

St. Joseph County Community Corrections Advisory Board

Annual Report for FY 2024

1. Executive Summary

St. Joseph County Community Corrections operates under the Public Act 511 framework, focusing on reducing prison commitment rates and recidivism through community-based programs and alternative sentencing solutions. The Community Corrections Advisory Board (CCAB) is a 16-member board that oversees these efforts, working in partnership with the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) and local courts to provide programs that offer alternatives to incarceration, including pretrial services, specialty courts, and cognitive-behavioral interventions.

The St. Joseph County Community Corrections has made significant progress toward achieving its goals in FY 2024. Through various evidence-based programs, such as Pretrial Supervision and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) the board has maintained key performance indicators in court appearance rates and public safety, while addressing some challenges in program enrollments and utilization.

This report outlines the accomplishments, challenges, and financial performance for the fiscal year, providing an overview of the efforts made toward improving the county's criminal justice outcomes.

2. FY 2024 Program Objectives

1. **Appearance Rate:** Maintained at 91%, exceeding the target of 90%. This objective ensures that defendants released on pretrial supervision attend all scheduled court hearings.
 2. **Public Safety Rate:** Also remained at 91%, indicating that a large proportion of defendants on pretrial supervision remained arrest-free during their supervision period.
 3. **Reduce Prison Commitment Rate:** Maintain or lower the prison commitment rate at or below 18% (from 20.4% in FY 2023). This target aligns with state goals to reduce the use of incarceration for non-violent offenders through effective supervision and rehabilitative programming.
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3. Program Enrollment and Utilization

- **PRAXIS – Risk Assessment:** The PRAXIS tool evaluates defendants' likelihood to either re-offend or fail to appear in court during the pretrial phase. It is an evidence-based, actuarial tool that helps in making informed decisions regarding pretrial release or detention.
 - Projected Enrollments: 364
 - Actual Enrollments: 509 (140% achievement)

- **Pretrial Supervision:** Provides structured supervision for defendants awaiting trial, including electronic monitoring (GPS, alcohol monitoring) and regular check-ins with staff. This helps reduce jail populations while ensuring defendants comply with court orders.
 - Projected Enrollments: 125
 - Actual Enrollments: 160 (128% achievement)
 - **Cognitive Programs (C01 - MRT & CBT)** Cognitive programming was utilized by participants to address criminogenic needs, with a focus on cognitive decision-making improvements.
 - Projected Enrollments: 30
 - Actual Enrollments: 15 (50% achievement)
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4. Key Performance Metrics (KPMs)

4.1 Risk-Appropriate Release Decisions

- **Target:** 80% of defendants with completed PRAXIS assessments will be released based on their risk level.
Actual: 79% of defendants were released in alignment with their assessed risk.
- **Target:** 80% of defendants with a completed PRAXIS will secure release pending case disposition
Actual: 78% of participants were able to gain release while on bond

4.2 Court Appearance Rate

- **Target:** 80% of defendants under pretrial supervision will attend all scheduled court appearances.
Actual: 97% of participants attended their court appearances.

4.3 Public Safety Rate

- **Target:** 80% of released defendants will not be charged with a new offense while on pretrial supervision.
Actual: 98% of participants remained offense-free during supervision.
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5. Financial Overview

5.1 Overall Budget

- **Total Authorized Budget:** \$98,500.
- **Total Spent:** \$98,377.82 (99% of total budget).

5.2 Program-Specific Expenditures

- **Pretrial Risk Assessments:** \$6,672 spent, 99% of the allocated budget.
 - **Pretrial Supervision:** \$55,182 spent, 100% of the allocated budget.
 - **Cognitive Programs:** \$6,885 spent, 100% of the allocated budget.
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6. Challenges and Opportunities

6.1 Challenges

- **Low Enrollment in Cognitive Programs:** The male and female programs struggled with low enrollments due to fewer referrals from MDOC agents.
- **Staffing Limitations:** The capacity to conduct assessments on weekends and holidays was limited, affecting the overall numbers for pretrial assessments. In addition, some magistrates and judges are more likely to use the information in the PRAXIS than others, affecting concurrence rates and services.

6.2 Opportunities

- **Enhancing Pretrial Services:** Discussions are ongoing to increase efficiencies with pretrial services and coordinate referrals into additional services based on risk and need.
 - **Improving Referrals:** Increased communication with MDOC agents and potential collaboration with adjacent counties like Kalamazoo have been implemented to address the low number of referrals and still meet the population's needs.
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7. FY 2025 Projections and Goals

Moving forward, the CCAB will continue to focus on improving the quality and reach of its programs. Key goals for FY 2025 include:

1. **Maintain and Improve Pretrial Services:**
 - Maintain the Court Appearance Rate at 90% and Public Safety Rate at 90%.
 - Continue utilizing validated risk assessments and pretrial supervision services to reduce the pretrial jail population and improve pretrial outcomes.
2. **Reduction in Prison Commitment Rate:**
 - Target an overall reduction in the Prison Commitment Rate (PCR) to 18% or below. Efforts will focus on reducing the number of technical and new sentence violations.
3. **Expand Cognitive Behavioral Programs:**

- Increase enrollments in cognitive-based programs aimed at reducing recidivism rates among offenders, with an emphasis on high-risk populations and substance abuse, criminal personality, and cognitive behavioral needs.

4. **Enhanced Specialty Court Programs:**

- Strengthen the coordination between ADTC, SSSPP, and 3B Sobriety Court, ensuring seamless referral processes, and improved communication among departments and stakeholders.

5. **Budget Management:**

- For FY 2025, the county's **approved budget is \$132,596, a 35% increase**, with a strong focus on optimizing fund utilization for maximum program impact.

8. **Conclusion**

The St. Joseph County Community Corrections programs continue to provide essential services using data-driven strategies and evidence-based practices that will support its objectives of reducing prison commitments, improving public safety, and fostering rehabilitation. The plans set forth for FY 2025 reflect both the successes and lessons learned from FY 2024, ensuring continued progress in addressing the community's correctional needs.

The CCAB looks forward to building on its successes, focusing on higher engagement in its programs and continuing its mission to serve the community with integrity and accountability.