

## **Milwaukee County SJC Phase III Application - Executive Summary**

In 2008, facing an average daily jail population (ADP) of 3079, the Milwaukee Community Justice Council (MCJC) launched reforms to reexamine use of the local jail. Expanding on initial efforts, the County requested support from MacArthur Foundation and its Safety & Justice Challenge (SJC) initiative. This nationwide initiative has three goals:

- Reduce overreliance on local jails
- Address racial and ethnic disparities (RED) in the criminal justice system
- Engage the wider community in system change

SJC Phase I (2015) engaged jurisdictions across the country, including Milwaukee County, to participate in the planning and development of site-specific improvements. Phase II (2016 to 2018) provided technical assistance and funding to implement the strategies that were identified in Phase I.

During Phase II, the Milwaukee SJC team worked to identify persons who could be appropriately released from jail by reviewing information on arrests, special populations, individuals in custody with low cash bail, and other factors. Few low-risk individuals were found in custody, so Milwaukee turns its attention towards improving system efficiency, introducing recommended practices, and boosting existing successful programs to further reduce unnecessary use of the jail. Since joining the SJC Network, Milwaukee has seen a 9% decline in its jail population<sup>1</sup>, a 33% drop from 2008.

### **Phase III Proposal**

In 2018, Milwaukee was invited to apply for a third SJC phase. The MCJC submitted an application for overall continuation funds and a separate proposal to support community engagement. The Phase III continuation grant outlines a two-year proposal, focusing on four key strategy areas:

- *Refined Case Processing*: Increases efficiency and streamlines movement of cases through the system
- *Mental Health Diversion*: Identifies people with mental health conditions and links them to community resources
- *Reentry Support*: Introduces community-based interventions to prevent persons from cycling through the system
- *Expanded Data Capacity*: Allows MCJC to monitor and address RED, community, and criminal justice trends

By May 2020, Milwaukee County aims to have an ADP of 1833, a 19.3% reduction from the SJC baseline.

Phase III redesigns existing efforts, adds new approaches, and invests in process changes and resources. With these changes, Milwaukee can continuously strive towards and ultimately maintain an appropriate balance of jail usage.

### **Racial & Ethnic Disparities**

Reflecting on recommendations from the W. Haywood Burns Institute, Milwaukee County will monitor RED data at key system decision points and across SJC strategies. The MCJC will expand its governance structure to include diverse voices in its collaborative work, including formerly incarcerated individuals and communities of color. In its Community Engagement proposal, the MCJC also requested resources for trainings and leadership development to sustain ongoing RED dialogue between system and community stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on monthly aggregate jail data, a baseline ADP of 2272 was set for Milwaukee County in May 2016. As of December 2018, the ADP was 2063.

Strategy	Description
<p><b>Refined Case Processing</b> 3.34% Projected Reduction</p>	<p>The Milwaukee County District Attorney's (DA's) Office will increase diversions and deferred prosecution agreements through two programs: <i>Early Interventions (EI)</i> and <i>Domestic Violence Deferred Prosecution Agreements (DV DPA)</i>. Case management, treatment programming, and risk assessment will be added to the DV DPA Program.</p> <p>Milwaukee will launch an enhanced court hearing reminder program to increase appearance rates among persons charged with criminal misdemeanor offenses.</p> <p>Weekly time slots will be offered by the Milwaukee County Circuit Courts to prevent long delays in scheduling <i>Return on Doctors Report (RDR)</i> hearings.</p> <p>Milwaukee will introduce <i>Charging &amp; Settlement Conferences</i> to allow early information exchange, reduce the number of court hearings, inform sentence recommendations, and expedite case resolution.</p> <p>The jail now provides a daily report to the DA's Office, listing individuals booked on certain non-violent charges to be considered for expedited release and diversion.</p>
<p><b>Mental Health Diversion</b> 1.53% Projected Reduction</p>	<p>A <i>Behavioral Health Division Liaison</i> will conduct assessments in the jail and work with designated attorneys from the DA and Public Defender Offices. The Liaison will link persons with mental health conditions to community resources and services.</p> <p>A <i>Forensic Discharge Coordinator</i> will support reentry into the community for persons who have competency hearings. To prevent unnecessary cycling of individuals through the criminal and civil court systems, the Coordinator will engage service providers and connect individuals to local community resources.</p> <p>Milwaukee will launch a <i>Mental Health Diversion Team</i>. This team will analyze system data, review mental health-related case processing, and identify suitable interventions to meet the unique needs of system-involved persons with mental health conditions.</p>
<p><b>Reentry Support</b><sup>2</sup></p>	<p>The MCJC will partner with a local health care provider and the <i>Transitions Clinic Network</i> to support persons returning to the community from incarceration. Using a nationally recognized model, community health workers provide peer support and help individuals navigate health and social challenges, as they return to the community after incarceration.</p>
<p><b>Expanded Data Capacity</b></p>	<p>Data personnel will be hired to capture strategy progress and foster a better understanding of the system-involved population through data. Personnel will include a <i>Jail Utilization Analyst</i> to track population-specific trends, identify system bottlenecks, and inform policy.</p>

<sup>2</sup> The Transitions Clinic Network impact is not included in the 4.87% projected reduction, as it will not be realized by May 2020 due to the implementation timeline.