

# NCSL Interviews with members of local Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils

Background reading for March 2020 meeting in Missoula  
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Source: The NCSL Blog posts by Amanda Essex, Senior Policy Analyst with the NCSL Criminal Justice Program

- South Carolina: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2019/12/30/state-engagement-with-local-justice-criminal-justice-coordinating-councils.aspx>
- Oregon: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2020/01/07/criminal-justice-coordinating-councils-interview-with-abbey-stamp.aspx>
- Wisconsin: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2020/01/15/criminal-justice-coordinating-councils-interview-with-tiana-glenna.aspx>
- Kansas: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2020/01/17/state-engagement-with-local-justice-interview-with-alexander-holsinger.aspx>

## State Engagement with Local Justice: Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils

December 30, 2019

Link to interview: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2019/12/30/state-engagement-with-local-justice-criminal-justice-coordinating-councils.aspx>

Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCCs), which bring together stakeholders to explore and respond to issues in the criminal justice system, are among the ways legislatures can engage with local governments to produce criminal justice reform.

Many CJCCs use data and structured planning to address issues in the justice system. These councils are intended to be permanent, rather than to address a problem or set of problems within a set time frame. Successful CJCCs need buy-ins from the key members of the justice system and those in positions of authority.

Over the next few weeks, read interviews from someone engaged with their local CJCC.

### **Mitch Lucas – Assistant Sheriff, Charleston County (S.C.)**

#### **What is your background and how did you end up being involved with your CJCC?**

I have been in local law enforcement for over 35 years. I began my career in 1983 with the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office and came to the Charleston County Sheriff's Office in 1997. I was hired to be the public information officer, advanced to administrative major, then was promoted to chief deputy (and jail administrator). I served as the jail administrator for seven and one-half years, and then was promoted to assistant sheriff.

#### **When and how was your CJCC created? What was the initial intent and/or goal of the council?**

Our first attempt was over 10 years ago and did not have very much success for two reasons: lack of commitment from stakeholders and lack of funding. Then we heard about the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's [Safety and Justice Challenge](#). We resurrected the CJCC and everyone got excited at the thought that with funding we could make meaningful and badly needed changes to the local criminal justice system. Our stakeholders came together, fully committed, and we developed strategies that are going to improve the criminal justice system from beginning to end.

#### **What are some of the specific goals and efforts of your CJCC?**

Simply put, we want the local criminal justice system to be efficient, effective and equitable. I am pretty sure most people would look at the length of time it takes to move a case from arrest to trial and would not say we have an efficient system. While that slow crawl to justice displays the system's inefficiencies, it is also a factor in effectiveness. Additionally, if you look at a jail

population and see a wildly disproportionate number of racial minorities, you have to question the equity of the entire system. Lady Justice is blindfolded for a reason.

**How has your state legislature been involved with your CJCC? How can they support your work?**

At this time our legislators have not been involved, but several have heard about the CJCC and are anxious for our success. [T]here are a number of state officials who are waiting to see the positive impact we make. When that occurs, I have no doubt that our work will bring positive changes to the South Carolina criminal justice system. The legislature will be critical to write better laws that effect the local criminal justice systems; additionally, state lawmakers could make funding available to implement the systemic changes. I am sure funding improvements to the criminal justice system will be considerably less than funding more jails and prisons.

**What are some of the biggest successes of your CJCC's work? What about the biggest challenges?**

- To begin with, and absolutely the most important, the commitment of all the stakeholders; every one of them are fully committed to our success.
- Developing a data warehouse was the biggest challenge and after a lot of hard work is turning out to be one of our biggest successes. Bringing data from all the various entities related to our work has given us the opportunity to pinpoint problem areas. The ability to mine, analyze, or just simply report, data that proves or disproves what we think we know about our criminal justice system.
- To have four major law enforcement agencies in the county develop [cite and release](#) protocols, rather than only having the option of putting someone in jail for a minor offense..
- A court reminder system that calls, texts, or emails, court reminders to people with a court date.
- Case processing and management has proven to be difficult to change but is absolutely essential to our success. As we progress, we plan on redirecting some of our resources to this effort.
- We have opened a crisis stabilization center for the mentally ill. Now cops can call the center and get advice on how to deal with a mentally ill person when they are on scene trying to determine what can be done, such as bringing the person to the center. Very soon the location will have a sobering facility.

**Who needs to be at the table?**

Everyone! Every entity that is part of the local criminal justice system is a stakeholder and needs to be treated as such. I say that because some entities like law enforcement agencies are

tremendously affected, as are the public defenders and prosecutors. It goes without saying that mental health and substance abuse representation is a must. We have also found great workers and fans to serve in our community engagement functions. In fact, one of our biggest cheerleaders is the president of the NAACP, who says we are actually making changes, instead of just talking about what needs to be done.

Check out the [National Network of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils](#) for more information on CJCCs.

## Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils: Interview with Abbey Stamp

January 7, 2020

Link to interview: <https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2020/01/07/criminal-justice-coordinating-councils-interview-with-abbey-stamp.aspx>

In 1995, Oregon passed legislation [mandating](#) that every county establish a Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC). Each LPSCC must submit an annual summary to the state's Criminal Justice Commission.

Multnomah County has an LPSCC, [established as required by that legislation](#). Portland is the largest city within Multnomah County and the executive committee of the LPSCC is co-chaired by the mayor of Portland and the Multnomah County chair. The executive committee meets monthly and also "directs the work of several subcommittees, working groups and affiliated committees."

The [membership of the council](#) is enumerated in statute and includes law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys, representatives of the judicial branch, community corrections and the executive branch, as well as community members and local government officials. Membership is not limited to those specified in the statute and in Multnomah, a state legislator also serves on the executive committee.

### **Abbey Stamp, executive director, Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council**

#### **What is your background and how did you end up being involved with your CJCC?**

I have worked for Multnomah County since 2003. For several years I was a family therapist for high-risk probation youth. In 2009 I moved into program development and system change efforts related to child welfare and juvenile justice. In 2013 I responded to a job opening for the executive director of the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC), and after five interviews was chosen.

#### **When and how was your CJCC created? What was the initial intent and/or goal of the council?**

The LPSCC was created in 1995. Each Oregon county has an LPSCC, and the original core mission is to approve the state juvenile and adult community corrections plans. However, our scope of work has increased significantly since 1995.

#### **What are some of the specific goals and efforts of your CJCC?**

Current efforts include implementation of state justice reinvestment grants and programming, administration of the [MacArthur Foundation's Safety + Justice Challenge](#), managing jail

population, implementing the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Assessment strategies, and [many others](#).

**How has your state legislature been involved with your CJCC? How can they support your work?**

We have had participation from a few local legislators. In recent years, we have partnered with the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to increase criminal justice best-practice knowledge among lawmakers. Our connection with legislators is quite good and has grown recently with the support of our Government Relations office. I think this connection will continue to grow in years to come.

**What are some of the biggest successes of your CJCC's work? What about the biggest challenges?**

Our biggest success is our ability to meaningfully collaborate. This is shown by our justice reinvestment work and the jail reduction strategies. Our biggest challenge is how to have criminal justice-focused meetings and also having meetings focusing on other partners like education and healthcare. Of course, funding is a challenge. All system actors would like more resources for data, evaluation and analyses.

**In your efforts, who have you found needs to be at the table for the CJCC to accomplish its goals?**

There needs to be a table for the criminal justice actors only in addition to a larger table for other topics. I have worked to ensure the right people are at the right tables. The key is to have trusted relationships and the right combination of participants.

## Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils: Interview with Tianna Glenna

January 15, 2020

The [National Institute of Corrections](#) highlights three essential characteristics for a high-functioning criminal justice coordinating council (CJCC). The first is an appropriate and engaged membership with effective leadership. This highlights the importance of having the right people at the table for decision-making regarding local criminal justice systems.

The second is a capable criminal justice planning staff. It is necessary for CJCCs to have staff to “provide their committees with high-quality analytical information and operational support.” CJCCs need to have funding to pay for staff.

The third is a structured, data-guided, collaborative policy planning process. This means there is a process in place allowing identification of areas of potential change or improvement within the local justice system and develop policies and practices to address them. Those policies and practices are then evaluated in order to determine whether they are having the desired impact.

**Tiana Glenna, criminal justice manager, Office of the County Administrator, Eau Claire, Wis.**

### **What is your background and how did you end up being involved with your CJCC?**

I have a master's in vocational rehabilitation, an undergrad in human development and family studies. I was law enforcement certified and jail officer certified (and) I am currently completing my organizational development certification. I was hired at the CJCC in Eau Claire County in 2008.

### **When and how was your CJCC created? What was the initial intent and/or goal of the council?**

The CJCC was established by local ordinance in 2006. The mission of the council as stated in the establishing ordinance was to enhance public safety in the county “through community collaboration by ensuring offender accountability, providing effective rehabilitation programs and supporting the rights and needs of victims.”

### **What are some of the specific goals and efforts of your CJCC?**

Evidence-based decision making (EBDM) has been a focal point since 2010 and that process has driven and guided our work. We are now continuing to work on EBDM but are also working with the Department of Human Services on the Stepping Up initiative and identifying those with mental health needs who have contact with our law enforcement.

We have increased work with our jail transitions—aiding people who have been in custody for 30 days or longer—in providing them with a soft handoff to services needed in the community.

### **How has your state legislature been involved with your CJCC? How can they support your work?**

I have been appointed by our governor to sit on our state CJCC and our state EBDM policy team.

At this time, it is primarily information sharing between the local and state work. However, we are moving the function of the state CJCC to become more involved and active with the locals. We have a number of directives that are working to improve, increase and strengthen the local CJCCs across the state.

**What are some of the biggest successes of your CJCC's work? What about the biggest challenges?**

Some of the biggest successes include:

- True sense of collaboration.
- Systems mapping.
- The creation of new programming to serve our population (pre-charge diversion, operating while intoxicated early intervention, bond supervision).
- Our work on national initiatives such as data-driven justice, EBDM and Stepping Up.
- Hiring of a data analyst.
- Use of data to drive program and policy changes.

Some of our challenges include:

- Establishing a communications plan in order to clearly and transparently communicate what you are doing both to your own staff and the community as a whole.
- County board and legislature understanding the scope and ability of a highly functioning CJCC. New laws/legislative changes should be proposed to the state CJCC for review to see what successes or obstacles the new change could pose to a county.
- Unfunded mandates.

**In your efforts, who have you found needs to be at the table for the CJCC to accomplish its goals?**

First is to have an identified director who has an operating budget funded by county tax levy rather than by grants. The position should be housed in a neutral location and staff is important, especially a data analyst. Overall, all department heads must be at each meeting. We also need an active member from the county board who relays information to the full board. The CJCC must have some authority directed by the resolution/county board.

## State Engagement with Local Stakeholders: Interview with Alexander Holsinger

January 17, 2020

Though criminal justice coordinating councils (CJCCs) are generally established at the local level, there are opportunities for state legislatures to encourage and support their work.

States may enact legislation requiring localities to establish these councils. Generally, this type of mandate includes funding in order to support the work of the council and cover costs associated with staffing. Unfunded mandates, such as requiring the development of these councils without financial support, are generally viewed unfavorably.

Pilot projects allowing localities to establish a CJCC and provide financial support for test sites to determine whether such councils may be successful in the state can also be authorized by the state legislature.

State legislators can also utilize their role as community leaders to bring together the appropriate individuals to consider topics related to local justice systems and encourage the development of appropriate policy.

**Alexander Holsinger, criminal justice coordinator, Criminal Justice Advisory Council, Johnson County, Kan.**

**What is your background and how did you end up being involved with your CJCC?**

For 19 years I served on the faculty at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, teaching courses and doing research as a tenured professor in the Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology. During that same period of time, I established long-term relationships with several individuals within Johnson County's criminal justice system and larger government which led to several training and research projects. While I currently coordinate our Criminal Justice Advisory Council (what we call our CJCC), I've been involved with them in various ways for many years.

**When and how was your CJCC created? What was the initial intent and/or goal of the council?**

The CJAC was established in March of 2008, via resolution approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The CJAC was initially created to provide a working forum designed to support communication and collaboration between key criminal justice stakeholder agencies. I should also add that our CJAC has membership and participation that extends past policing, court and correctional agencies, and also involves the county mental health system, the faith community and ex-offender representation, as well.

**What are some of the specific goals and efforts of your CJCC?**

One of the overarching initiatives that has been a primary focus for some time (and likewise drives a lot of what we do) has been the [Stepping Up Initiative](#). For a long time, we've been

trying to find ways in which we can prevent individuals with behavioral health challenges from penetrating the CJ system any further than might be necessary.

**How has your state legislature been involved with your CJCC? How can it support your work?**

Part of our current strategic plan involves raising our state legislature's awareness of the CJAC's mission and the quality of our work. We often have to confront ways in which state policy (and legislation) greatly impacts our criminal justice (and related) systems. We likewise see the need to bring state legislators into the discussion whenever possible.

**What are some of the biggest successes of your CJCC's work? What about the biggest challenges?**

Overall, I think the biggest recent success would be the recognition we've received as an "Innovator County" in the Stepping Up Initiative. The work we began as part of the Stepping Up Initiative was made possible by our very long-standing Justice Information Management System (JIMS) which has likewise made a lot of other important work possible. Another related success can be found via our collaborations with the University of Chicago as well as Notre Dame. Both initiatives are utilizing data in unique ways in order to intervene proactively in the face of behavioral health challenges and avoid crises.

**In your efforts, who have you found needs to be at the table for the CJCC to accomplish its goals?**

Without question, the broad representation from all the major criminal justice players has been key to the CJAC accomplishing its goals. The council was founded in order to ensure both communication and collaboration. Thankfully our CJAC has willing and enthusiastic participation and support from every part of our CJ system, which likewise includes decision-makers from each agency. Having those who can make definitive decisions that relate to their own agencies is key (e.g., directors, deputy directors, and the like).