



**LEBANON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY
BOARD
(LCCJAB)
STRATEGIC PLAN for
2022-2023**



Adopted by the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board

December 7, 2021

The ongoing mission of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of the local criminal justice system, and by means of communication, cooperation, and collaboration, enhance and improve the system and services in the most effective, efficient, and cost-effective manner possible.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEBANON COUNTY CJAB

The Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board consists of 17 Core Members and two non-voting members. The position of Offender Reentry Coordinator remains unfilled at this time.

Ms. Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney, CJAB Chair

Ms. Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator, CJAB Vice Chair

Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge, Court of Common Pleas

Mr. Brian L. Deiderick, Chief Public Defender

Ms. Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator

Mr. Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator

Mr. Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner

Ms. Audrey Fortna, Director of Probation Services

Mr. Bruce Klingler, Sheriff

Ms. Tina Litz, Warden, Lebanon County Correctional Facility

Ms. Erin Moyer, Director of Children and Youth Services

Mr. Jonathan Hess, Lebanon County Chiefs of Police Representative

Mr. James Donmoyer, Director, Commission on Drug & Alcohol Abuse

Mr. Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations

Ms. Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach

Ms. LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Intervention

Mr. John P. Shott, CJAB Planner*

Ms. Kimberly Mackey, PCCD Regional Representative*

(Non-voting member)*

A Brief History of CJAB in Lebanon County

The County of Lebanon applied for and received a grant from the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) in late 2006 to begin the process of establishing a Criminal Justice Advisory Board comprised of key court and county officials involved in the criminal justice system. This funding was part of a key initiative by PCCD to provide an incentive for counties to establish such advisory boards for the purpose of improving and enhancing collaborative efforts.

The Lebanon County Commissioners hired a Criminal Justice Advisory Board Planner/Grant Coordinator in 2007 to assist in the formation of the Board and to carry out day-to-day operations. The first formal meeting of the Board took place on October 16, 2007, at which time those in attendance discussed the Board's Core Membership and reviewed a set of proposed bylaws. ***The members ratified the CJAB's Bylaws at the second CJAB meeting held in December 2007, marking the official establishment of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board.*** Since 2007, the Board has adopted several amendments to the Bylaws, though the amendments have not substantially changed the CJAB's structure. The Board last adopted a new amendment to the Bylaws in April 2021, adding the Executive Director of Domestic Violence Intervention as a core member of the Board.

CJAB Meetings

In accordance with the CJAB Bylaws, as amended in April 2015: *“Regular meetings of the LCCJAB will be held once every even month, with specific dates, time, and location to be determined by the LCCJAB at the December meeting prior to the start of the new year. LCCJAB meetings will convene no earlier than 11:00 a.m., but no later than 12:30 p.m. and will last no longer than a maximum of two (2) hours.”*

Meetings of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board begin at 11:00 a.m., Second Floor Conference Room of Mental Health/Intellectual Disabilities/Early Intervention, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon.

Approved meeting dates for 2022: February 8, April 12, June 14, August 9, October 11, and December 13

CJAB STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR 2022-2023

Mission Statement and Role of CJAB Members

CJAB members agreed in the Summer of 2021 that the Board should have a new or updated Strategic Plan for 2022-2023. At the October CJAB meeting, the Board voted to keep the “CJAB

Mission Statement” intact without any word changes. The members also voted to continue the following guidelines that CJAB members should follow:

- Be willing, able, and prepared to participate in free and open discussions with your colleagues.
- Remain aware of trends that commonly present themselves as matters of concern within your department.
- Understand that inter-departmental collaboration and communication is critical to the future growth of criminal justice departments in Lebanon County.
- Know that you, as the leader of your department, are in charge of how anything the Board discusses will ultimately be implemented (or not) in your office.
- Know that there are moments when negotiation and compromise will have to take place. Consensus, however, is always the preferred solution.
- Attend the meeting regularly so that you stay informed of the issues presented and are able to represent your agency more appropriately.
- Have read the CJAB Bylaws at least one time.
- Submit questions or concerns about the Board to the CJAB Planner so that the CJAB Planner has an opportunity to discuss such matters with the Board Chair.
- Participate, when necessary, in electronic voting about initiatives under consideration by the Board.
- Know that members may express concerns without threat or retaliation. Our Board demands decent, non-hostile conduct during meetings.

Identifying Areas of Emphasis for 2022-2023

At the August 2021 CJAB meeting, the members agreed that the Board should move forward with the planning process, identifying priorities for the next two years. The members also agreed to establish priorities at the October meeting, followed by approval of the document in December. Adherence to this timeframe would ensure that the CJAB is meeting the State’s Minimum Operating Standards for CJABs as well as maintaining the CJAB’s eligibility to apply for funding in 2022 and 2023. What follows is a review of the priorities identified and the plans for each priority over the next two years.

OFFENDER REENTRY

Operating through a grant awarded by PCCD, the County of Lebanon formed the Offender Reentry Coalition in June 2015 to identify the needs of offenders during incarceration and upon release. The Coalition consisted of representatives from agencies and departments—public, private, non-profit, faith based, etc.—who shared a common interest in collaborating to ensure that offenders make a successful return to the community. The Coalition became an independent entity, not a committee of the CJAB, though most CJAB members served as Coalition partners. In December 2018, the CJAB amended the CJAB Bylaws by adding the Offender Reentry Coordinator as a core member of the Board. Since that time, the County has struggled to keep anyone in this position. The County has not had a Reentry Coordinator since December 2019, and the Coalition has not met as a group since May 2018. This raises understandable concern that Coalition partners have lost interest and that any momentum from the Coalition’s earlier work has stopped.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023:

- *The County hires a full or part-time Offender Reentry Coordinator to reorganize and reenergize the Offender Reentry Coalition. Coordinator continues as a core member of the CJAB.*
- *The Offender Reentry Coalition begins to meet on a regular basis.*
- *The CJAB renews its commitment to the importance of reentry.*

TEAM M.I.S.A.

In August 2020, the CJAB adopted a resolution calling for the implementation of Team M.I.S.A. (Mental Illness and Substance Abuse) program in Lebanon County. Comprised of representatives from criminal justice departments, Team M.I.S.A. works to divert low-risk offenders with mental illness and other special needs from prison. It also focuses on expanding community-treatment options and working toward early diversion for drug/alcohol and MH/ID defendants. Team M.I.S.A. met for the first time in January 2021 and now meets at least once per month. The purpose is to engage in rapid but meaningful dialogue about identified individuals and develop treatment plans to bring before the court. The Team reviews six to eight cases per month. Key issues involve housing/home plans and compliance with medication directives.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Continued increase in the number of cases screened and reviewed by the Team.*
- *Formation of a collaborative group to examine challenges and make comprehensive and appropriate recommendations for low-risk individuals prisoners with mental illness and other special needs in the very early stages of incarceration.*
- *Develop and enhance opportunities for feedback, collaboration, and understanding of program practices across County systems.*
- *Educate Team MISA members about mental illness, special needs, and substance abuse.*
- *Increase early diversion for low-risk prisoners with mental illness and other special needs.*
- *Reduction in jail time for individuals with mental illness and other special needs.*

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Trauma-Informed Care acknowledges the need to understand an offender's life experience as a means of providing the most appropriate, effective services. Society now understands that many offenders have had a history of trauma leading to their criminal conduct.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Increase the capacity of the County Justice System to collaborate with local systems in the prevention of trauma.*
- *Increase the capacity of the County Justice System to collaborate in identifying, screening, assessing, and treating justice-involved persons for trauma exposure.*
- *Recommend that service providers apply culturally competent and generationally focused approaches in evidence-based policies, practices, and programs to improve the delivery of services.*
- *Improve the ability of the county systems to identify, implement, and monitor impacts of effective trauma-informed strategies to improve outcomes.*
- *Improve the capacity of systems to blend funding streams to sustain the implementation of evidence-based, trauma-informed practices.*

VIABLE HOUSING FOR THE FORENSIC POPULATION

The lack of viable housing for the forensic population continues to be a chief concern and one that too often impedes successful reentry. This issue does not pertain solely to the adult population. Juvenile Probation is also concerned about housing options for young offenders who reach adult status and no longer have the support of family members. Offenders who find themselves in the transition from juvenile to adult have no financial resources to obtain housing on their own. Exacerbating the problem is that authorities cannot release these

offenders from detention without an address. As a result, they find themselves mired in the criminal-justice system with no effective options.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *County continues meeting with stakeholders to determine what housing is most beneficial to the population served.*
- *County will assess the availability of funding options to start-up as well as maintain a housing project. Plan is to identify funding sources and obtain approval for forensic housing project by end of FY 2021-2022 (June 30, 2022).*

MEDICAL-ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT) AT THE LCCF

Inmates with serious addiction to heroin and other substances are a growing concern. With that in mind, it is important to devise methods of ensuring that inmates, upon release, stay drug free and, as a result, improve their chances of successful reentry. Vivitrol is a widely used drug that blocks opioid receptors in the brain, thus preventing euphoric highs as well as reducing opioid cravings. The PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) has awarded the County \$96,456 in grant funding to implement an in-house vivitrol program at the LCCF. The objective is to assist addicts in their recovery and prepare for a successful reentry into the community. The grant cycle is Oct. 1, 2021-September 30, 2022.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *The County will implement the MAT program, following the parameters set for in the PCCD grant application. The LCCF, working with PrimeCare will provide access to vivitrol for an increased number of inmates.*
- *Stakeholders involved in the project will make a concerted effort to locate funding to continue the project after award funds have expired.*

DAY REPORTING CENTER (DRC)

The Day Reporting Center (DRC) opened its doors in October 2017 at its location in downtown Lebanon. The consultant contracted by the County to operate the program is PA Counseling Services, Inc. As per the agreement with PA Counseling, the County pays for a minimum of 40 clients per month, with the expectation that the census could increase to as high as 110. At present, the number of offenders assigned to the program on a regular basis remains under 30. Concern that the number of referrals to the program is not as high as anticipated. Much of it due to mitigation efforts necessitated by the pandemic. In addition, the PA Superior Court's ruling in ***Commonwealth v. Koger*** has had an impact on Probation's ability to utilize the DRC as an alternative to incarceration/sentencing prior to scheduling offenders for court. In ***Koger***, the

Court ruled that local courts must advise an offender of the rules and conditions of probation at the time of sentencing, or the Court cannot charge the defendant with a technical violation for failing to comply with these rules and conditions. Beginning on 6-9-21, the Court of Common Pleas, in compliance with the **Koger** ruling, specified all conditions of probation at the time of sentencing.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Increase in the number of participants referred to the DRC, including participants in the D.U.I. and Veterans' treatment courts. Possible option for Contempt Court. Work with Judges to consider DRC as a condition at time of sentencing.*
- *Direct County IP funding for DRC participants, including participants in the former Renaissance-Crossroads program under house arrest/electronic monitoring or other Restrictive Condition of Probation under Act 115 of 2019.*

RENAISSANCE-CROSSROADS AND IP TREATMENT

The Renaissance-Crossroads program has been in place in Lebanon County since 2001, with an impressive track record of success. The CJAB listed continuation of this program, albeit with modifications to adhere to new State mandates, as a definite priority for this plan. However, in early November, PA Counseling Services announced that it was ending the residential (long-term) program after two decades of solid collaboration with the County. The main issue necessitating this decision was the struggle to maintain the number of offenders in the program. Crossroads was also facing new mandates from the Commonwealth that would require PA Counseling to add staff, thereby raising personnel costs at a time when PA Counseling was also having difficulty filling staff positions. The program ends no later than December 31, 2021.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Modify the IP-Crossroads grant to appropriate resources for other IP-related programs for the balance of FY 2021-2022.*
- *Continued updates of County's IP-Treatment Plan*
- *Apply for IP funding for FY 2022-2023 in response to PCCD announcement*

SPECIALTY COURTS

The County's D.U.I. Court, operating since 2008, and the Veterans' Court, initiated in January 2019, provide eligible offenders with an opportunity to avoid incarceration. Both special courts are key components of the County's approach to IP Treatment/Restrictive Conditions of Probation under Act 115 of 2019.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Plan is to continue both specialty programs, working to increase the number of participants. Work to achieve a high percentage of offenders who successfully complete all phases of the programs and graduate.*

JUVENILE PROBATION

Juvenile Treatment Court—Established in 2021 in conjunction with Youth Advocate Program (YAP), but a work in progress. Working with YAP to implement a parent group for young offenders. Juvenile Court is also mapping out plans to implement a “FirstMatch” predictive tool for the County. This assessment tool will match up offenders with the most appropriate services needed. It uses data to predict the best outcomes for specific types of needs or situations facing young offenders. Juvenile Probation is also planning to implement a partnership program with Dr. Kathryn M. Whiteley, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Lebanon Valley College for female youth participating in the Girls’ Circle Program at YAP.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023

- *Full implementation of the Treatment Court. Parent group serving as advocates for parents and facilitating discussions of issues/concerns that generate positive suggestions.*
- *Full establishment of “FirstMatch” assessment tool by the end of 2023.*
- *Implement partnership program with Dr. Whiteley in 2022. Program will also involve women offenders at SCI Muncy, screened and selected by Dr. Whiteley, to share their experiences (virtually) with the girls and to discuss specific issues and concerns.*

