



LEBANON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD
(LCCJAB)
STRATEGIC PLAN for
2024-2025



Adopted by the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board

April 8, 2024

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEBANON COUNTY CJAB

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

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

Ms. Megan D. Tidwell, 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. Jeffrie Marley, Jr., 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

Ms. Karen Raugh, Executive Director, Lebanon County Housing Authority

Ms. Glenda Folsom, Program Manager, P.R.O.B.E.*

Ms. Lori Burrus, Representative, Lebanon County Branch 26AA of the NAACP*

Ms. Norma Gonzalez, Director of Therapy, SARCC*

(Non-voting member)*

The CJAB Planner is Mr. John P. Shott. Ms. Kimberly Mackey is the PCCD Regional Representative.

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.***

Over the years, the Board has approved amendments to the bylaws without changing the Board’s basic structure. However, the most recent change to the bylaws, adopted by the Board on Feb. 5, 2024, is significant because it provides for non-voting membership on the Board. On April 8, 2024, the CJAB approved a request from three county-based organizations—Potential Reentry Opportunities in Business and Education (P.R.O.B.E.), Lebanon County Branch 26AA of the NAACP, and Sexual Assault Resource and Consulting (SARCC)—to join the CJAB as non-voting members.

CJAB Meetings

Meetings of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board begin at 9:00 am., Second Floor Conference Room of Mental Health/Intellectual Disabilities/Early Intervention, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon. They are held every even month, in accordance with Bylaws. Approved meeting dates for 2024: February 5, April 8, June 10, August 12, October 7, and December 9.

CJAB STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR 2024-2025

Mission Statement and Role of CJAB Members

CJAB members agreed in the Summer of 2023 that the Board should have a new or updated Strategic Plan for 2024-2025. This is to stay in compliance with PCCD's "Minimum Operating Standards for CJABs," which require CJABs to adopt and maintain a current strategic plan. At the October 2023 CJAB meeting, the Board voted to keep the "CJAB Mission Statement" intact without any word changes:

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.

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 2024-2025

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 is an independent entity, not a committee of the CJAB.*** 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 been unable 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 2024-2025

- *The County hires a full or part-time Offender Reentry Coordinator to reorganize and reenergize the Offender Reentry Coalition. Coordinator remains a core member of the CJAB.*
- *The Offender Reentry Coalition begins to meet on a regular basis.*

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 have been meeting monthly. 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. Through January 2024, the team had discussed the cases of 43 unduplicated individuals. Key issues involve housing/home plans and compliance with medication directives.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *Continued increase in the number of cases screened and reviewed by the Team.*
- *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.*
- *Continued focus on improving data collection, more specifically tracking those who have or had mental illness prior to incarceration.*
- *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.*

CRISIS INTERVENTION

In December 2022, MH/ID/EI was awarded a \$175,500 grant under the American Rescue Plan to prepare a comprehensive Crisis System Plan for the county. This entails examining the existing system and, as a result, implementing a full spectrum of enhanced crisis services, including Mobile Response Teams and a Crisis Walk-In Center. Transforming Crisis Intervention is a State mandate. In response to this mandate, MH/ID/EI issued an RFP in April 2023; the County Commissioners awarded a consultant contract to the Panto Group in August to begin the project. The Panto Group began meeting with stakeholders to obtain feedback on crisis intervention; they also met with some CJAB members for their opinions on issues involving the criminal justice system. Following these sessions, Panto Group began formulating a plan for the transformation of the county's Crisis Intervention system. All funds awarded under this grant must be expended by 6-30-25.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *Full development of revised Crisis Intervention Services, as recommended by MH/ID/EI and the Panto Group. This includes transformation to mobile crisis response teams and a walk-in center.*

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 2024-2025

- *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. Lebanon County is experiencing an extremely low inventory of housing, especially affordable housing. 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. In January 2023, the County opened a renovated three-bedroom cottage behind the MH/ID/EI building to provide transitional housing for up to three persons. As of February 2024, three females were residing in the cottage.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *County continues to seek viable housing opportunities for the forensic population. If renovations are necessary, the County will search for start-up funds as well as sustainable funding to continue the housing long-term.*
- *County will continue to maintain the cottage located and solicit appropriate referrals for placement there.*

INTERMEDIATE PUNISHMENT

Lebanon County's leaders recognize the importance of reducing overcrowding at the Lebanon County Correctional Facility (LCCF) and maintaining the inmate population at manageable levels. The County accomplishes this by offering viable, cost-effective alternatives to incarceration for eligible offenders while protecting the public. County officials have authorized and revised these sentencing alternatives as part of County Intermediate Punishment (CIP) programming and, in accordance with Act 115 of 2019, as restrictive conditions of probation. Act 115 of 2019 replaced what had been formerly known as County Intermediate Punishment (CIP) with Restrictive Conditions of Probation. Since the enactment of that law, the County has been committed to working within its guidelines, including changes to eligibility under Title 42, Section 9721 (a.1), while maintaining the proactive practices that benefit both the offender and the community.

The ongoing goal of the plan is to offer viable alternatives to incarceration as means of keeping the Average Daily Population (ADP) at the Lebanon County Correctional Facility (LCCF) at a manageable level, preferably below 300. The County is achieving this objective.

Lebanon County believes that CIP/Restrictive Conditions of Probation should be less costly but more effective than incarceration. These conditions include a combination of supervision, treatment, and behavioral management. Lebanon County also realizes that such programming is not appropriate for all offenders, but should be specifically oriented to individuals who, through restrictive probation and alternative sentencing program, will benefit from program contact without jeopardizing community safety.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *The County will continue its proactive approach and evaluate all components of IP/Restrictive Conditions of Probation. CJAB Planner will update IP Treatment Plan as needed.*
- *Apply for IP funding for FY 2024-2025 and beyond when such funding is available.*

ADULT PROBATION

The Adult Unit of County Probation Services continues proactive approaches to serving offenders under supervision, particularly as it pertains to assessing offenders' criminogenic needs and developing appropriate supervision plans based on such assessments.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *The County proceeds with the transition from LS/CMI to the more effective Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS). This will entail training two to three staff as "train the trainers" by the end of 2024. It also includes transitioning from paper assessments to an electronic*

version. Utilizing an electronic version as part of a case-management system that reminds staff when reassessments of offenders are due.

- *The County continues the evidence-based practice of assessing offenders prior to sentencing. At present, Probation Services employs this practice for all felony and M1 cases. By the end of 2024, Probation will be assessing M2 cases and all other eligible cases.*
- *County applies for a service dog for offenders in treatment court or others on probation who are experiencing anxiety or depression.*

SPECIALTY COURTS, INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT COURT

The County currently operates three specialty courts: D.U.I. Court, operating since 2008; Veterans Court, initiated in 2019; and, Drug Treatment Court, started in 2022. All three specialty courts provide eligible offenders with an opportunity to avoid incarceration. These courts are key components of the County's approach to IP Treatment/Restrictive Conditions of Probation under Act 115 of 2019. In 2023, the President Judge announced his intentions to begin a Mental Health Treatment Court in Lebanon County.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *The plan is to continue the three specialty courts now in place, working to increase the number of participants. The goal is to achieve a high percentage of offenders who successfully complete all phases of the programs and graduate.*
- *Development and implementation of a Mental Health Treatment Court.*
- *All specialty courts in the County apply for and become accredited by the Administrative Office of PA Courts (AOPC)*

MEDICAL-ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT) MAINTENANCE AT THE LCCF

Inmates with serious addictions to heroin and other substances are always a pressing concern. Therefore, it behooves the county to continue methods of ensuring that inmates stay drug free during their time in incarceration--as well as upon release--and, as a result, improving their chances of successful reentry. PrimeCare, the organization contracted by the County to deliver medical care at the LCCF, can provide inmates with methadone, subutex, or vivitrol, based on an individual inmate's needs when first entering the LCCF and throughout the inmate's stay there. The County uses funds from the opiate settlement to pay for this maintenance program.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *The County will continue the MAT Maintenance program at the LCCF, including a counseling component.*

JUVENILE PROBATION

Juvenile Treatment Court—Established in 2021 in conjunction with Youth Advocate Program (YAP). This includes working with YAP to implement a parent group for young offenders. The Juvenile Court has also implemented a “FirstMatch” predictive tool for the County. This assessment tool matches 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.

Child Trauma Screen (CTS)—Intended as a brief, empirically based screen for child traumatic stress. CTS can be administered by trained clinical and non-clinical staff, including intake staff, child welfare workers, juvenile probation officers, clinicians, medical providers, and school personnel. CTS is neither a comprehensive screening tool nor a clinical assessment. It does not screen for all types of exposure, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or other traumatic stress reactions. It is not intended to promote lengthy discussions about a young person’s exposure or reaction to trauma; rather, it is intended to assist professionals in determining the presence of trauma and possible need for further assessment or evaluations.

Strategic Plan for 2024-2025

- *Full implementation and continuation of the Treatment Court. Parent groups serve as advocates for parents and facilitating discussions of issues/concerns that generate positive suggestions.*
- *Full establishment and continued use of “FirstMatch” assessment tool.*
- *Full implementation of the Child Trauma Screen (CTS) in 2024. Goals of the CTS are to 1) identify juveniles who could be suffering from trauma exposure and who would benefit from being referred for a more comprehensive trauma-focused assessment by a trained clinician; 2) function as an engagement tool to allow professionals to discuss the juvenile’s exposure to trauma and trauma-related actions, and to support the child/caregiver.*
- *Utilization of “Teen Intervene” as early as March 2024.*

