



## CLUE Santa Barbara

Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice

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January 3, 2020

To: Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) members

From: Criminal Justice Workgroup, CLUE SB

Re: Recommendations for 2021-2022 Public Safety Realignment Plan

Dear CCP Members,

CLUE SB requests and calls upon CCP to make transformative decisions in 2021 that move beyond the status quo. Our faith-spiritual communities seek a more humane SB county criminal justice system built on core faith values: to be good neighbors, respond with compassion to those who are disadvantaged, and treat others as we would want to be treated. These values call for systemic moves away from ineffective punishment towards solutions which stabilize justice-involved people, improve public safety and reduce recidivism. We submit these proposals as evidence-based program/budget recommendations that will apply humane values in effective and cost-conscious ways.

These recommendations are based on careful listening to the CCP budget discussions, interviews with those directly engaged in public safety and criminal justice, and our own independent study and research. Our recommendations are organized to correspond with CCP's five stated Goals set forth in its 2020-2021 Realignment Plan. This year we urge you to add an additional Goal 6: Improve jail conditions by increasing humane treatment that improves re-entry outcomes and reduces recidivism.

### **CCP Goal 1: Enhance public safety by reducing recidivism**

#### Recommended refinement of objectives:

Require each program relating to Santa Barbara's criminal justice system to support and justify its funding with objective evidence showing specific positive impacts on justice-involved client outcomes, such as people housed and employed, successful rehab months of sobriety, successful diversion practices, and officers' responses to change.

Of limited value is evidence like the following presented in last year's 2020 -2021 CCP Realignment report: "A March 1st snapshot, indicates 64% of high risk supervised realigned offenders under supervision had been referred..." Such data offer no actual outcomes of the referrals, i.e. whether clients became housed, employed, or self reported positive changes. Evidence-based decisions require data that demonstrate links between funded referral programs and client success.

Funding recommendations:

No change, but see funding recommendations for CCP Goal 4, below.

**CCP Goal 2: Enhance the use of alternative detention (pre- and post-sentence) for appropriate justice-involved individuals.**

Recommended additional objectives

Address inequities for low income people of color in current alternative detention policies by establishing a CCP Workgroup subcommittee to study and make recommendations. The following policies and protocol for Pretrial Release Policy are currently being applied by the L. A. County D. A.'s office. 1 Gascon, George. L.A. District Attorney Pre-trial Release Policy, Dec. 7, 2020, and evidence-based research cited therein.

- Eliminate cash bail requirements for misdemeanors, non-serious felonies and non-violent felonies
- Adopt a presumption of pretrial release on personal recognizance
- Do away with pretrial jail for persons with non-serious, non-violent offenses (misdemeanor, non-serious felony, or non-violent felony)
- Prefer least restrictive conditions of pretrial release
- Waive defendant's appearance at routine hearings
- If bail is imposed, do so in proportion to defendant's financial means

Funding recommendations:

- Reallocate or reassign Deputy District Attorneys, as needed, to present recommended guidelines to the Court.
- Add Public Defender staff attorneys to adequately manage first appearance caseloads and advocate for judges to follow guidelines

**CCP Goal 3: Provide for successful re-entry of justice involved individuals back into the community.**

Recommended additional objectives:

- Collect data on specific client outcomes for unemployed clients referred to Employment/vocational programs. (See Goal 1.)
- Support repurposing of Compliance Response Teams toward mentoring role; referrals to resources instead of re-arrest over technical violations; (Pilot an officer training program with Freedom to Choose to support this mission)

Funding recommendations:

- Continue to fund pilot transitional supportive housing
- Require Discharge Planning team budget to fund data on outcomes for unemployed clients
- Discontinue funding for Community Engagement Coordinator pending evidence of this Program's contribution to improved outcomes

**CCP Goal 4: Coordinate efforts to eliminate duplications, enhance efficiencies, and promote best practices.**

Recommended additional objectives:

- Develop a cost-effective new countywide system for centralized data management  
Data analysts from each department participate in a CCP Workgroup sub-committee to generate new system-wide funding recommendations for centralized data management that will:
  - a. Reduce costs through a centralized, coordinated, cloud based data system to collect and distribute necessary court documents, case discovery, criminal histories
  - b. Revamp data collection and analyses, from separate department data silos (Court, District Attorney, Sheriff, Public Defender, Probation) to centralize objective data collection and analyses under the County CEO or other administrative office, to improve identification of evidence-based programs that make measurable differences to meet CCP's stated goals.
  - c. Study if reallocation of CCP Data Collection ( \$424,802 funding ) tasks could be under the county umbrella and then reduced funding could be reallocated for other CCP goals.

Funding recommendations:

- No change until next fiscal year.

**CCP Goal 5: Support a systemic approach to studying and addressing racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.**

Recommended additional objectives:

- Produce data to show cultural competency of front-line justice workers in each department in comparison to the ethnic/racial composition of justice-involved individuals
- Require jail data transparency on bookings to assess if and when alternatives to incarceration are available but not used.
- Analyze whether there is a skewed distribution of resources such as shelters, rehabilitation centers and staff, favoring south county compared to north county, despite more justice-involved people in north county, including disproportionately more justice-involved people of color.

Funding recommendations:

- Fund recommended increases in culturally competent front-line staff for the Public Defender, District Attorney, Probation and Sheriff's Departments, to mirror justice-involved client demographics.
- Increase culturally competent "holistic" advocacy by funding additional social work staff for the Public Defender's office.

**NEW CCP Goal 6: Improve jail conditions to emphasize humane treatment that will materially contribute to reducing recidivism.**

Recommended objectives:

- Improve access to jail residents to achieve CCP goals
  - a) Establish internet access with appropriate security for Zoom educational programs, volunteer support programs, and attorney-client consultations
  - b) Establish online jail scheduling for defense attorneys to meet and work with clients.
  - c) Streamline security vetting procedures to approve volunteer participants
  - d) Reduce overall jail population Average Daily Population
- Focus officer training goals for 2021-22 on humane mentoring practices from Norway's Halden prison model to "build good neighbors". See results from research based AMEND Oregon Project and explore Freedom to Choose training.

Funding recommendations:

- Fund expanded internet access and associated security measures

In summary, the CLUE SB Criminal Justice Workgroup believes these recommendations will substantially advance efforts to improve and heal Santa Barbara's Criminal Justice System. Our proposals will help move us toward a transformational humane culture for justice-involved jail residents and probationers. By adding an express goal focusing on jail transparency and practices, the faith community adds its voices toward protecting jail residents.

Respectfully submitted,  
CLUE Criminal Justice Workgroup  
**Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice Santa Barbara**

By Maureen Earls, Co-Chair  
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