



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
130 W. CONGRESS, FLOOR 10, TUCSON, AZ 85701-1317
(520) 724-8661 FAX (520) 724-8171

C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

August 10, 2020

Laurie Garduque, PhD
Program Director for Justice Reform
MacArthur Foundation
140 S. Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Re: **July 30, 2020 Request for COVID-19 Fact Sheet**

Dear Ms. Garduque:

I am writing today in response to your July 30, 2020 email (attached) requesting that Pima County prepare a COVID -19 Fact Sheet in order to *"...share a new resource to help Implementation Sites communicate about [our] local justice system's response to COVID-19."*

According to your communication, the fact sheet is intended to serve as a useful tool for:

- Compiling key information and data that could be used as part of educational or other communications efforts with local press, justice stakeholders and/or community members to shape the short- and long-term narratives around reforms put in place for this crisis. It is also a useful tool to help sites think through messaging related to your local COVID response.
- Providing useful information for our communications partners at M + R to highlight the work being done on the ground in local justice systems to respond to the crisis as a way to shape the national narrative.
- Contributing to a broader effort to prepare the SJC for likely backlash against COVID releases and local justice reform in general.

1. Pima County Administration and Pima County Health Department

Since March of 2020, Pima County has established a robust information and resources page on the Pima County website at [Pima County Combined COVID-19 Information and Resources](#).

Ms. Laurie Garduque
Re: **July 30, 2020 Request for COVID-19 Fact Sheet**
August 10, 2020
Page 2

This is the landing page for all the health information, in Spanish and in English. This page includes:

- Health Information and Resources;
- Pima Works (for those who have lost jobs or need financial assistance);
- Back to School Information;
- COVID-19 hotlines; and,
- A section devoted to Business and Community Violations of local adopted public health measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Pima County also created the Back to Business (B2B) Steering Committee to establish a framework of hygiene and physical distancing standards.

Other webpage links include:

[Pima County COVID-19 Testing Centers](#)

Pima County Face Mask Mandate information: [Face Coverings](#)

Pima County also created an Intranet page for employees:

Our top priority is to keep County Employees safe and healthy. You play a vital role in delivering important services to County constituents. Please bookmark this page of employee resources and information related to COVID-19. We'll update it as often as necessary. You can also access this information from home by visiting [Pima.gov/covid19-employees/](https://pima.gov/covid19-employees/) .

This page provides Employee Information concerning Returning to Work, Telecommuting Requests and Tools, and links to video messages from Pima County Administration. The Pima County Health Department provides **daily** video updates from the Pima County Health Department Director on a wide variety of topics related to COVID-19.

2. Pima County Adult Detention Complex

The Pima County Adult Detention Complex (PCADC) is one of the few jails across the country that has not had a COVID-19 outbreak since the inception of the pandemic. There have been very few detainees coming into the PCADC with COVID-19 symptoms; however, as soon as suspected COVID-19 positive individuals are encountered, they are immediately placed into a 14-day quarantine:

We believe that our successes in keeping the virus away from our inmate population has been due, in great part, to the protocols that we set in place to deal with the health concerns, fairly early in the life of the pandemic.

Ms. Laurie Garduque
Re: **July 30, 2020 Request for COVID-19 Fact Sheet**
August 10, 2020
Page 3

It may be worth highlighting how implementing these protocols have contributed to *a zero infection rate of our inmates*, compared to clusters that have occurred in other facilities and jurisdictions.

The protocols we are following were established through the guidance of the Pima County Public Health Department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and our staff medical advisor, former Surgeon General of the United States Dr. Richard Carmona.

The Pima County Sheriff's Department (PCSD) operates the Adult Detention Complex. Similar to Pima County Administration and the Health Department, the PCSD also has a posted website devoted to COVID-19 information and resources.

The PCADC has posted numerous videos designed to provide information for the public that include conversations with Sheriff Mark Napier, Captain Joshua Arnold (Acting Bureau Chief of the Jail) and Dr. Richard Carmona. Dr. Carmona was the 17th Surgeon General of the United States and has been the medical advisor and a Deputy Sheriff and member of the PCSD SWAT team for over 30 years.

Link to Pima County Sheriff's Department and PCADC videos: <https://www.youtube.com>

3. Pima County Provides Daily Updates to its Employees and constituents

Clearly, Pima County Administration, Pima County Health Department, Pima County Sheriff's Department and Adult Detention Complex provide all of the elements in the fact sheet you have asked us to prepare. In fact, more daily information is provided than what you are requesting we prepare.

Your template includes inaccuracies, at least as far as our Adult Detention Complex is concerned. You suggest we state:

People incarcerated in jails are particularly vulnerable to contracting COVID-19. Local jails lack the resources and medical care to safely detain people, risking the health and lives of the people they detain, their staff, and the broader community.

This is not accurate. The PCADC contracts with a medical provider Centurion. Centurion also provides mental health services. The Detention Complex has doctors and nurses on site 24/7.

Further, the template claims that:

The misuse and overreliance on jails have always posed a threat to public health and safety, and COVID-19 has accelerated efforts to change our local justice system.

Ms. Laurie Garduque
Re: **July 30, 2020 Request for COVID-19 Fact Sheet**
August 10, 2020
Page 4

This statement, again, is misleading. While in 2014, our Jail population climbed within reach of its capacity of 2,300 and on May 15, 2020, the jail population dropped to 1,305. Starting in April of 2020, the Pima County Justice Coordinating Council worked together to come up with a plan to release inmates with low-level charges (non-violent charges, specifically). A detention facility, if run properly, is not a threat to public health and safety. To agree with that statement undermines the efforts made by Pima County stakeholders in the last six years.

Our employees and constituents, particularly in the PCADC, are made safe on a daily basis by following simple protocols suggested by experts in the field, including our Health Department, the CDC, and Dr. Carmona.

Pima County and the PCADC provides accurate and daily briefings available to the public and its employees.

Finally, we see no need to prepare the COVID-19 Fact Sheet. The resources we have delineated in this letter are more than adequate in providing useful information and we have seen little to no *"...backlash against COVID-19 releases or local reform in general."* In fact, we believe our community whole-heartedly endorses reform measures designed to reduce the cost of the criminal justice system, as well as improve outcomes for those entangled in the system.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/lab

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Mark Napier, Pima County Sheriff
Jan Leshner, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Wendy Petersen, Assistant County Administrator for Justice and Law
Kate Vesely, Director of Justice Reform Initiatives
Criminal Justice Reform Advisory Commission Members

Lois Burlingham

Subject: FW: Aug 7 PLEASE READ: Template fact sheet re: COVID-19 & Local Justice Reform
Attachments: SJC Site COVID Template Fact Sheet FINAL.docx; SJC Messaging for Sites- COVID-19 Local Justice Systems FINAL.docx; 2020.08.04.Ig-COVID 19 Fact Sheet.docx

From: Michelle Blundell <mBlundell@mrss.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 11:11 AM
To: Wendy Petersen <Wendy.Petersen@pima.gov>; Anthony Gimino <Anthony.Gimino@pima.gov>;
Kate.Vesely@pcao.pima.gov
Cc: Billie Grobe <billie@justicesystempartners.org>; TeamSJC <TeamSJC@mrss.com>; Speiser, Maria <mspeiser@macfound.org>; Gillum, Bria <bgillum@macfound.org>
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ: Template fact sheet re: COVID-19 & Local Justice Reform

This message and sender come from outside Pima County. If you did not expect this message, proceed with caution. Verify the sender's identity before performing any action, such as clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

Hi Kate, Wendy and Anthony,

We wanted to follow up on Laurie's email below regarding the **template fact sheet (attached here again)** and loop in some additional folks in case everyone hasn't seen the original note. As mentioned below, this fact sheet will help Implementation Sites communicate about your local justice system's response to COVID-19. **If your team needs more time to work on the fact sheet with your Site Coordinator, please do not hesitate let us know.** Feel free to send any questions in the meantime.

In addition, we wanted to share **another resource that will be helpful as you discuss your site's efforts to address the pandemic. Please find attached a set of messaging and talking points.**

These are for **internal reference only** and should be tailored and used as appropriate for your jurisdiction. Ultimately, our goal here is to equip all sites with a set of messages that help you:

- 1.
2. Proactively educate the press, partners
3. and the community about local justice reform efforts during the pandemic to respond to this public health crisis, and
- 4.
- 5.
6. React to any pushback on local justice reform
7. efforts and specific strategies being implemented to keep the community safe during the pandemic.
- 8.

Please feel free to use these talking points and reach out for any additional assistance, but no need to share a final version with M+R or the Foundation. Should you need additional talking points and/or would like to discuss tough questions you anticipate specific to your jurisdiction, the Foundation and the M+R communications team are ready and available to assist – please do not hesitate to ask.

Thanks,
Michelle & Audrey

--

.....
Michelle Blundell
978-223-0287 (m)

On Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 1:44 PM Garduque, Laurie <LGarduqu@macfound.org> wrote:

Hello, Implementation Sites and Site Coordinators,

I hope this email finds you safe and well. I'm writing to share a new resource to help Implementation Sites communicate about your local justice system's response to COVID-19. As you know, the Foundation has tracked the critical steps the Network sites have taken to safely reduce jail populations the remarkable results that have been achieved. We worked with M+R and the steering committee to develop the template fact sheet attached.

This fact sheet is intended to serve as a useful tool for:

- Compiling key information and data that could be used as part of educational or other communications efforts with local press, justice stakeholders and/or community members to shape the short- and long-term narratives around reforms put in place for this crisis. It is also a useful tool to help sites think through messaging related to your local COVID response.
- Providing useful information for our communications partners at M+R to highlight the work being done on the ground in local justice systems to respond to the crisis as a way to shape the national narrative.
- Contributing to a broader effort to prepare the SJC for likely backlash against COVID releases and local justice reform in general.

In terms of next steps, you should:

- **Tailor your fact sheet:** You'll see the fact sheet has many placeholders that will need to be tailored according to your site's unique response to the crisis and data available. Since each site collects and makes available, the fact sheet includes suggested data points that can be tailored as appropriate. In an effort to make the fact sheet visually appealing and easily digestible, it also includes some simple design elements, including box graphics for pull quotes and/or images. Please feel free to add or remove these graphic boxes as needed.
- **Process:** **Your Site Coordinator(s) will work with you to help tailor and finalize the COVID-19 fact sheet.** M+R will be available to answer any questions during the process of tailoring, but sites should work directly with Site Coordinators to finalize their fact sheet. Once final, M+R will be

available to connect with sites to discuss ideas for incorporating the fact sheet in educational opportunities with the press and the community. If additional assistance is needed from either ISLG or JFA Institute, please coordinate with your site coordinator.

- **Timing:** Sites should share the final version with the M+R team (TeamSJC@mrss.com) by August 12. While ideally all sites will finalize the fact sheets by this time, we also recognize this is a busy time. If you would benefit from additional time for this project, please reach out to your Site Coordinator and the M+R team.

Thank you again for all that you do. Please reach out with any questions.

All my best,



Laurie Garduque PhD

Program Director | Justice Reform

John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation

www.macfound.org | 140 S Dearborn St Chicago IL 60603 USA

lgarduqu@macfound.org | 312.726.8000

MacArthur Foundation

Messaging & Talking Points for Implementation Sites: COVID-19 & Local Justice Systems

****For Internal Reference Only****

Below is a set of messaging and talking points to help guide you as you discuss your site's efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic in your local justice system. This is for internal reference only and should be tailored and used as appropriate for your jurisdiction. Ultimately, our goal here is to equip all sites with a set of messages that help you:

1. *Proactively educate the press, partners and the community about local justice reform efforts during the pandemic to respond to this public health crisis, and*
2. *React to any pushback on local justice reform efforts and specific strategies being implemented to keep the community safe during the pandemic.*

Should you need additional talking points and/or would like to discuss tough questions you anticipate specific to your jurisdiction, the Foundation and the M+R communications team are ready and available to assist – please do not hesitate to ask.

COVID-19 and the Local Justice System

- The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on every aspect of our local justice system and is uniquely affecting those incarcerated in local jails.
- Because jails process millions of people each year in facilities that make social distancing very difficult, the virus can [spread exponentially](#), threatening the health of those held in jails, those who work in jails, and the community at large.
- What's more, the pandemic further exposed the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black people and other people of color, and these disparities are even more exacerbated in the justice system.
- The COVID-19 pandemic continues to reinforce the need for structural and cultural changes to the way our justice system operates.

Core Strategies for Addressing COVID-19 in the Local Justice System

- Our foundation of collaborative, data-driven strategies, including the necessary structures and collaboration from local stakeholders that are in place to support these strategies, set us up well to respond to the pandemic swiftly and effectively. This work was already underway as part of our broader efforts and engagement in the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#) to end the misuse and overuse of jails and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the local justice system.
- In an effort to prevent the spread of the virus and continue to ensure public safety, we have been working to safely release people from jail who pose little or no risk to our community.
 - Specifically, our local justice system has put in place the following responses to the COVID-19 pandemic: [\[Share key strategies for releasing people from jail amid COVID-19. These can include current or new policies or strategies \(including those that ensure](#)

- racial and ethnic disparities in the local justice system are not exacerbated during the pandemic, as well as those that affect populations especially at risk such as people with mental health and/or substance use issues), technology shifts, etc.]
- While we have taken important steps to reduce the threat of the pandemic inside our jail, we have also worked to implement strategies to ensure people who pose no threat to public safety do not end up in jail in the first place.
 - [A recent study in the journal Health Affairs](#) found that the “cycle of arrests, jailings and releases has been a significant predictor of the spread of the coronavirus.”
 - Our strategies have included reducing arrests and [Add details for other alternatives your site is implementing to reduce arrests and enforcement such as increasing citations] (if applicable). These strategies have not only ensured that people who are committing non-violent offenses are not booked in jail unnecessarily, but that we have also prevented the possible spread of infection in both the jail and the community.
 - (If applicable) We have also continued to rely on safe alternatives to incarceration such as [referrals to mental health and housing services, reentry services, etc.], that also allowed us to expedite releases from jail at the beginning of/during the pandemic.
 - (If applicable) While our jail population has decreased, we have not seen a rise in crime rates during this period, showing that we can simultaneously keep our community safe and create a more fair and just system.
 - [If applicable, point to data showing steady or declining crime rates since the start of COVID-19.]
 - Overall, [SITE]’s work to-date through the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge to reduce the local jail population and advance safe alternatives to arrest and detention set us up well to respond to this public health crisis.
 - (If applicable) Continued collaboration among key stakeholders, such as [Insert key stakeholders involved in response efforts, such as prosecutors, public defenders, judges, law enforcement etc.], has contributed to a swift and effective response in addressing the public health crisis in our jails.
 - [Share other high-level examples of key SJC initiatives launched in recent years and/or progress already made toward jail reduction that set your site up for success amid COVID-19, such as jail population review teams.]

Progress in Addressing COVID-19 in the Local Justice System

- As a result of strategies that have promoted alternatives to arrest and the safe release from jail of people who do not pose a threat to our community, we have been able to keep the community safe and limit infections by reducing our jail population.
 - [Point to relevant data on reduced jail population, arrests, pretrial population, booking and release, average length of stay, etc. If you have specific data about race and ethnic populations, please include that as well.]

- [Example stats include:
 - [SITE] jail population has dropped by [#]% since [MONTH]. Jail bookings have also decreased by around [#]% since [MONTH]. The average daily population has decreased by [#]% since [MONTH].]
 - [SITE]'s previous work to safely reduce the jail population before the pandemic began set up [SITE] to respond well during this crisis. For example,
 - Over the last [NUMBER] years, [SITE] have been able to reduce the jail populations by [#]%;
- In addition to keeping the community safe and preventing the spread of COVID-19, limiting the use of jail for people who pose little threat to our community just makes sense. It has also allowed people to keep their jobs and be with their families during these uncertain times.
- As we've reacted quickly to the pandemic, we've also engaged the community, kept them informed of reforms, and solicited their feedback. We've done this by:
 - [Add any relevant details on recent community engagement]

Sustaining Progress During & Beyond the Pandemic

- Ending the misuse and overuse of jails is critical work that must continue—both in this current public health emergency and in the long-term. Doing so will benefit many individuals and families and help build a stronger community.
- [SITE] remains committed to keeping our community safe during the pandemic, as states, including [STATE], begin to reopen, as well as beyond the pandemic. This includes continuing to advance alternatives to jail for people with mental health and substance use issues, and addressing the disparate harm over-incarceration has on people of color and low-income communities.
- To sustain this progress, [SITE] will:
 - [If possible, point to how your site will sustain progress or share that your site will continue to look toward sustaining progress in the local justice system as states begin to reopen as well as beyond the COVID-19 crisis.]

Messaging & Talking Points for Implementation Sites: COVID-19 & Local Justice Systems

****For Internal Reference Only****

Below is a set of messaging and talking points to help guide you as you discuss your site's efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic in your local justice system. This is for internal reference only and should be tailored and used as appropriate for your jurisdiction. Ultimately, our goal here is to equip all sites with a set of messages that help you:

1. *Proactively educate the press, partners and the community about local justice reform efforts during the pandemic to respond to this public health crisis, and*
2. *React to any pushback on local justice reform efforts and specific strategies being implemented to keep the community safe during the pandemic.*

Should you need additional talking points and/or would like to discuss tough questions you anticipate specific to your jurisdiction, the Foundation and the M+R communications team are ready and available to assist – please do not hesitate to ask.

COVID-19 and the Local Justice System

- The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on every aspect of our local justice system and is uniquely affecting those incarcerated in local jails.
- Because jails process millions of people each year in facilities that make social distancing very difficult, the virus can [spread exponentially](#), threatening the health of those held in jails, those who work in jails, and the community at large.
- What's more, the pandemic further exposed the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black people and other people of color, and these disparities are even more exacerbated in the justice system.
- The COVID-19 pandemic continues to reinforce the need for structural and cultural changes to the way our justice system operates.

Core Strategies for Addressing COVID-19 in the Local Justice System

- Our foundation of collaborative, data-driven strategies, including the necessary structures and collaboration from local stakeholders that are in place to support these strategies, set us up well to respond to the pandemic swiftly and effectively. This work was already underway as part of our broader efforts and engagement in the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#) to end the misuse and overuse of jails and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the local justice system.
- In an effort to prevent the spread of the virus and continue to ensure public safety, we have been working to safely release people from jail who pose little or no risk to our community.
 - Specifically, our local justice system has put in place the following responses to the COVID-19 pandemic: [\[Share key strategies for releasing people from jail amid COVID-19. These can include current or new policies or strategies \(including those that ensure](#)

- racial and ethnic disparities in the local justice system are not exacerbated during the pandemic, as well as those that affect populations especially at risk such as people with mental health and/or substance use issues), technology shifts, etc.]
- While we have taken important steps to reduce the threat of the pandemic inside our jail, we have also worked to implement strategies to ensure people who pose no threat to public safety do not end up in jail in the first place.
 - [A recent study in the journal Health Affairs](#) found that the “cycle of arrests, jailings and releases has been a significant predictor of the spread of the coronavirus.”
 - Our strategies have included reducing arrests and [Add details for other alternatives your site is implementing to reduce arrests and enforcement such as increasing citations] (if applicable). These strategies have not only ensured that people who are committing non-violent offenses are not booked in jail unnecessarily, but that we have also prevented the possible spread of infection in both the jail and the community.
 - (If applicable) We have also continued to rely on safe alternatives to incarceration such as [referrals to mental health and housing services, reentry services, etc.], that also allowed us to expedite releases from jail at the beginning of/during the pandemic.
 - (If applicable) While our jail population has decreased, we have not seen a rise in crime rates during this period, showing that we can simultaneously keep our community safe and create a more fair and just system.
 - [If applicable, point to data showing steady or declining crime rates since the start of COVID-19.]
 - Overall, [SITE]’s work to-date through the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge to reduce the local jail population and advance safe alternatives to arrest and detention set us up well to respond to this public health crisis.
 - (If applicable) Continued collaboration among key stakeholders, such as [Insert key stakeholders involved in response efforts, such as prosecutors, public defenders, judges, law enforcement etc.], has contributed to a swift and effective response in addressing the public health crisis in our jails.
 - [Share other high-level examples of key SJC initiatives launched in recent years and/or progress already made toward jail reduction that set your site up for success amid COVID-19, such as jail population review teams.]

Progress in Addressing COVID-19 in the Local Justice System

- As a result of strategies that have promoted alternatives to arrest and the safe release from jail of people who do not pose a threat to our community, we have been able to keep the community safe and limit infections by reducing our jail population.
 - [Point to relevant data on reduced jail population, arrests, pretrial population, booking and release, average length of stay, etc. If you have specific data about race and ethnic populations, please include that as well.]

- [Example stats include:
 - [SITE] jail population has dropped by [#]% since [MONTH]. Jail bookings have also decreased by around [#]% since [MONTH]. The average daily population has decreased by [#]% since [MONTH].]
 - [SITE]'s previous work to safely reduce the jail population before the pandemic began set up [SITE] to respond well during this crisis. For example,
 - Over the last [NUMBER] years, [SITE] have been able to reduce the jail populations by [#]%;
- In addition to keeping the community safe and preventing the spread of COVID-19, limiting the use of jail for people who pose little threat to our community just makes sense. It has also allowed people to keep their jobs and be with their families during these uncertain times.
- As we've reacted quickly to the pandemic, we've also engaged the community, kept them informed of reforms, and solicited their feedback. We've done this by:
 - [Add any relevant details on recent community engagement]

Sustaining Progress During & Beyond the Pandemic

- Ending the misuse and overuse of jails is critical work that must continue—both in this current public health emergency and in the long-term. Doing so will benefit many individuals and families and help build a stronger community.
- [SITE] remains committed to keeping our community safe during the pandemic, as states, including [STATE], begin to reopen, as well as beyond the pandemic. This includes continuing to advance alternatives to jail for people with mental health and substance use issues, and addressing the disparate harm over-incarceration has on people of color and low-income communities.
- To sustain this progress, [SITE] will:
 - [If possible, point to how your site will sustain progress or share that your site will continue to look toward sustaining progress in the local justice system as states begin to reopen as well as beyond the COVID-19 crisis.]