

CASE STUDY

Pathways ARC (Achieving Recovery by Choice)

Franklin County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office



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Compendium Contents

<u>Part 1</u>	Adapting Community-Oriented Policing Strategies and Procedural Justice for Jail Communities
<u>Part 2</u>	Quick Reference Guide
<u>Part 3</u>	Research Brief
<u>Part 4</u>	Promising Practices, Examples of Promising Practices from the Field
<u>Part 5.1</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Pathways ARC (Achieving Recovery by Choice) Franklin County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.2</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> The Inmate Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education (I.G.N.I.T.E.) Program Genesee County (Michigan) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.3a</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Gender Responsive Programming Los Angeles County (California) Sheriff's Department
<u>Part 5.3b</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Town Sheriff Model Los Angeles County (California) Sheriff's Department
<u>Part 5.4</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Familiar Faces Action and Community Transition (F ² ACT) Program Louisville (Kentucky) Metro Department of Corrections
<u>Part 5.5</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Behavioral Care Center (BCC) Davidson County (Tennessee) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.6</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> The Farm Program Plymouth County (Massachusetts) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.7</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Sheriff's Anti-Trafficking Initiative (SATI) Suffolk County (New York) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 6</u>	Jails and Community-Based Strategies Survey Community Oriented Policing Strategies Employed in Jail Communities
<u>Part 7</u>	Pandemic Behind Bars—Lessons Learned in Handling COVID-19 in Jails Strategy Brief
<u>Part 8</u>	Appendix A. Agencies that Participated in the Survey
<u>Part 9</u>	Appendix B. Focus Group Overview and Script

Part 5.1 Contents

Overview	PART 5.1 5
What conditions led to the development and implementation of the Pathways ARC program?	PART 5.1 7
How does the Pathways ARC program exemplify the principles of community-oriented policing?	PART 5.1 8
Implementation challenges and response.	PART 5.1 10
Assessing program effectiveness and replication.	PART 5.1 12
About the National Sheriffs' Association	PART 5.1 16
About the National Policing Institute (formerly known as the National Police Foundation)	PART 5.1 17
About the COPS Office.	PART 5.1 18

**Franklin County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office
and Office of Justice Policy and Programs**

Current Sheriff: Dallas Baldwin

Number of beds/inmates: 1,687

Overview

Pathways to Women's Healthy Living launched in March 2015 with a focus on the female incarcerated population in the Franklin County, Ohio, jail. Since inception, 16 cohorts have participated in the program with a 59 percent graduation rate. To graduate, participants are required to attend 90 percent of all classes, actively participate in programming, and complete a comprehensive transition plan. In 2020, the program expanded to include the male population and was renamed Pathways ARC (Achieving Recovery by Choice). Because of the COVID-19 public health crisis, services provided to both male and female inmates have been tailored to ensure physical distancing needs of staff and participants. Pre-release programming continues using non-contact and contact visitors' rooms with an emphasis on assessment, treatment linkage, and transition planning. Given the infancy of the men's Pathways program, this publication focuses on the women's program only.

The program eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Women assessed as medium- to high-risk
- Diagnosed with a mental health or co-occurring disorder (or both)
- Multiple arrests within the last three years
- Majority under no form of supervision nor engaged with a specialty docket
- Voluntary

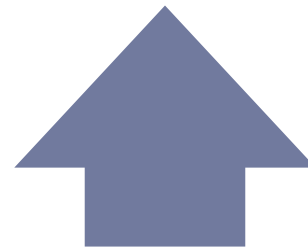
Pathways ARC staff work with medium- to high-risk individuals diagnosed with a mental health or co-occurring disorder and a history of re-occurring arrests. Given the prevalence of justice-involved individuals assessed with opioid use disorders in Franklin County, the program's focus has shifted to include individuals screened as high risk for a drug-related overdose. Participation in the program is voluntary, and the majority of participants are under no form of supervision, nor engaged with a specialty docket.

"The Pathways program has realized incredible savings in terms of recidivism, saved jail bed nights and improved public safety. Most importantly, the Pathways program has been a lifeline to women engaged in our justice system struggling with mental health, addiction, and trauma. This restorative model has helped women and their families achieve a better quality of life through pre- and post-release engagement including treatment referral and linkage, peer support, and pro-social reinforcement."

— Franklin County Commissioner
Erica C. Crawley

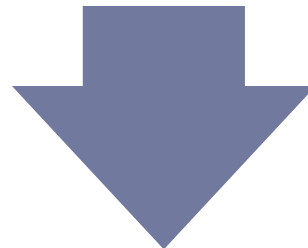
Program goals include reducing recidivism, opioid-related overdoses, and overdose deaths and improving individual wellness outcomes (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Goals of the Pathways ARC program



- **Recovery**
- **Individual wellness**

-
- **Recidivism**
 - **Opioid overdoses**
 - **Overdose deaths**



What conditions led to the development and implementation of the Pathways ARC program?

The Pathways ARC program was developed in response to the federal Stepping Up Initiative, which challenged local jurisdictions across the country to address the disproportionate number of individuals detained in local jails with mental health and co-occurring disorders. Franklin County, Ohio, subsequently “stepped up” as one of the first counties in the country to pass a resolution formally signing on to the Stepping Up Initiative challenge.

At around the same time, Franklin County leadership noticed that the growing focus on the consequences of parental incarceration for children was skewed toward programming for incarcerated men. Women were being overlooked despite increasing and alarming rates of incarceration and research confirming the profound intergenerational impact of maternal incarceration. It was this factor that motivated leaders in Franklin County to focus on the justice-involved female population.

Finally, the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office (FCSO) sought to respond to a 2015 Council of State Governments report showing that 74 percent of individuals with behavioral health disorders released from the Franklin County Jail were not linked with treatment services pre- or post-release.¹ Exacerbating

this problem was a dramatic increase in overdose deaths related to opioids in Franklin County. A 2020 report from the Franklin County Coroner’s Office found that the crude overdose death rate in Franklin County was 44.5 per 100,000 in 2019 and 64.5 per 100,000 in 2020,² which surpassed both state and national prevalence rates. Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs (OJPP) conducts a data match biennially reviewing coroner overdose fatali-



Photo Courtesy of the Franklin County Sheriff's Office

Recruitment materials for Pathways ARC participants

ties with booking data provided through the Sheriff’s Office Jail Management System, which consistently found that approximately 26 percent of individuals who had died from opioid-related overdoses had been incarcerated in the Franklin County Jail in the 12 months prior to their death. The FCSO, in collaboration with OJPP staff, realized it had a unique opportunity to intervene with this population and hopefully help set them on the road to recovery.

1. Justice Center, *Franklin County, Ohio: A Justice and Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Project* (New York: Council of State Governments, 2015), <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/franklin-county-ohio-a-county-justice-and-behavioral-health-systems-improvement-project/>.

2. Anahi M. Ortiz, *Franklin County Overdose Fatalities Data Brief: 2020* (Columbus, OH: Franklin County Forensic Office of the Coroner, 2020), <https://coroner.franklincountyohio.gov/getattachment/Media/Franklin-County-Overdose-Fatalities-Data-Brief/Franklin-County-Overdose-Fatalities-Data-Brief-%283%29.pdf>.

“If we can restore the value, dignity, and worth of a person, we can return a more productive citizen back into society.

— Dr. Patrice Palmer,
Pathways Staff and Facilitator

How does the Pathways ARC program exemplify the principles of community-oriented policing?

Community-oriented policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of community partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues (see figure 2).³ Components of community policing include problem solving, the development of community partnerships, and organizational transformation.

The core of Pathways programming is problem solving, and it relies on community partnerships for support and implementation. It is also based on the fundamental belief that people can change the trajectory of their lives. The program’s genesis was in response to a series of problems the county was facing, including disproportionate rates of incarceration of individuals with mental health disorders, soaring rates of opioid-related overdoses, and a vulnerable population in which women were overrepresented. The County’s analysis demonstrating that more than a quarter of individuals who had died from

opioid-related overdoses had been incarcerated in the Franklin County Jail within the year prior to their death was profound and further illustrated the unique window of opportunity incarceration could provide to intervene and support treatment linkage. These data—along with multiple national studies showing that individuals released from incarceration are 40 times more likely than the average citizen to die of an opioid overdose within two weeks of their release—confirmed the agency’s need to try a different approach.

Pathways is among the more robust programs in jail management. The extent of planning and thought put into responding to substantial program implementation challenges highlights the staff’s commitment to making a difference in the lives of people in custody. When looking more closely at the specifics of the responses to these challenges, the agency

Figure 2. Community policing components



Source: COPS Office, “About the COPS Office,” accessed December 9, 2021, <https://cops.usdoj.gov/aboutcops>.

3. COPS Office, *Community Policing Defined* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014), <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P157>.

Photo courtesy of Franklin County Sheriff's Office



Pathways ARC staff and participants

“The CIT officer at the jail was instrumental in helping me when things got tough. She would check on me and make sure I was alright. I was able to ask questions and get answers that I could understand. This made me feel like I was contributing to the process.”

— Stella J.

noted that many were resolved through the cultivation of community partnerships, which has the benefit of expanding the pool of resources available and also facilitates a continuity of care for individuals.

The program objectives for Pathways ARC included a 35-percent reduction in opioid related overdose fatalities by 2021, the ability to provide needed level of care and access to care for at least 85 percent of the women screened for program participation, and an increase in the number of individuals booked into the jail who have the option of receiving medication-assisted treatment (MAT) pre-release.

In light of COVID-19, some aspects of the program have inevitably been restructured. Prior to COVID, the pre-release component of the program consisted of eight weeks of cognitive behavioral treatment, pro-social activities, and recovery management with an option to be linked with a Peer Support Specialist during week five of the pre-release program.

The inclusion of crisis intervention team (CIT)-trained officers in the day-to-day Pathways program was intentional and

built upon the premise that CIT was developed to create connections between law enforcement, mental health providers, and individuals with mental illness. By having CIT officers from the Columbus Division of Police regularly engaging with program participants, the FCSO was able to establish important pre-release relationships that often continued post-release into the community. Participants no longer viewed law enforcement as adversaries but as advocates.

Sample Weekly Pathways ARC Schedule

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (twice a week)
- Recovery Management Group (every Wednesday)
- Prosocial activities such as yoga and arts (every Friday)
- Pre-release medication assisted treatment (optional)
- Treatment referrals and links to public health, peer support, and other benefits
- Harm reduction education

YOGA: BALANCING LIFE

FOR WOMEN INCARCERATED LIFE ISN'T EASY IN JAIL OR ON THE OUTSIDE. FOR THE WOMEN OF PATHWAYS, THAT IS CHANGING. PART OF THAT CHANGE IS A FOCUS ON PRO-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, DESIGNED TO HELP THE LADIES FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES THAT BENEFIT THEM ALONG WITH OTHER PEOPLE, OR SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. ONE OF THOSE ACTIVITIES IS TAKING HOLD, ONE BREATH AT A TIME.

Yoga is offered as part of the Pathways program meant to rehabilitate women behind bars. "I like to say it's a place where we can meet people on the mat where they are, and hope to reach them in ways they didn't know they could be reached," said instructor Julie Wilkes. "This teaches us to find that strength to hold on when it's hard."

Motivation happens to be the key to this program's success. It's why Tressalyn Butler, a deputy sheriff, pitched the idea to the jail, and works with the women side by side during every class.

"Research shows that it helps to lower aggression with inmates. It gives them a de-escalation skill that way they have a way to cope in the midst of chaos." As of right now, officers at the jail say it's working.

"We've only had two disciplinary reports out of the Pathways program for the last year," said Captain Carl Towbridge. Wilkes is proud of the women who have come through the program and hopeful it will help others for years to come. "I believe that everybody who is incarcerated, they are just one bad decision from a good day. All they need is a little bit of hope and people who believe in them and show them something different and I believe that's really powerful." It's a major improvement that's bringing peace to a place where it can be hard to find.

(Excerpted and extracted from <https://www.boc.com/news/local-news/yoga-in-jail-could-help-rehabilitate-inmates/17295666>)

Photo courtesy of Franklin County Sheriff's Office



A flyer advertising yoga activities in the Pathways ARC program.

Post-release. One of the aspects of Pathways that makes it a strong program is the focus on post-release services to ensure continuity of care, which is so important to recovery. Components of post-release programming include case management; Narcan distribution and harm reduction education; peer support linkage; optional linkage with a Columbus Division of Police CIT officer; weekly check-ins with ARC staff; a weekly Saturday Recovery Management group; and monthly pro-social activities such as yoga, book club, and arts expression.

Staffing. Program staffing includes one full-time re-entry specialist, three part-time peer support specialists, one full-time case manager, and one CIT officer. Specialized training is required for staff including a four-year degree, social work license, or peer

"We are tackling the toughest demographic for us with this program. The women selected for this program are repeat offenders who have co-occurring mental health issues as well as a substance abuse problem."

— Chief Deputy Geoff Stobart

support certification through the Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services. Many of the staff members supporting the Pathways program have lived experiences themselves that make them particularly adept at working with the justice-involved population.

Implementation challenges and response

Franklin County and Pathways staff faced challenges common in program implementation. These included (a) sustainment and expansion costs, (b) FCSO staffing capacity to support programming operations, (c) physical space limitations in the jail, (d) short length of stay for jail populations, (e) lack of available low income and sober housing, and (f) limited Narcan distribution channels.

Sustainment and expansion costs. To address the significant costs of providing behavioral health and addiction treatment, MAT, and other supportive services to inmates not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement, Pathways ARC staff

- established an extensive network of collaborative partnerships to support leveraging of additional community resources;

- embedded an MAT coordinator in the jail to work with the jail's medical services provider to increase the number of individuals receiving MAT pre-release;
- made a concerted effort to provide individuals with health insurance benefits prior to release, allowing them to receive MAT immediately upon release in the community;
- developed an expedited process with Job and Family Services to authorize Medicaid benefits the day of release.

FCSO staffing capacity limitations. To address staffing capacity limitations, grant funding was initially included for deputy overtime-related costs to support the program. Ironically, overtime funds were not used, largely as a result of the ownership and buy-in by the sheriff's office command staff in support of the Pathways program and a mid-course adjustment to the program hours to allow for shifting of existing staff resources. Deputy support of the program gained traction once data confirmed a reduction in disciplinary incidents of participants, many of whom had a lengthy history of infractions.

Physical space limitations. Limited jail space was also a main program implementation challenge. Pathways ARC staff responded to this challenge by cultivating new relationships and strengthening existing relationships with key sheriff's office staff to encourage investment in programming, which resulted in the repurposing of a multipurpose space in the jail to accommodate the Pathways program. Staff found that to secure buy-in and support from sheriff's office staff, it was critical to demonstrate the

impact of the Pathways ARC program on outcomes such as disciplinary reports, use of force incidents, and recidivism.

Short length of stay for jail populations. The average length of stay in the Franklin County Correctional Center is approximately 26 days, which made it difficult to develop a program that addressed dosage and intensity requirements aligning with evidence-based practices that emphasize risk, need, and responsiveness. To address this barrier, the screening and assessment process was strengthened to ensure participants screening as medium to high risk for recidivism and selected for program participation had a minimum of six weeks remaining on their sentence or future court dates that would support their participation for the full duration of the program.

Lack of available low income and sober housing. Responses to the problem of insufficient sober housing options and limited community inpatient treatment capacity were also addressed through partnerships including agreements with sober housing facilities prioritizing admission of individuals participating in the Pathways ARC pre- and post-release programs. In addition, staff conducted outreach to the local Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Board of Franklin County and other key providers of services to encourage expansion of services to justice-involved individuals.

Limited Narcan distribution channels. Finally, the surge of fentanyl mixed with methamphetamines and cocaine also posed challenges to the Pathways ARC staff and endangered program goals. In addressing this challenge, Pathways staff developed a relationship with a local physician and city and county

public health departments to develop a medical protocol allowing them to provide harm reduction education, receive Narcan from authorized providers, and distribute Narcan to program participants. With the passage of Ohio HB 341, the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs is now able to purchase Narcan directly from manufacturers, which has supported the FCSO's ability to distribute the life-saving drug to all inmates triggering positive at intake on the Clinical Opioid Withdrawal Scale (COWS). In addition, Pathways staff adopted the Anchor4Me mobile app, which allows Pathways ARC participants to link with local community treatment resources, receive real time support from peers, process triggering episodes, participate in virtual reality mindfulness and meditation exercises, and receive daily inspirational and uplifting messages. Through the use of the EZ Texting platform, Pathways staff are able to push out mass texts and notifications to program participants to alert them of upcoming events like job fairs, food pantry locations, etc. and updates including potentially life-saving information about deadly batches of fentanyl in the streets.

Assessing program effectiveness and replication

Sustainability through successful demonstration of impact. Pathways staff took a similar approach internally to secure buy-in and resource support from the county commissioner's office and key sheriff's office personnel. A particularly strong aspect to the program's sustainability is the ability to harness program data to demonstrate the impact of the ARC program on important outcomes of interest to command staff such as disciplinary reports, use of force incidents, and recidivism including a reduction in jail bookings and bed nights.

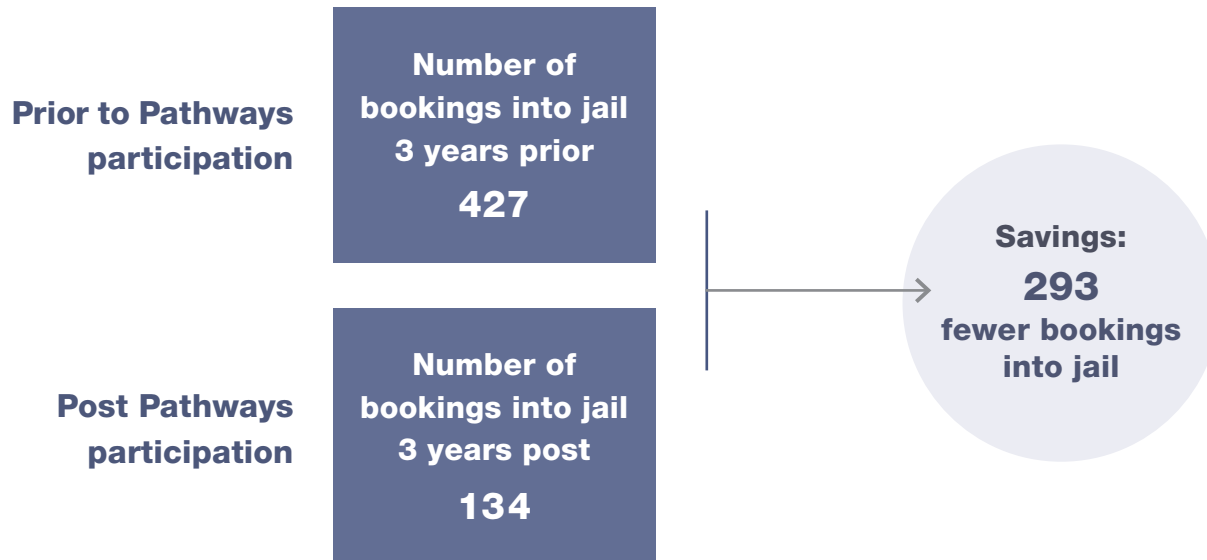
"We are very encouraged by the results of this gender-responsive approach of offering a full complement of wrap-around services to this target population."

— Sheriff Dallas Baldwin

Metrics. From program inception, Pathways ARC staff made it a priority to track not only recidivism rates for program participants but also other important metrics such as the jail bed nights of participants three years prior to program participation and three years post-program participation. Collection of metrics such as these have been crucial in demonstrating the program's effectiveness from a number of different angles, such as recidivism rates and cost-benefit comparison. For example, ARC estimates that 111 participants who spent a collective 17,951 nights in jail in the three years before the Pathways program, at a recidivism rate of 91 percent, spent just 4,452 nights in jail in the three years following the program, at a recidivism rate of 58 percent—saving the County more than \$1.3 million (see figure 3 on page 13).

Quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Program evaluation outcomes other than those already discussed are a bit harder to quantify but nonetheless critical. These outcomes include reductions in trauma exposure resulting from arrest procedures and incarceration, reductions in family separation, and less employment interruption for individuals. The combination of quantitative outcome data and individual success stories has allowed Franklin County to tell the story of Pathways in a way that is meaningful to multiple types and levels of audiences.

Figure 3. Jail bed nights and bookings pre- and post-Franklin County Pathways to Womens Healthy Living participation and recidivism rates for Pathways participants, n = 111 (cohorts 1–10)



Recidivism rate of graduates three years prior to program participation —→ 91%

Recidivism rate of graduates three years post program completion —→ 58%

n = 111 (10 cohorts included)

Costs. Pathways staff recognize that *funding* will always be an ongoing challenge especially as they move to expand staff to accommodate a complementary program for men and the launch of a Rapid Resource Center located in the jail’s lobby area in 2021. Staff members have proactively responded to this challenge by making a concerted effort to maintain internal and external support through sharing of program outcomes, encouraging local and state elected official involvement at graduations and other special events, and expanding the base of partners serving the same population to leverage resources. Staff are confident they have established Pathways ARC as a “brand” that community members recognize and want to continue to be a part of because it works. Partnership and community engagement are cornerstones of this program and of community policing, demonstrating that this program embodies the philosophy of community policing in a jail setting.

“The secret ingredient—the reason Pathways works—lies in the compassion and dedication of our staff, many of whom have a [similar] lived experience themselves. Our staff understands the importance of helping individuals hold themselves accountable while still acknowledging the pervasiveness of trauma among justice-involved women. We meet participants where they are, while making sure not to leave them there.”

— Melissa Pierson, Chief Operating Officer



Program participants and staff at Pathways Graduation Ceremony

“The Pathways program taught me to value myself and how to stop and think things through before acting on my feelings, which in the past had gotten me into trouble.”

—Maleka B.

Replication. The FCSO believes the Pathways program model is replicable in both rural and urban settings where support from local law enforcement, local leaders, and elected officials is plentiful. The success of the program relies on adherence to evidence-based programming, appropriate dosage standards, commitment to data collection to inform program structure, and the quality of the staff hired. Staff commitment to the program and passion for working with the target population is *absolutely essential* to program success.

The Pathways program is also scalable, requiring adjustments to the staffing ratio based on the size of the implementing agency and target population. If program space is an issue, taking the program into the dorms or housing area is always an option. Although not optimal, this program could be offered almost exclusively virtually.

In a *rural setting*, the availability of community-based partners might not be as plentiful as in an urban setting, but the partners are there and need to be identified and invited to be part of the initiative. Pathways staff report that they found inviting guests and leaders from other organizations to the cohort graduations was the most powerful motivator of all. Recognizing that people want to be part of something that works and changes lives, Pathways staff engaged others in the graduations so that guests could see for themselves the transformative role of the program on its participants.

Overall, Franklin County recommends that jurisdictions interested in implementing a similar program start small and expand based on the needs of the local population. The Pathways program initially began with only two staff and two days of programming per week and expanded based on the needs of the population.

For more information about this program, please contact:

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About the National Sheriffs' Association

The **National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)** is a professional association, chartered in 1940, dedicated to serving the Office of Sheriff and its affiliates through police education, police training, and general law enforcement information resources. The NSA represents thousands of sheriffs, deputies, and other law enforcement agents, public safety professionals, and concerned citizens nationwide.

Through the years, the NSA has provided programs for sheriffs, their deputies, chiefs of police, and others in the field of criminal justice to perform their jobs in the best possible manner and to better serve the people of their cities, counties, or jurisdictions.

The National Sheriffs' Association headquarters is located in Alexandria, Virginia, and offers police training, police information, court security training, jail information, and other law enforcement services to sheriffs, deputies, and others throughout the nation. The NSA has worked to forge cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal criminal justice professionals across the nation to network and share information about homeland security programs and projects.

The NSA serves as the center of a vast network of law enforcement information, filling requests for information daily and enabling criminal justice professionals—including police officers, sheriffs, and deputies—to locate the information and programs they need. The NSA recognizes the need to seek information from the membership, particularly the sheriff and the state sheriffs' associations, in order to meet the needs and concerns of individual NSA members. While working on the national level, the NSA has continued to seek grass-roots guidance, ever striving to work with and for its members, its clients, and citizens of the nation.

The NSA has through the years assisted sheriffs' offices, sheriffs' departments, and state sheriffs' associations in locating and preparing applications for state and federal homeland security grant funding. The NSA record and reputation for integrity and dependability in such public safety programs among government agencies is well recognized and has led to continuing opportunities to apply for grants on the national, state, and local levels as well as management of service contracts.

To learn more, visit the NSA online at www.sheriffs.org.

About the National Policing Institute (formerly known as the National Police Foundation)

The **National Policing Institute** is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to pursuing excellence through science and innovation in policing. As the country's oldest police research organization, the National Policing Institute has learned that police practices should be based on scientific evidence about what works best, the paradigm of evidence-based policing.

Established in 1970, the National Policing Institute has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure and works to transfer to local agencies the best new information about practices for dealing effectively with a range of important police operational and administrative concerns. Motivating all of the National Policing Institute's efforts is the goal of efficient, humane policing that operates within the framework of democratic principles and the highest ideals of the nation.

To learn more, visit the National Policing Institute at www.policinginstitute.org.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has been appropriated more than \$20 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 130,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- More than 800,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations and the COPS Training Portal.
- Almost 500 agencies have received customized advice and peer-led technical assistance through the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, <https://cops.usdoj.gov>.

Jails are communities in and of themselves, whose members are the individuals incarcerated and the correctional staff employed there; they are also part of the broader communities in which they are located, where the correctional staff live and to which the incarcerated population will eventually return. Community-oriented policing is as important in jails as it is in towns, cities, and counties; this compendium of community policing and procedural justice practices and programs, developed by the National Policing Institute and the National Sheriffs' Association, features research and promising practices as well as eight successful programs operated by seven sheriffs' departments that will be illuminating for other agencies nationwide.



COPS
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U.S. Department of Justice

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