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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: July 18, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner   
County Administrator

Re: **Update on Pima County's Safety and Justice Challenge Grant Program**

The attached Memorandum from Justice Services Director Kate Vesely summarizes the status of Pima County's involvement in the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC) grant program. It also provides a brief overview of the strategies implemented to date and a jail population analysis comparison from 2014 (pre-SJC application) through 2021.

The MacArthur Foundation has invested \$3.95 million in SJC funding to date in Pima County's jail reduction strategies, of which approximately \$775,000 funding remains. Strategies implemented include increase pretrial assessment and community supervision, pre-booking review of misdemeanors, the Supportive Treatment and engagement Programs (STEPs) Court, Jail Population Review, community engagement, and other efforts. A separate "Race Equity Cohort" grant project recently launched, where Justice Services has partnered with the YWCA to systemically address and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system. The County's funding for that project is \$125,000.

Ms. Vesely's Memorandum notes that when a coalition of Pima County's justice system partners first applied for the SJC, the Pima County Adult Detention Complex's (PCADC, also known as the jail) average daily population (ADP) was over 2,100 detainees and was frequently at or near max capacity (about 2,300 detainees). The ADP in 2021 was 1,616 – a reduction of almost 25 percent since 2014. While the pandemic created a significant drop in 2020 (low 1,300s in May 2020), analysis of the makeup of the 2021 jail population demonstrates that targeted strategies to change how jail is used have been successful. Today's jail population is predominantly more serious felony charges – indicating a fundamental shift toward utilization of detention for community safety. During this same period (2014 to 2021) there was a 25 percent decrease in violent crime bookings

The attached Memorandum notes the strategies implemented to reduce the target population. And that the SJC program is a partnership between our community's justice system partners.

Pima County's active participation in the SJC is expected to conclude in December 2023 if all funds are expended, however it is expected to remain in the SJC "Network" to provide mentorship and technical assistance to other sites throughout the country.

JKL/anc

Attachment

c: Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer  
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator  
Kate Vesely, Director, Justice Services

**Date:** July 14, 2022

**TO:** Jan Lesher  
County Administrator

**From:** Kate Vesely  
Director, Justice Services



**RE:** Overview of the Safety & Justice Challenge with Jail Population Analysis

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The MacArthur Foundation, over the course of several funding opportunities, has invested close to \$4 million in Pima County since 2015 through its [Safety and Justice Challenge \(SJC\) grant program](#), with the objective of safely reducing our jail population and addressing racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of the County's participation in the SJC network, the strategies that implemented to date, and a comparison of the jail population between 2014 (the year before SJC launched) through 2021.

## Summary

When a coalition of Pima County's justice system partners first applied for the SJC, the Pima County Adult Detention Complex's (PCADC, also known as the jail) average daily population (ADP) was over 2,100 detainees and was frequently at or near max capacity (about 2,300 detainees). The majority of detainees were individuals with non-violent/non-dangerous charges like possession of illicit substances, misdemeanor charges, and failures to appear.

Strategies to reduce the target population (misdemeanors, individuals with substance use and/or mental health concerns) have included: pretrial assessment and supervision, electronic monitoring, jail population review, deflection by law enforcement, warrant resolution, reduce failures to appear, improve court accessibility, reduce use of jail for technical violations on probation, case processing efficiencies, and community engagement.

The ADP in 2021 was 1,616 – a reduction of almost 25 percent since 2014. While the pandemic created a significant drop in 2020 (low 1,300s in May 2020), analysis of the makeup of the 2021 jail population demonstrates that targeted strategies to change how jail is used have been successful. Today's jail population is predominantly more serious felony charges – indicating a fundamental shift toward utilization of detention for community safety. During this same period (2014 to 2021) there was a 25 percent decrease in violent crime bookings

Pima County's SJC program is a partnership between our community's justice system partners, though the grant administration and coordination are housed within Pima County Justice Services. We are currently in a sustainability planning stage, identifying resources to continue the most effective SJC strategies. Pima County's participation in the SJC as an Implementation Site is expected to conclude in

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December 2023, but will likely remain part of the SJC network to provide leadership and technical assistance to other sites.

### Overview of the Safety & Justice Challenge

The John D. and Catherine T. [MacArthur Foundation](#), a private foundation perhaps best known for their MacArthur Fellows (the “genius grants”), launched the Safety and Justice Challenge in 2015 with the goal of helping America rethink our use of jails. Pima County was one of ten communities selected to be the first Implementation sites; since then, the SJC network has grown to 57 nationally. Participants in the SJC must commit to identifying drivers of over-incarceration, engage justice and community stakeholders to determine potential solutions, and make a significant investment in data collection and research.

The Foundation seeks not only to implement tangible change in jail populations, but also to change the culture in justice systems regarding the purpose of incarceration – from over-reliance on jail to ensure court appearance, to primarily detaining individuals who present a risk to community safety. Extensive research demonstrates the negative impacts of pretrial incarceration, including loss of employment and housing, challenges with childcare, and increase in overdose fatalities upon release. Over-utilization of jail negatively impacts individuals, family, dependent children, communities, and taxpayer funded resources. Additional information about the SJC and Pima County’s participation in the project is included as **Appendix 1**.

Pima County has received a total of \$3.95 million for the Safety and Justice Challenge:

- \$150,000 Planning Grant (2015)
- \$1.5 million Implementation “Round 1” Funding (2016)
- \$1.5 million Sustainability “Round 2” Funding + \$300,000 for Community Engagement (2018)
- \$500,000 Continued Sustainability “Round 3” Funding (2020)

The majority of funding has primarily gone to Pretrial Services to increase the number of staff conducting community supervision and booking assessments. Other expenditures have included:

- Staff for Superior Court and Tucson Police Department for data, research, and evaluation (no funding has been utilized to support County employees),
- [HEAT](#) (Habilitation, Empowerment, Accountability Therapy; a culturally relevant intervention for young black men with substance use concerns and justice system involvement) training and program operation,
- Amity Foundation to create video series on justice system involvement, and
- Independent contractors to support community engagement and race equity strategies.

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Local strategies, a few of which did not require SJC funding, have included:

- Pretrial assessment and community supervision (Pretrial Services)
- Prebooking Modular: a facility outside the jail intake which screens certain misdemeanors for release prior to booking (Pretrial Services)
- Adult Probation Modifications to Petitions to Revoke and Other Processes (Adult Probation)
- Law Enforcement Deflection (Tucson Police Department)
- Supportive Treatment and Engagements Program (STEPs) Court (Superior Court, Pima County Attorney's Office, and Public Defense Services)
- Jail Population Review (JPR) Committee (Justice Services, Pretrial Services, Pima County Attorney's Office, Public Defenders Office)
- Warrant Resolution (Combined effort of multiple County and City justice agencies)
- Community Engagement (Justice Services, multiple community partners)

Additional details on each of these strategies is also included in **Appendix 2**.

Approximately \$775,000 of SJC funding is remaining and is projected to be fully expended by December 2023. The main priority during this period will be sustaining and identifying alternative funding for strategies that have been effective.

In 2021, Pima County and community partner, [YWCA of Southern Arizona](#), applied jointly for and were awarded a separate MacArthur Foundation grant opportunity that focuses on systemically addressing racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system. Pima was one of four sites selected nationally for the Race Equity Cohort (REC). Total funding for the project is \$500,000, of which Pima County will receive approximately \$175,000, with the remaining balance allocated to YWCA. Pima County voluntarily reduced its portion of funding to support the hiring of additional staff at YWCA, who will launch their new Race Equity Center. Additional information about the REC project is included as **Appendix 3**.

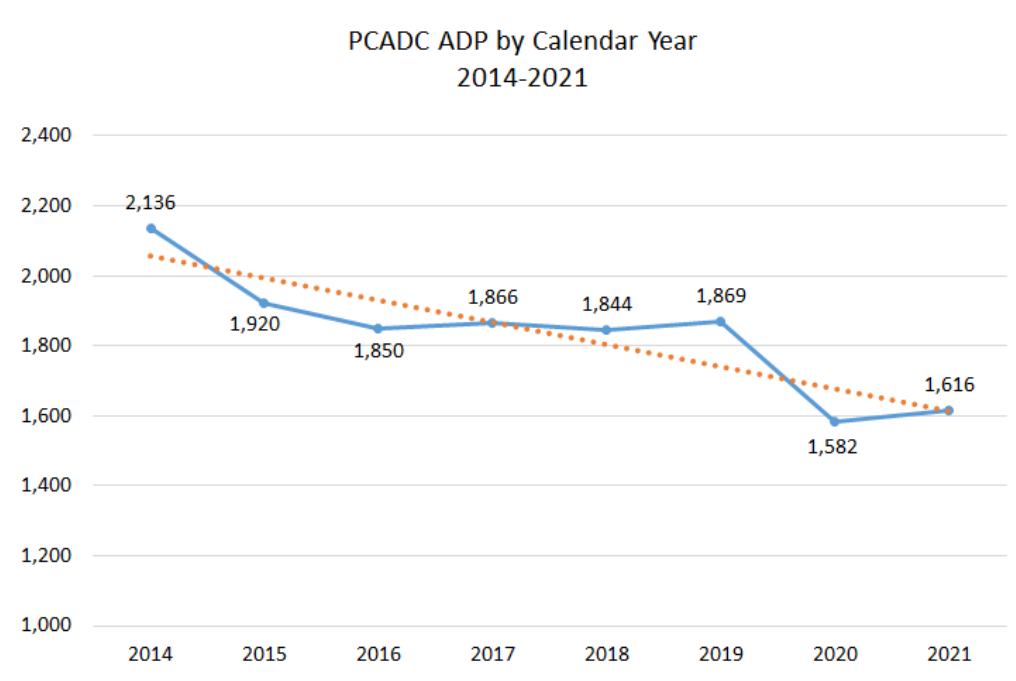
Jail Population – Data Highlights

There has been a 25 percent reduction in jail population from 2014 (average daily population of 2,136) to 2022 (average daily population of 1,616). This reduction is primarily attributed to reducing misdemeanor detention, implementing diversion and deflection programs, reducing the amount of time an individual (both pretrial and while on probation) spends in custody. During this period, Pima County's overall population increased by approximately six percent.

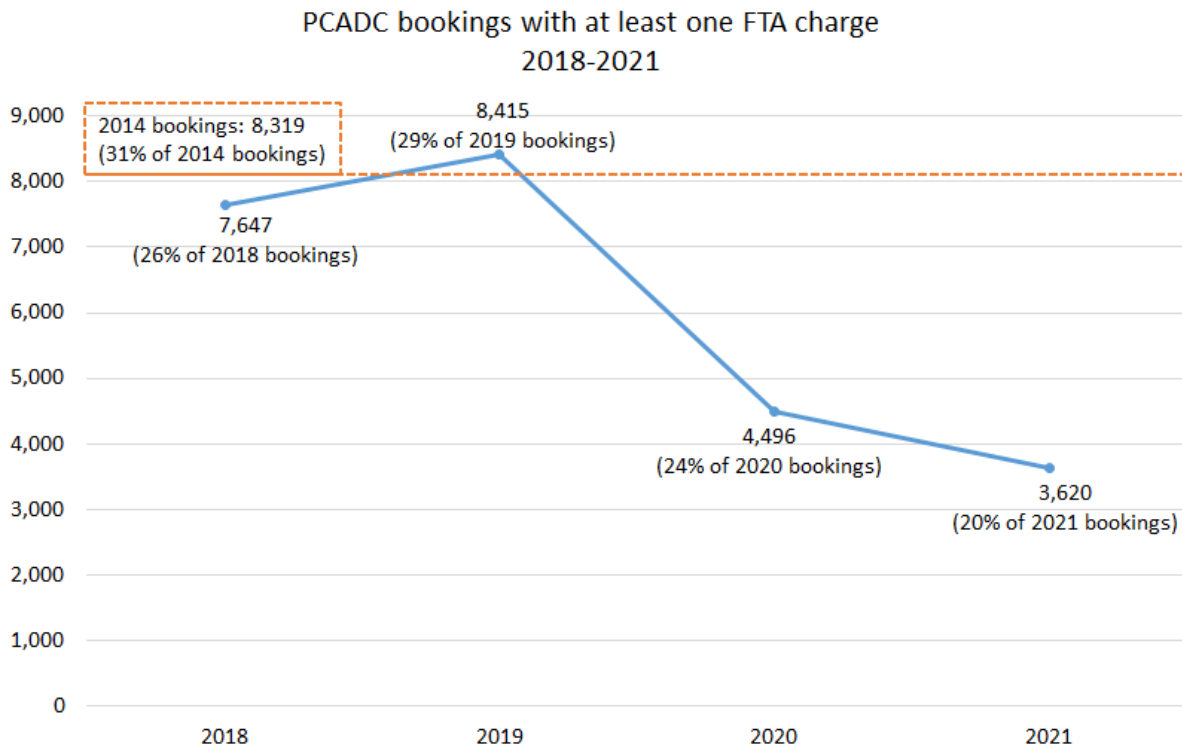
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One of the most significant reductions is among individuals booked on Failure to Appear (FTA). From 2014 to 2021, there was a 56 percent reduction in FTA bookings. Additionally, the percentage of FTA bookings, out of the total PCADC bookings, decreased by 11% from 2014 to 2021.

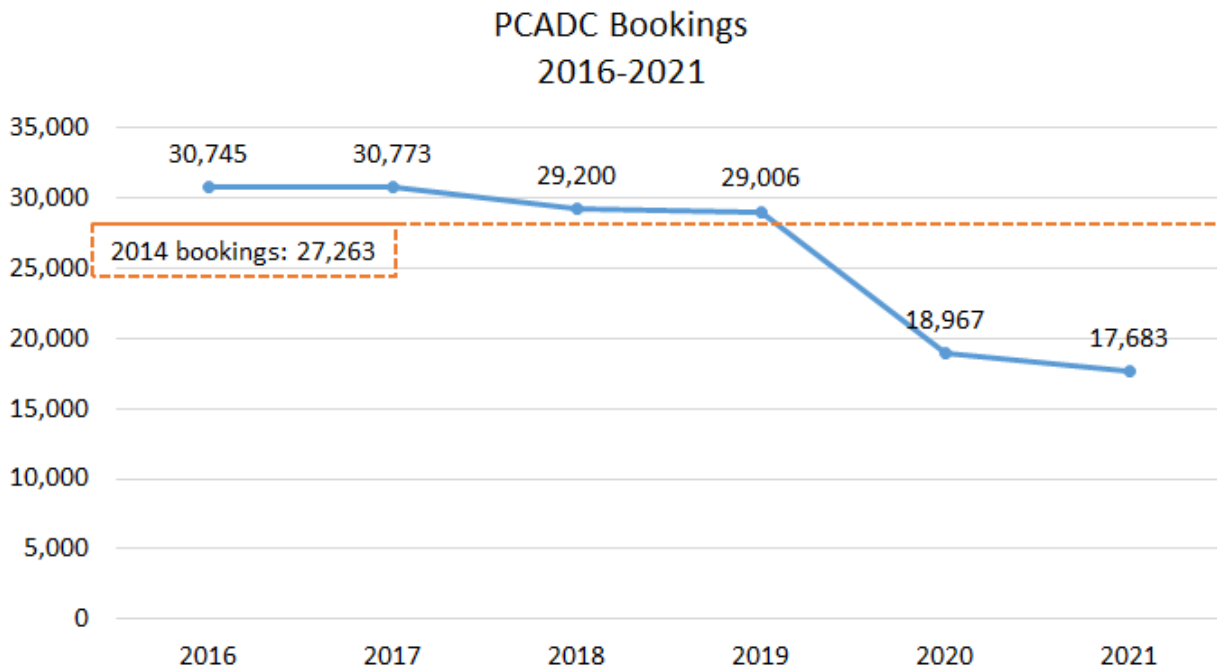


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Overall, the average number of bookings into the jail reduced by 35 percent since 2016 (the first year of the SJC programs). While the greatest reduction was in 2020, bookings continued to drop into 2021 and remained lower – despite arrest rates increasing after COVID-related charging moratoriums were lifted.



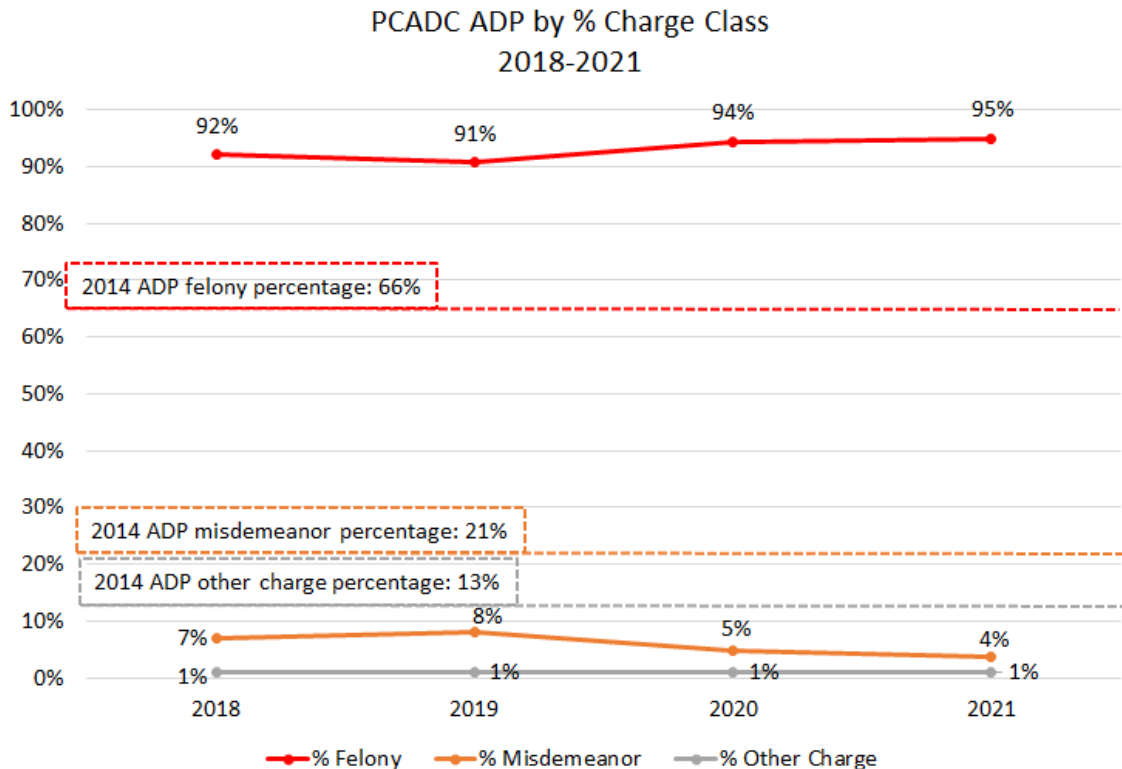
Pima County has reduced the jail’s population by targeting individuals who present a limited risk of dangerousness to the community. The most dramatic reductions from 2014 to today have been the number of misdemeanors and individuals charged with personal use drug crimes.

Individuals held in PCADC on misdemeanor-only charges dropped significantly. In 2014, misdemeanors represented 21 percent, whereas felony charges were 66 percent, of the overall jail population. By 2021, misdemeanors constituted only 4 percent of the jail population and felonies 95 percent.

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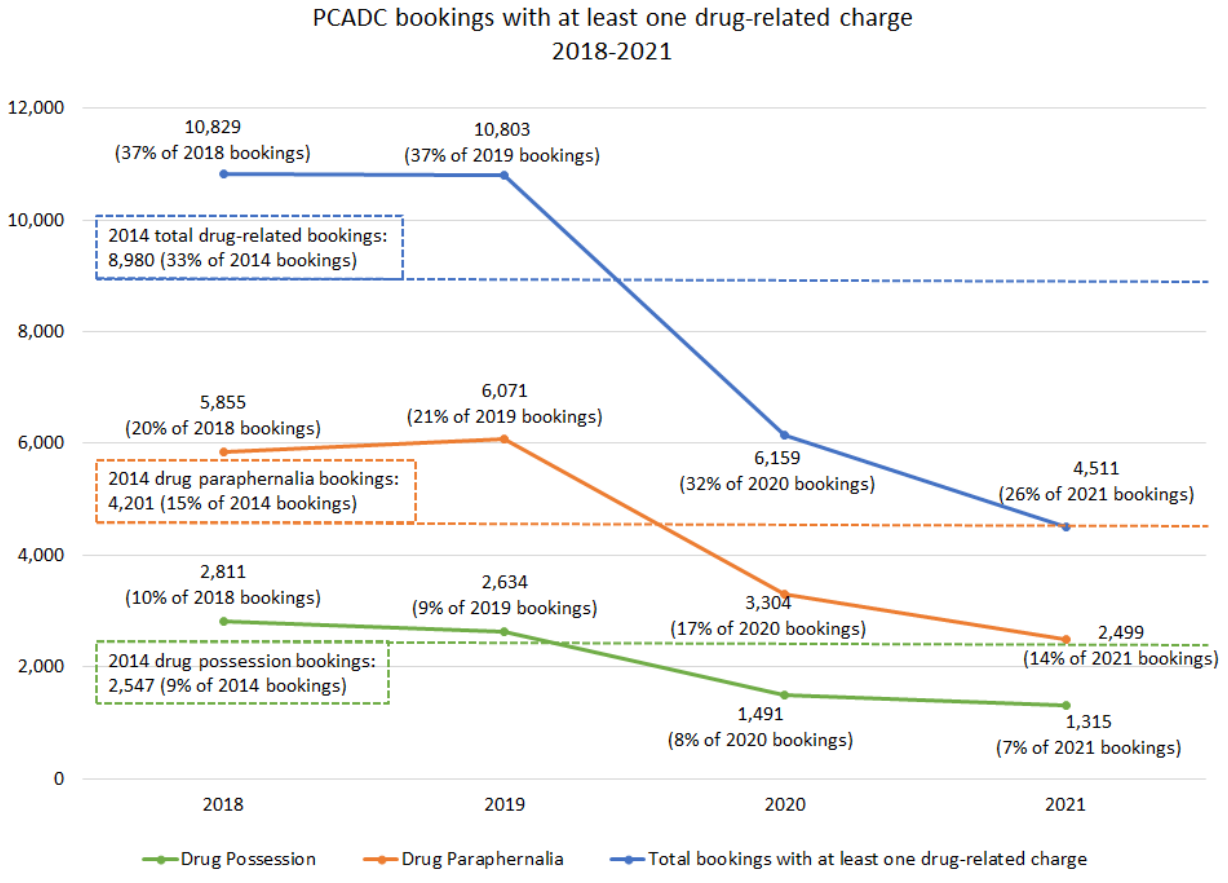
While many of the SJC strategies focused on reducing misdemeanors in custody, including warrant resolution events and implementation of deflection programs, the Pretrial Services Pre-Booking Modular (which is located in the PCADC parking lot just outside the jail’s intake entry) misdemeanors from custody. Pretrial Services Director Domingo Corona has provided additional information and data regarding the positions funded by SJC and outcomes of those strategies, included as **Attachment 1**.

The other category of most significant reduction was personal use drug possession and paraphernalia. The percentage of drug bookings out of total bookings per year decreased 12 percent from 2014 to 2021, and the number of overall drug-related bookings per year decreased 55 percent during this period. In 2020, in response to the COVID pandemic, justice system leadership across law enforcement, prosecution, and the courts implemented multiple strategies to reduce non-violent, non-dangerous individuals with non-victim charges from both charging and booking. The most significant decrease in 2020 may largely be attributed to those strategies, however new programming launched with SJC resources, like the [Supportive Treatment and Engagement Program \(STEPs\) Court](#), works to continue to keep these numbers low as we emerge from the pandemic.

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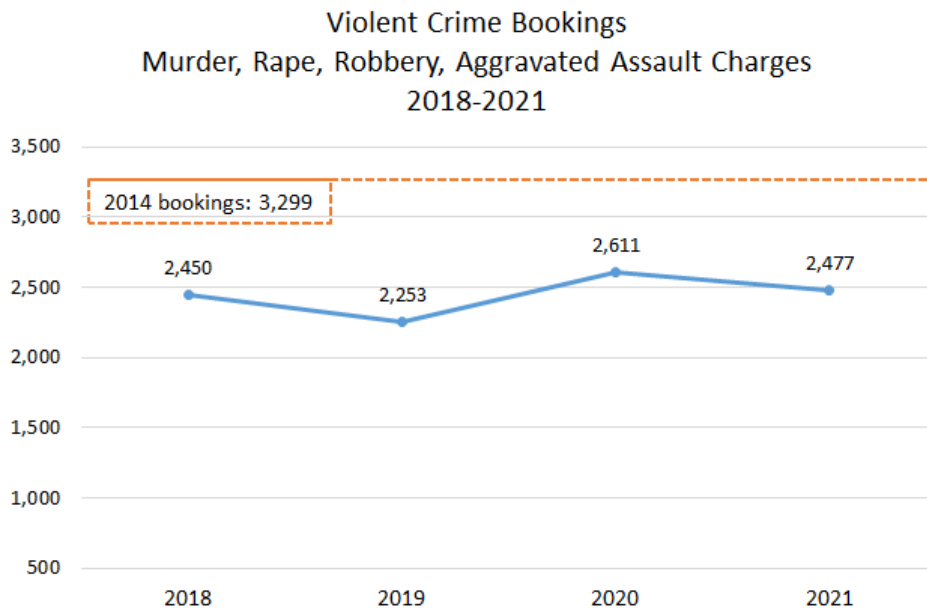
Despite the 25 percent reduction in jail population (and six percent increase in community population), violent crime charges booked into PCADC have remained statistically stable for the last four years (and have dropped overall 25 percent since 2014, from 3,299 bookings to 2,477 bookings). It should be noted that, like all other charges discussed in this report, these statistics reflect only *reported* violent crimes in Pima County.



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*Data and charts prepared by Sara Lomayesva, Research and Evaluation Specialist (Justice Services), with assistance from Amelia Gallardo, Pima County Sheriff's Department.*

Other meaningful outcomes have been cited by system partners. Foremost among this list are the reduction of silos among justice systems, improved information sharing, understanding of how each intercept of our local justice system may have ripple effects elsewhere, and resource sharing to improve economies of scale.

Another mark of progress is community engagement. Our local community has better access to justice system leaders, insight into and influence in various system improvement strategies, and regular interaction with Justice Services and its programs.

### Where Do We Go From Here?

While much has been done to reduce our jail population without increasing violent crime since joining the SJC in 2015, we have the capacity and impetus to do much more.

Justice Services, working in collaboration with our justice system and community partners, have identified several strategies that will serve to further reduce target populations in our jail. This includes:

- Technology to support Virtual Court appearances: The pandemic has shown us how technology can be utilized effectively in the courtroom – virtual appearances have likely contributed to increased appearance for hearings (making it easier for individuals to avoid missing work, requiring transportation, or obtaining childcare). Providing resources to facilitate virtual appearances, to both the courts as well as individuals with justice-system involvement, will

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further reduce FTAs (which, despite significant reductions, still represent 26 percent of the overall jail population as of June 2022).

- **Electronic monitoring (EM):** Electronic monitoring has come a long way in recent years, and this community supervision tool can now include an app on your phone or a device that looks like a watch. Implementing a range of EM options, depending on an individual's compliance with pretrial or probation conditions, can tailor community supervision each person's needs.
- **Data collection & cross-agency reconciliation:** Justice Services, in partnership with Pima County Analytics and Data Governance (ADG) seeks to implement a centralized justice data warehouse. This combined databank will not only receive information from multiple, siloed justice databases (in a de-identified and secure system), but facilitate complex analysis across the justice system – providing the most advanced examination of our local justice system and enabling data-driven decision-making and best practice implementation.
- **Addressing racial and ethnic disparities:** In a five-year analysis of PCADC bookings by race/ethnicity, the percentage of individuals identified Latinx and Black increased three percent, while the percentage of White (non-Hispanic) individuals booked decreased by six percent. Addressing these disparities will require targeted intervention, in multiple areas, over a significant period of time. Justice Services' work to create a justice data warehouse will also better identify areas of disproportionality – enabling more targeted interventions.

### Conclusion

Pima County, through its work with the Safety and Justice Challenge as well as our many other pioneering strategies to increase community safety, decrease taxpayer costs, and improve outcomes associated with the justice system, has positioned itself nationally to be among the most innovative and successful communities. Tucson and Pima County are frequently cited in articles, receive site visits, are contacted for research and best practice studies, and provide mentorship to other communities working in justice system improvement. While our active participation in SJC will be decreasing over the next year and a half, the trajectory of this work has a very bright future.

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**Appendices**

1. About the MacArthur Foundation Safety & Justice Challenge
  - a. Timeline of Pima County's Safety & Justice Challenge
2. Pima County's Strategies Overview
3. About the 2022 Race Equity Cohort (REC) "RERoot" Project

**Attachment:** Memorandum from Domingo Corona, Director of Pretrial Services

**Linked Websites**

1. MacArthur Foundation's Safety & Justice Challenge: <https://safetyandjusticechallenge.org/>
2. MacArthur Foundation: <https://www.macfound.org/>
3. YWCA of Southern Arizona: <https://ywcatuson.org/>
4. HEAT Program: <http://heattime.org/>
5. Supportive Treatment and Engagement Program (STEPS) Court: <https://www.sc.pima.gov/news/superior-court-launches-steps-pre-indictment-diversion-program/>

CC: Francisco García, Deputy County Administrator  
Monica Perez, Chief of Staff

## APPENDIX 1

### Pima County's MacArthur Foundation Safety & Justice Challenge

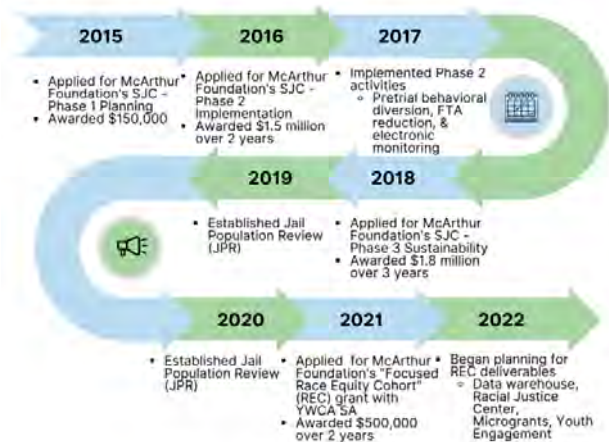
The [Safety & Justice Challenge \(SJC\)](#) Safety & Justice Challenge (SJC) is a collaborative criminal justice reform effort between the [John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#), criminal justice system partners from 57 jurisdictions, and allies ranging from non-profit organizations to research institutes. The main goal of the initiative is to safely reduce the use of incarceration in the United States through strategies targeting systemic change. These strategies are enacted at multiple intercept points in the criminal justice system, from law enforcement deflection to post-conviction alternatives to incarceration. The SJC and the MacArthur Foundation have established a wide support network that invests funding and technical assistance resources into the jurisdictions involved, fostering community and equity-centered innovation.

The Safety and Justice Challenge is a national five-year **\$100 million** investment provided by the MacArthur Foundation. The purpose of the Challenge is to fund initiatives to safely reduce over-incarceration by fostering and supporting dialogue about how Americans think and currently use jails. The Challenge additionally promotes fairer and more effective alternatives to incarceration by examining and addressing racial and ethnic disparities (RED). Additionally, the Challenge emphasizes using data and evidence-based practices to inform policy change. Pima County was awarded **\$3,950,000** between 2015 and 2021, including **4 grants** in **Criminal Justice**. In 2022, a **Racial Equity grant** was awarded for **\$500,000 (split with the YWCA Southern Arizona)**.

Since 2013, criminal justice system agencies in Pima County have focused on reducing recidivism. The agencies are committed to collaborative, data-driven, and evidence-based efforts. For example, Pima County Pretrial

Services make pretrial release recommendations, and Adult Probation conduct needs assessments for sentenced probationers. These efforts are examples of risk assessment practices utilized in Pima County. In addition, in 2013 and 2015, Pima County piloted a Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) tool to establish a needs-based plan for probationers and in-custody defendants. In 2014, the Sheriff and County Administrator obtained technical assistance to develop jail re-entry strategies and programs from the National Institute of Corrections. The momentum of the criminal justice reform laid the groundwork for Pima County to apply for the SJC in 2015.

### Timeline of Pima County's Safety & Justice Challenge



Following a national competition in 2015, Pima County was among twenty jurisdictions selected for inclusion in the Safety and Justice Challenge Network, the centerpiece of the Foundation's strategy to address over-incarceration by reducing jail misuse and overuse. Pima County was initially awarded **\$150,000**. Supporting Pima County's participation in a structured data analysis and planning process, assessing local drivers of jail incarceration, setting reduction targets, and developing a plan to achieve them. Resulting plans were scored by an expert panel

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on the basis of ambition, comprehensiveness, and achievability, and eleven, including Pima County, were selected for implementation funding on the basis of this review. This two-year award enables Pima County to institute changes aimed at reducing local incarceration and disparities in jail usage in accordance with its implementation plan.

In 2016, with the **\$1.5 million award** over two years, Pima County focused on implementing three major strategies identified in the application (pretrial behavioral health diversion, FTA reduction/resolution, and home detention/electronic monitoring). Secondly, address economic and racial disparity issues in the criminal justice system. Thirdly, educate and empower community members. Fourthly, use data and information to drive decision-making and promote lasting system changes.

In 2018, Pima County was awarded **\$1.8 million** over the next three years. Under previous awards, Pima County engaged in a structured, collaborative process to identify local drivers of unnecessary jail incarceration, generated an ambitious plan to address them, and implemented the plan over a two-year period with technical assistance and guidance from a consortium of national experts. This award enables Pima County to sustain and expand its reform work, implementing changes across an array of criminal justice processing and decision points with the goal of safely achieving reductions in local incarceration and reducing racial and ethnic disparities. For example, implementing changes across various criminal justice processing and decision points to safely achieve reductions in local incarceration and reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

In 2021, Pima County collaborated with YWCA Southern Arizona to apply for MacArthur Foundation's "Focused Race Equity Cohort" grant. Pima County and YWCA were awarded a total of **\$500,000** that they split. The two-year

grant focuses on ways to eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in Pima County's local justice system. This funding will provide peer-to-peer support from other cohort members, technical assistance and training focused on racial equity and authentic community engagement, and qualitative and quantitative data and analytical support.

In addition, Pima County received a no-cost extension and will continue the grant funding **until December 2023**. Pima County continues to plan for sustainable opportunities once the McArthur Foundation funds are no longer accessible.

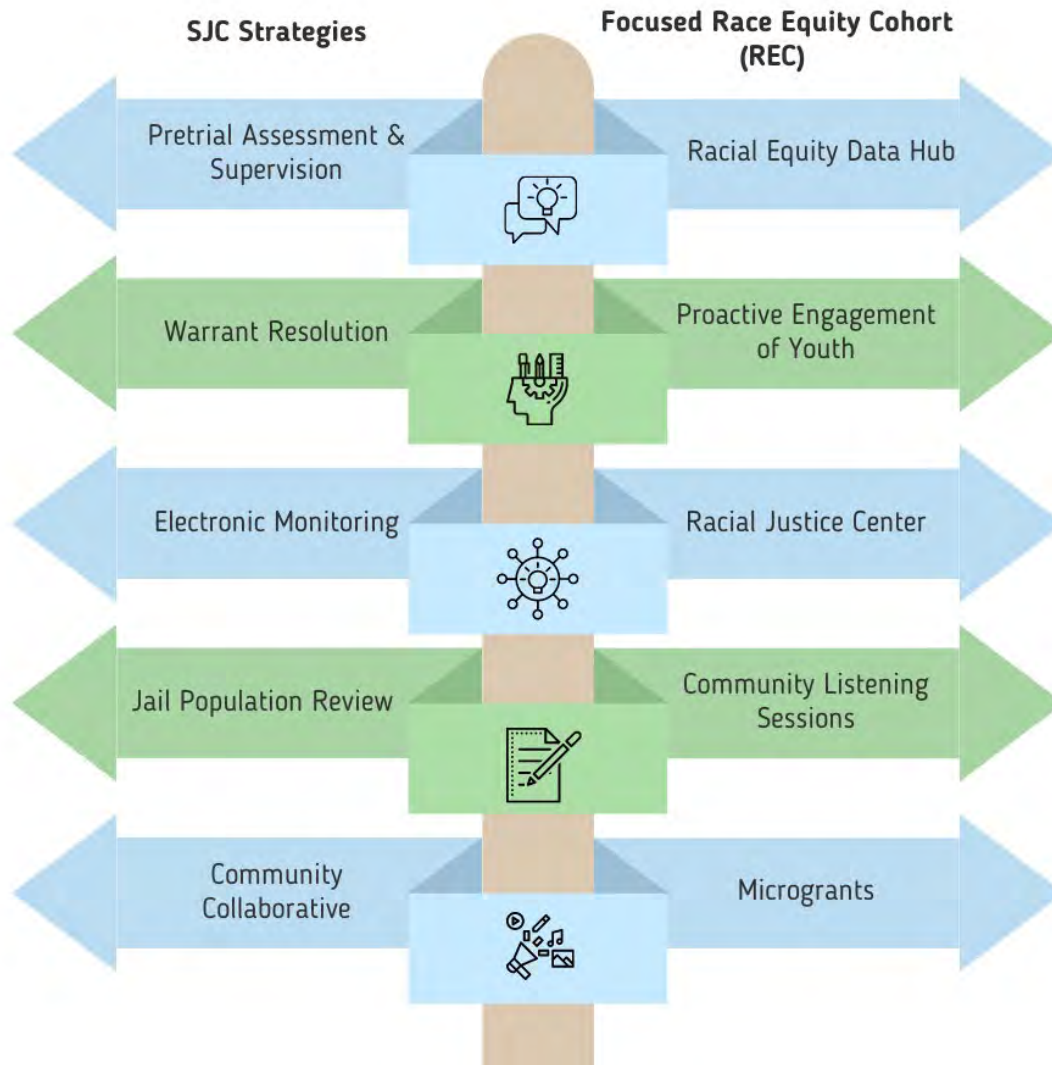
The following entities have been partners in the SJC program. Unless noted, participation in SJC commenced with the initial application in 2015.

- Pima County Administration
- Pima County Superior Court
  - Pima County Pretrial Services
  - Pima County Adult Probation
- Pima County Attorney's Office (PCAO)
- Pima County Sheriff's Department (PCSD)
- City of Tucson
  - Tucson City Court
  - Tucson Police Department (TPD)
  - City Prosecutor
- Pima County Public Defender
- Pima County Legal Defender
- Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA)
- Pima County Behavioral Health Department
- YWCA of Southern Arizona (joined in 2021 as Race Equity Cohort Community Partner)

## APPENDIX 2

### Pima County's Safety & Justice Challenge- Strategies & Activities

Since 2015, Pima County has deployed a multitude of strategies, to reduce jail population; increase community safety, save community cost and most recently (2022) address racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionalities.



*Pima County Safety and Justice Challenge and Racial Equity Cohort Strategies and Activities, 2015- 2022.*

**Jail Population Review:** The conception of the Jail Population Review (JPR) Committee occurred in the concluding months of Round 1 funding (end of 2018); therefore, the formal planning, construction and implementation transpired in Round 2 (first half of 2019). Modeled after Lucas County, JPR was created to safely reduce the jail population and reduce racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionalities, while addressing the underlying causes of crime such as substance use disorders, mental health, and housing instability.

Jail Population Review (JPR) Committee and Support for Released Participants: The JPR Committee (approaching its third year of operation) continues to meet weekly to review charges,

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criminal history, and socio-economic status of recent Pima County Adult Detention Complex (PCADC) detainees and identifies potential releases with low public safety risk. The past year, we saw the most individuals released since the group's inception in 2019, with 264 individuals released in 2021 and 684 total since 2019. We estimate that the program has saved over 50,000 jail days in its less-than three years of operation. Collaboration among Pima County justice system partners ensured transportation and housing were provided to released persons who otherwise would have been homeless. At the beginning of the pandemic, we were given authorization by the MacArthur Foundation to redirect some funding to provide housing for individuals being released homeless. Later, we added the "release bags" component, providing to each individual a durable bag where they could store personal items. The bags include resources like basic toiletries, socks, feminine hygiene supplies, a small blanket, first aid kit, hand sanitizer, soap, a face mask, and other items that support individuals who are homeless and may be going into transitional housing with no resources. Both of these efforts have been highly successful; we have identified significant correlation to housing and appearance in court (and therefore, a reduction in "failure to appear" warrants). It is our intention to continue this resource, and expand our data monitoring strategies to quantify the program's impact.

**Pretrial Assessment and Supervision:** One of the primary strategies to reduce the jail population and racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system revolved around Pretrial Services (PTS) efforts. One of these efforts came to fruition in April of 2017 when PTS launched enhanced community behavioral health treatment options as an alternative to incarceration. Screenings are conducted prior to Initial Appearances (IAs), allowing judges to utilize the findings to refer individuals to treatment and other resources instead of jail. Simultaneously, this increased PTS's capacity to supervise higher-risk individuals.

Another PTS strategy employed was the expansion of the pretrial assessment and evidence-based risk screening (utilizing the SAMHSA Brief Jail Mental Health Screen) to misdemeanor charges, which was successfully implemented in October 2016. With this being operational, all individuals with misdemeanor charges were screened prior to Initial Appearance (IA) and resulted in less pretrial misdemeanors in the jail population.

These two PTS related efforts were estimated to decrease the average daily population of the Pima County Adult Detention Center (PCADC) by 191 individuals, while simultaneously targeting existing racial and ethnic disparities. The costs associated with this strategy mostly revolved around PTS staffing.

Superior Court's Pre Trial Services (PTS) implemented Enhanced Supervision (ES) is a supervision program meant to facilitate expedited referrals to mental health and/or substance use providers for pretrial defendants. The program includes a notification to the Initial Appearance (IA) Judge that an individual is suitable for the expedited referral program, and the IA Judge will release the defendant, many times with a court condition denoting program placement, with the understanding this referral will take place soon after initial release, keeping individuals with mental health issues out of the Pima County jail. The Enhanced Supervision Team is made up of one (1) Administrative Program Coordinator, one (1) Enhanced Supervision Specialist, and four (4) Pretrial Services officers. In Calendar Year 2021, approximately 1,215 individuals were released to ES at their IA hearing; of ES eligible defendants, approximately 89 percent released without financial conditions. This strategy was funding through July 2021, and then transitioned to Pima County General funds funding, ensuring long-term sustainability.

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The Universal Screening Team, comprising of nine (9) Pretrial Services Officers and a non-SJC funded initiative, for the purpose of screening all misdemeanors booked into the jail (or pre-booking modular). The Universal Screening program deflected 2,871 individuals from booking at the Pima County Adult Detention Complex (PCADC) in the first and second quarters of Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Including Pre-Booking releases, a total of 3,114 individuals were released prior to Initial Appearance (IA). Even with reduced misdemeanor screening numbers due to COVID-19, approximately 259.5 defendants are being released prior to booking every month. We know that the pre-booking modular has been a key resource in reducing misdemeanors in jail, and we hope in the coming years we hope to expand this option to felonies. Currently, we are limited by statute, but we are exploring ways that this might be overcome. This strategy was funded through July 2021, and then transitioned to Pima County general funds funding, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Supportive Treatment and Engagement Programs (STEPS) diversion program – this is a program we adapted from a similar RIC Docket in Harris County, Texas. This pre-indictment diversion program launched March 2021. The specialty court started strong, however a moratorium from MacArthur was utilized to support STEPS Program Manager for Pretrial Services and a STEPS Research Analyst for Superior Court; the Program Manager costs have been shifted to General Funds funding but we continue to support the Research and Evaluation Specialist with SJC funds. It is our intention in 2022 to expand financial support to STEPS diversion through peer support and incentives to increase appearance rates and program completion.

**Warrant Resolution:** Data analysis conducted during the initial 2015 planning stage revealed that warrants and Failure-to-Appears (FTAs) were the largest contributing factors of the jail population and disproportionately impacted people of color. In response, the warrant resolution strategy was formulated with the overarching goal of increasing the accessibility of courts and the feasibility of quashing warrants. Some of the strategies that were initially employed, and have evolved since, are: enhanced automated reminders of upcoming court dates (via phone calls, texts, and emails) and Warrant Resolution Court at Justice Court and Tucson City Court to provide extended court hours and make court more accessible for individuals with outstanding warrants (weekend court, weeknight court, weekday walk-in courts, joint weekend/evening courts).

During the initial application, this strategy was estimated to reduce the average daily jail population by 164 individuals, while simultaneously targeting racial and ethnic disparities present in the system. Due to waning attendance over the years, night and weekend Warrant Resolution Court was discontinued at the end of 2019. However, warrant resolution during business hours became a practice adopted by Tucson City Court.

Data Analyst position at Tucson Police Department (TPD); whose efforts resulted in interactive data dashboards on a variety of topics including use of force, reported crimes, arrests, traffic collisions, traffic enforcement, and police activity. The individual filling this position at TPD accepted another position mid-year, and TPD has not yet filled the position. We hope to have this position filled in 2022.

**Community Engagement and Collaborative:** The Community Collaborative, composed of 32 members (determined via an application process), was initiated in September of 2016. 18 community members and 14 government representatives met quarterly to advise on overall Safety and Justice Challenge strategies,



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with an emphasis on Racial Equity Disproportionalities & Disparities (RED&D) work. Collaborative members represented diverse experiences and included persons of color, formerly incarcerated individuals, the faith community, justice reform advocates, law enforcement, and justice system stakeholders, among others.

Tribal Listening Sessions: This strategy launched in 2020, just before the beginning of the pandemic. Our contractor, Jasper Kinsley, struggled significantly to engage with our local tribal communities during the “shut down” period, and it was only in 2021 that he was able to shift to an online format for the Listening Sessions. Unfortunately, the virtual format had very limited attendance and the series was concluded early. Our contractor felt that limited participation likely resulted from limited access to technology on the reservations, that there was distrust of government entities, and that talking about justice system involvement in the local communities was a social taboo that carried a stigma. Unfortunately, the contractor was not able to complete a final report, where we requested these insights be documented to help guide future efforts. In internal assessment, we also felt as though advertising of the listening sessions could have targeted a much broader audience as the contractor was only marketing the events in one tribe’s local newspaper. We intend to revisit tribal engagement strategies in 2022, seeking new technical assistance and guidance on building trust with indigenous communities, and by working with organizations that have experience and history working with our tribal communities.

HEAT Program: The Habilitation Empowerment Accountability Training (HEAT) program focuses on African American males between the ages of 18 and 29, providing leadership and mentorship. Getting this program to Pima County has been several years in the planning, and we are thrilled that the program finally launched in 2021. After a virtual three-day training with the Pinwheel group occurred in early February 2021, Justice Services identified and contracted a local treatment provider that specialized in peer support, [HOPE, Inc.](#), to run the program. The \$90,000 contract is for a two-year period. Placing the program with a treatment provider meant that the group’s facilitator, Gerald Williams, would receive supplemental training and clinical supervision and have the opportunity for program sustainability through Medicaid funding. The program officially went live in fall 2021, and we are currently working to market HEAT to our system partners to increase referrals. We are also exploring expanding the HEAT program to include women (HER) and HEAT for youth.

### **Focused Racial Equity Cohort Strategies & Activities**

In August of 2021, the Pima County Safety + Justice Challenge Community Collaborative (the Collaborative) and YWCA of Southern Arizona (YWCA) proposed partnering to build the capacity for deeper system-wide examination of racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparities (RED&D) in the local criminal justice system and applied for the Racial Equity Cohort Grant. Each partner brought a rich network and experience that has been leveraged to fill critical gaps in the local movement for racial justice. This partnership took shape around shared values, including multi-sector collaboration, evidence-based decision-making, and community ownership.

As co-leads, Justice Services and the YWCA will work to address national and local drivers of racial inequities. Focusing on four distinct strategies. Justice Services aims to create new data management systems to better understand where disparities occur in the justice system and to implement data-driven decision-making and targeted interventions. The YWCA will focus on community engagement, including

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listening-sessions and creating a racial justice center, as well as community investment through youth interventions and microgrants.

**Establishing a Racial Equity Data Hub:** To eliminate racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionalities (RED&D), Pima County must first accurately identify them and understand their root causes. By funding and establishing a centralized data warehouse for information sharing and analysis across the local justice system, this will allow for collecting and storing quantitative and qualitative data from system and community collaborators to provide an evidence-based understanding of where RED&D exist and how it affects community quality of life.

Building upon years of community visioning around data integration, we will establish a public-facing dashboard with accurate and up-to-date information that clearly identifies and tracks RED&D through weekly snapshots and clear data visualization. DJS has hired a Research and Evaluation Specialist to oversee the technical process of creating the dashboard utilizing input gleaned through a 15-month community dialogue series co-facilitated by the YWCA and the Racial Equity Community Action Team (RECAT). DJS prescribes the dashboard homepage will be a digital hub of resources and information for both residents who are navigating the justice system and those who are working to change it.

**Proactive Youth Engagement:** DJS has partnered with Teen Court to develop a community-centered process for examining the school-to-prison pipeline. Teen Court's success is attributed to its unique youth leadership model that uses adolescents as attorneys, bailiffs, clerks, and jurors for youth diverted from Juvenile Court. This partnership shifts the lens to consider approaches to intervention before an arrest ever occurs.

DJS and the YWCA will collaborate toward the facilitation of intergenerational dialogue involving Teen Court participants, area school districts, law enforcement, Collaborative members, and county leadership. Groups will share data, challenges, and ideas during a six-month listening session process, culminating with the development of recommendations for disrupting pathways to incarceration for local youth. Everyday Democracy will support training for a cadre of youth facilitators to guide this process. This cadre will be comprised entirely of formerly justice-involved youth who have successfully completed the Teen Court program; a true mirror of those the program serves. With the goal of youth, standing on equal footing with adults to facilitate all workshops offered through Teen Court. Additional support will go toward expanding Teen Court's capacity through technology upgrades, a professional development fund for youth participants, and expanded staff capacity.

YWCA will continue to make efforts to engage teens who have lived experience and completed the Teen Court program, to create opportunities for mentorship and guidance. These youths will not only be on the front lines of the Teen Court program, but also sitting at the table influencing programs and policies with equal footing to their adult counterparts.

**The groundwork for a Racial Justice Center:** DJS and the YWCA continue to collaborate toward laying the groundwork for a Racial Justice Center housed at the YWCA. Over the past two years, extreme political polarization, a global pandemic, and the national Movement for Black Lives have brought greater attention and intention to local conversations around inequity. As a county leader

## APPENDIX 2

in this space, the YWCA has developed resources to address needs in the regional landscape, including training and support services for organizations engaged in equity processes.

This partnership around Racial Equity Disparities & Disproportionalities (RED&D) in the criminal justice system comes with the opportunity for assessment of regional gaps in knowledge, skills, and expertise around facilitating racial justice work. YWCA will engage an AmeriCorps Vista member in research and planning for the Center, and its Racial Justice Coordinator will manage the launch process. A third-party evaluator will be engaged in the early planning stages to ensure insights gained from this process are used to inform future local efforts.

**Fostering Innovation and Collaboration through Microgrants:** Recognizing that those closest to the problem are often closest to the solution, partners have allocated \$50,000 to developing additional racial equity strategies proposed by system-impacted individuals and grassroots organizations. Microgrants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded in Year 1 of Cohort participation through an equitable re-granting process. This process was designed with input from Racial Equity Community Action Team (RECAT) participants. This strategy is a favorite among Community Collaborative members, who see it as a path to new ideas, increased engagement, and leadership development.

In our upcoming No-Cost Extension (NCE) budget modification request, we intend to focus on the following priorities in 2022:

- Support the Supportive Treatment and Engagement Programs (STEPS) pre-indictment diversion program; specifically, in increasing rate of appearance at their first court hearing;
- Support the development and implementation of a Restorative Justice diversion program;
- Expand deflection beyond Tucson Police Department to other law enforcement agencies throughout Pima County (with the intention of reducing jail bookings);
- Increase referrals to the HEAT program, and exploring opportunities to create other culturally responsive programming to meet our community's unique needs (i.e. programming for Latinx individuals);
- Invest in new community engagement strategies, including growth of the Community Collaborative as well as new approaches as part of our RERoot project (a collaboration with the YWCA of Southern Arizona, in our Race Equity Cohort);
- Invest in new data collection and evaluation opportunities to assess the efficacy of our SJC and other justice reform strategies (including the implementation of a justice data warehouse); and
- Increase our community's awareness of local justice reform efforts, their knowledge of how the justice system operates, and resources available at each intercept (decision point) of justice system proceedings.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Pima County’s MacArthur Foundation Safety & Justice Challenge - Racial Equity Cohort**

Cities and counties participating in the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC) significantly reduced their jail populations over the past few years – both prior to and since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite that progress, racial and ethnic disparities in jails persist. In January 2022, the Challenge deepened its commitment to learning and investing in more intentional and effective strategies to eliminate institutional and systemic racism within the justice system. It selected four jurisdictions to join a new Racial Equity Cohort based on proposals that explicitly focused on racial and ethnic equity in the criminal justice system.

Pima County, was amongst the four selected sites to participate in this initial cohort. Participation in the Racial Equity Cohort provides communities with training and technical assistance focused on racial equity and authentic community engagement, peer-to-peer support from other cohort members, and qualitative and quantitative data and analytic support.

A total of **\$500,000** in award is to be split between Pima County and its community partner, YWCA Southern Arizona. Partners will be co-creating goals, strategies and ways to collaborate to advance racial and ethnic equity in the justice system, center lived experience, and emphasize the SJC Community Engagement Pillars of authenticity, accessibility and transparency, respect for diversity, and commitment to ongoing engagement. Each partner has been granted an independent budget to address these areas, but are working in conjunction to accomplish overarching goals. A majority of the Pima County budget has been dedicated to building a data warehouse.

The partnership aims to establish an infrastructure for equity by addressing three of the most pervasive challenges identified:

1. A dearth of accessible system-wide data analysis to identify, measure, and track racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionalities (REDD).
2. Historical conflict, distrust, and power imbalance between the county government and BIPOC communities.
3. Limited resources, information, and expertise around racial justice facilitation.

Some of the primary goals formulated by this partnership are: to establish a racial equity data hub, proactively engage youth, lay the groundwork for a Racial Justice Center, and foster innovation and collaboration via microgrants. Other desired outcomes include a measurable impact on race and ethnicity in our justice systems (i.e. jail, specialty courts, etc.), creating trust with historically disadvantaged communities, and increasing access to resources for BIPOC individuals involved in the justice system.

*Partnership logo*



# ATTACHMENT 1



# MEMORANDUM

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Date: July 14, 2022

To: Kate Vesely  
Director of Justice Services, Pima County

From: Domingo Corona,  
Pretrial Services Director

Re: **Universal Screening and Enhanced Supervision**

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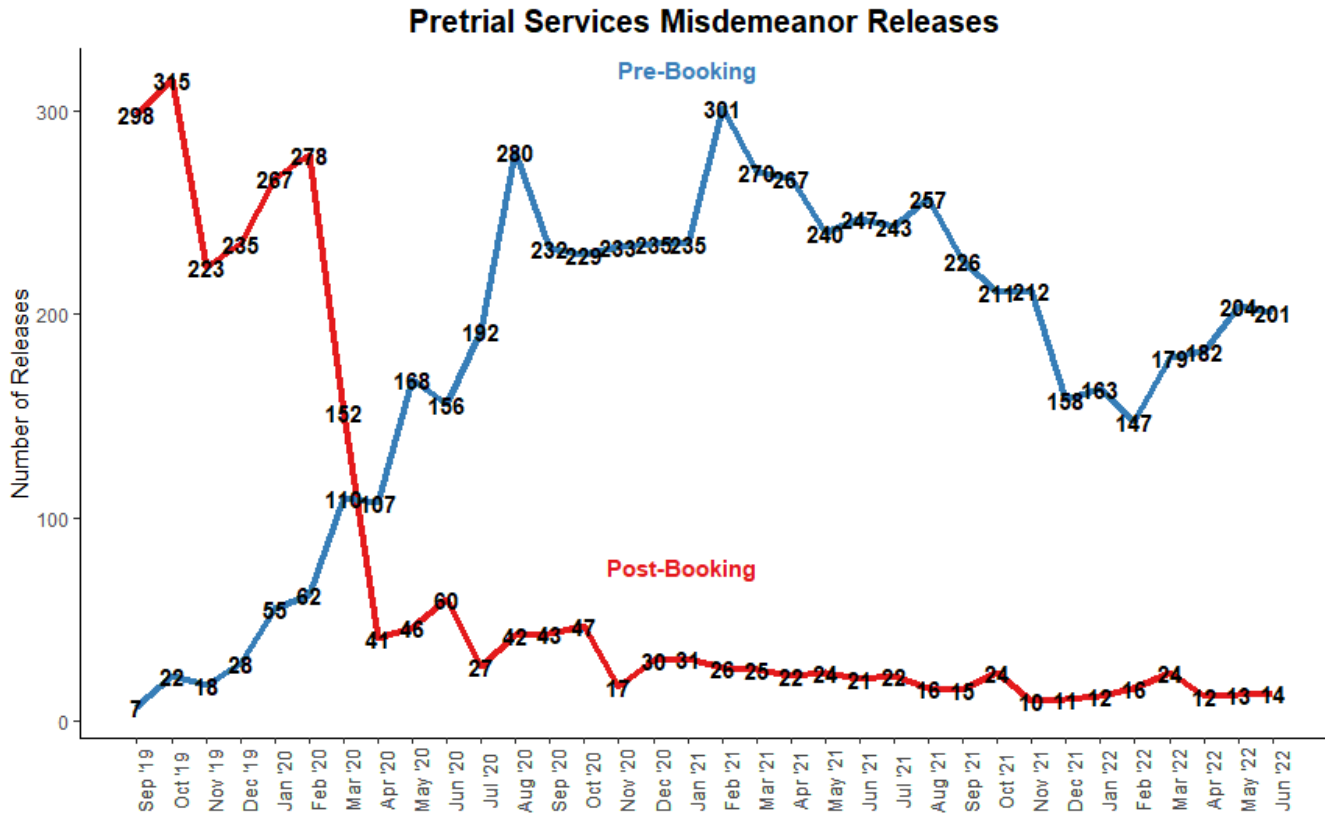
This data report reflects work directly or indirectly supported by 15 positions previously funded by the MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC) grant effort. These positions have been moved to the General Fund as part of the County's commitment to sustain the work set forward by the SJC collaboration.

## **UNIVERSAL SCREENING**

PTS Officers in this category work at the Pima County Adult Detention Center and provide one of our core functions, preparing bail/release recommendations for initial appearance (IA) hearings. These hearings are held twice per day, seven days a week. Information provided by PTS Officers helps judges at the IA hearing determine release conditions. Reports presented include information which judges are required by statute to consider when setting bail. PTS offers a neutral, data-informed recommendation which is meant to identify release strategies tailored to individuals based on combination of statutory conditions and assessed pretrial success/risk.

SJC funds helped to establish a universal **pre-and post-booking, pre-initial appearance release program**, which expanded the original misdemeanor release program from Justice Court-only cases to the entire misdemeanor population.

**The following graphs provide the number of pre-booking releases monthly, to date.**



## ENHANCED SUPERVISION (ES)

### Enhanced Supervision, Initial Appearance Process

Funding of positions has allowed PTS to create a data-informed screening process focused on substance use and behavioral health treatment needs. Once individuals are screened as suitable for referral to a service provider, PTS recommends a special condition of release to the initial appearance (IA) judge signaling the defendant will be placed on enhanced supervision. Since the program's start date in April 2017, in approximately 80% of cases or more with this recommendation (non-violent felony cases) judges have released the defendant and the defendant has been placed on the Enhanced Supervision (ES) caseload. In standard PTS supervision cases, due to workload, PTS Officers will typically conduct a needs assessment and offer referrals after the defendant's indictment (approximately 20 days from release). ES PTS Officers are asked to conduct a brief needs assessment and facilitate a referral to services within 1-7 days from the defendant's release.

**In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, 1287 defendants were released to the Enhanced Supervision Program through the Initial Hearing process.**

Kate Vesely, Director, Justice Services

Re: **Pretrial Services Pre-Booking Screening and Enhanced Supervision**

July 14, 2022

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Pima County's Jail Population Review (JPR) Committee

The JPR Committee has benefitted heavily from both Universal Screening and Enhanced Supervision staff. The in-custody review process begins with a review of the PTS initial appearance report and many times references the screening for participation in the Enhanced Supervision program.

**Since March of 2019, 826 defendants with high needs who were originally held in custody at the initial appearance hearing were released through the JPR process.**

**OTHER SUPPORTED PROGRAMS**

STEPs Court Diversion

One position originally funded by SJC was assigned to the Court and County Attorney's STEP's Pre-Indictment Diversion Program. This position, an Administrative Program Coordinator, oversees the programmatic elements of STEP's, which includes program coordination with service providers, attorneys and the court. Data outcomes originally planned to be shared in this report instead will be provided in the final report for CY2021. Data collection efforts in this area are ongoing.

c: Ron Overholt, Court Administrator, Pima County Superior Court

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