to cope with increasing caseloads and shrinking resources, agencies are seeking innovative solutions that use technology while maintaining effective and safe supervision.

**—The Potential of Community Corrections to Improve
Community Safety and Reduce Incarceration,
Vera Institute of Justice, 2013**

EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS TO TAKE ON NEW CHALLENGES

From California to New York and from Texas to Michigan, probation, parole, pretrial services, and community treatment providers are rising to the challenges of serving whole new populations of people who were once in prison and jail but are now back in the community.

To rise to the much larger challenge of helping corrections and taxpayers solve the billion-dollar corrections spending challenge, the criminal justice field must help build the capacity of the community corrections profession and organizations so that it can continue to ensure the strong public safety outcomes that the public deserves and desires. New technologies offer the opportunity for community corrections to serve individuals more effectively and to speed up the sharing of information with public safety partners so that staff can monitor their clients in real time and target supervision and services to the right people and to the appropriate parts of communities. New technologies have huge potential for community corrections and the public safety field, but they also have significant implications for workforce development, skills, training, and staff development: Use of technology and technological innovations need to be examined through a cost-benefit lens (e.g., if a \$10 process or innovation can save \$100, the \$10 expenditure needs to be prioritized), and lawmakers may need to prioritize some statutory changes.

How does technology have the potential to transform the community corrections field?

- **Kiosk reporting:** Kiosk reporting systems are a strategy for low-risk offenders that can shorten case processing time, reduce the expense of data collection, and allow systems to reallocate resources to serve others who are objectively assessed to need more from the system. Kiosks are automated machines through which individuals can report to supervising officers. Once clients enter a password or other identifier, they can update their information, receive messages from their supervising officers, be assigned to drug testing, or ask questions about the conditions of their supervision. Kiosks can also allow clients flexibility in reporting times if they are in school or working, preventing interruptions in what may be activities that support successful reentry. More modern versions of kiosk reporting involve clients reporting in on their home phone, with voice recognition software able to analyze and confirm responses.

- **Global positioning system (GPS) monitoring:** With improvements in mobile phones and satellite technologies, community corrections departments can now track electronically where individuals are—whether they are at work, at school, at home, or somewhere that breaks the terms of their court obligations. This technology means that a department can be alerted when individuals under supervision are somewhere they are not supposed to be. Parole and probation officers can then respond appropriately with a warning, a sanction, or an arrest, depending on the risk level of the individuals and other factors. When individuals show that they can meet the terms of court obligations, they may graduate from having to use the GPS. In this way, GPS holds the promise of allowing the criminal justice system to realign resources to focus more attention on those who need it at the time that they need it.
- **Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS).** Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS) seeks to reform the relationship between probation and parole officers (or case managers) and the people they serve. A key technological innovation includes the recording of sessions between officers and their clients: These sessions are analyzed by a coach, who then works one-on-one with the officer to improve how he or she works with clients. When EPICS-trained supervision agents have access to modern mobile devices, laptops, and tablets, they can be in the field more often—something critical when working with young people to engage their families, schools, and the world at large in community supervision.

To maximize public safety dollars, the field needs to make better and more appropriate use of electronic monitoring, computers, telecommunication devices, and information systems. Serving higher risk individuals means that community corrections has to adopt different approaches, requiring that the field train its staff on the best ways to change people's behavior.

DESIGNATE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES TO COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Ongoing state budget deficits and decades of prison population growth mean that state policymakers are likely to continue to focus attention on ways that community corrections can help policymakers safely reduce reliance on prison, jails, and juvenile facilities. The Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN) agrees that community corrections approaches are some of the best antidotes the public safety system has to avoid future costs associated with prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities. If changes are not made to corrections, the rising costs of prisons and jails will continue to burden taxpayers and reduce the resources available to solve this problem. Community corrections systems are responsible for changing the behavior of seven out of ten individuals under correctional supervision,²⁰ but more than seven out of ten correctional dollars is spent on institutions. One survey of the multi-billion dollar increase in corrections spending over the last 25 years in eight states found that 88% of additional corrections spending since the early 1980s has gone to prisons.²¹

For community corrections to help the system successfully save money and improve public safety, our partners will need to do more than simply flood the system with additional justice-involved individuals. If what the system wants from corrections is “punishment,” then prison is an appropriate place to send an individual for a long time. If what the system wants is a smart, fair, just and cost-effective way of changing someone's behavior, then jurisdictions will need to resource

community corrections appropriately, provide treatment and capacity building, procure new technology, and develop the workforce to meet new demands of the system. Community corrections approaches can be delivered in a more cost-effective way than a sentence to prison or jail for many individuals, but the criminal justice system must enhance its infrastructure to deliver the public safety services and provide the treatments that individuals need.

Community corrections and its partners must ensure that community corrections receives designated funding to enhance the infrastructure that gets criminal justice systems the results they want and that the public deserves. Policymakers should consider developing block-grant opportunities for states to address prison overcrowding and implementing evidence-informed practices in community corrections. When someone is in prison or jail, generally, the corrections department funded by that community pays the full cost of treatment. Once individuals are in community corrections systems, it is possible to pay for their treatment through other funding streams that allow levels of government to share the costs of mental health and drug treatment, further reducing the burden on taxpayers in that community.

With the right resources, the community corrections field is ready to help the system reduce correctional costs, supervise people in the community in a way that curbs reoffending, reduce harm, and help people leave offending behind them as they contribute to their communities.

Endnotes

- 1 According to the U.S. Justice Department, states spent \$47.8 billion on corrections in 2009 and all local government (counties, municipalities, and cities) spent \$27.5 billion on corrections. Kyckelhahn, T. (2012). *Justice expenditure and employment extracts 2009*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- 2 Glaze, L., & Parks, E. (2012). *Correctional populations in the United States, 2011*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- 3 Drake, E.K. (2011). "What works" in community supervision: Interim report (Document No. 11-12-1201). Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Aos, S., Miller, M., & Drake, E. (2006). *Evidence-based public policy options to reduce future prison construction, criminal justice costs, and crime rates*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- 6 Ibid
- 7 American Bar Association. (2007). *ABA standards for criminal justice. Pretrial release* 3rd ed.. Washington, DC: American Bar Association; VanNostrand, M., Rose, K., & Weibrecht, K. (2011). *State of the science of pretrial release recommendations and supervision*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Justice Department; Tomkins, A. Bronstein, B., Herian, M., Rosenbaum, D., & Neeley, E. (2012). "An experiment in the law: Studying a technique to reduce failure to appear in court," *The Journal of the American Judges Association*, 48 (3) Petteruti, A., & Walsh, N. (2008). *Jailing communities*. Washington, DC: The Justice Policy Institute.
- 8 Mendel, D. (2011). *No place for kids*. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation,.
- 9 Greene, J. (2010). *Downscaling prisons: lessons from four states*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.
- 10 Shames, A., & Rahdert, *Performance incentive funding: Aligning fiscal and operational responsibility to produce more safety at less cost*. New York, NY: Vera Institute for Justice.
- 11 Ninety-five percent of those polled favored "[a]n effective probation and parole system [that] would use new technologies to monitor where offenders are and what they are doing, require them to pass drug tests, and require they either keep a job or perform community service." The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2011). *Key findings from a national survey of 1,200 registered voters conducted March 7–14, 2010*. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.

- 13 “Respondents were asked to rate a series of terms used to describe a revised focus in our public safety system.” The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2011). *Key findings from a national survey of 1,200 registered voters conducted March 7–14, 2010.*, Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.
- 14 Those polled said risk assessments were effective at preventing flight, ensuring appearance at trial, and protecting community safety based on these questions: “And how effective do you think risk assessment would be when it comes to protecting community safety? Do you think it would be very effective, somewhat effective, a little effective, or not effective at all?”; “And how effective do you think risk assessment would be when it comes to preventing flight and ensuring appearance at trial? Do you think it would be very effective, somewhat effective, a little effective, or not effective at all?” From National Association of Counties. (2012). *Communicating the need for pretrial justice reform.* Washington, DC: National Association of Counties.
- 15 Eight-seven percent of those polled favored or strongly favored “reduc[ing] prison time for low- risk, non-violent offenders and re-invest[ing] some of the savings to create a stronger probation and parole system that holds offenders accountable for their crimes.” Ninety percent of those polled favored or strongly favored “[a]llow[ing] inmates convicted of non-violent crimes to be released up to 6 months early if they have committed a non-violent offense, have behaved well in prison, and, based on an evaluation, are considered a low risk for committing another crime.” The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2011). *Key findings from a national survey of 1,200 registered voters conducted March 7–14, 2010.* Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.
- 16 Support was measured by the following question: “Next you will read some proposals that have been made to reform the juvenile justice system. For each, please indicate whether you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose that proposal: Design treatment and rehabilitation plans that include a youth’s family in planning and services (91%); Require that youth offenders be placed in facilities close to their families and communities (79%). Citizen Opinion and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. (2011). *Advancing juvenile justice reform: A research-based message strategy.* Washington, DC: Citizen Opinion and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner.

- 17 Support for the concept was measured by the question, “Compared to the way things are now, when it comes to the juvenile justice system, do you think there should be more focus on punishment and incarceration or more focus on prevention and rehabilitation?” Citizen Opinion and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. (2011). *Advancing juvenile justice reform: A research- based message strategy*. Washington, DC: Citizen Opinion and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner.
- 18 Robinson, L., & Slowikowski, J. (2011, January 31). Scary -- and ineffective. *The Baltimore Sun*, pp. A25.
- 19 “A recent study found that non-violent offenders in a number of states could have served prison terms between 3 months and 2 years shorter with little or no public safety consequences: 14 percent of all offenders released in Florida, 18 percent in Maryland, and 24 percent in Michigan. The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2012). *Time served: The high cost, low return of longer prison terms*. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.
- 20 Glaze, L., & Parks, E. (2012). *Correctional populations in the United States, 2011*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- 21 “States spent about three-quarters of the corrections budget on correctional institutions.” Kyckelhahn, T. (2012). In FY2008, 34 states spent \$18.65 billion on prisons but just \$2.52 billion on probation and parole, a ratio of more than seven to one. Viewed over time, the spending gap looks just as substantial. For eight geographically diverse states that were able to provide data for the past 25 years, 88% of the increase in corrections spending was directed toward prisons, which now consume nearly nine out of every ten state corrections dollars. The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2009) *One in 31: The long reach of american corrections*. Washington, D.C: The Pew Charitable Trusts, Pew Center on the States.
- 22 California saw more than \$100 million transferred from the state to community corrections through SB 678. Ohio saw \$5 million allocated per year under HB 86 to community corrections, with additional funds for technological innovations, probation improvements, and other incentives. Kansas and Illinois saw \$4 million or less appropriated for community corrections. Texas’ SB1055—while passing unanimously in the legislature—has not been implemented because there was no budgetary provision to implement it. Shames, A., & Rahdert, L. (2012). *Performance incentive funding: Aligning fiscal and operational responsibility to produce more safety at less cost*. New York, NY: Vera Institute for Justice.

