

LPSCC

Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Report 2021 - 2022

July 2020 - December 2022



Letter from the Co-Chairs

Over the last three years, our community has encountered a series of uniquely historic events: from the COVID-19 pandemic, to sustained and passionate protests for racial justice, to the impacts of climate change and other smaller, often related crises. These challenges have pushed us to respond in ways that reveal our convictions, our values and our commitment to using these opportunities to create something better. That's especially true when it comes to the ongoing effort to transform the criminal legal system.

Even before the events of this historic chapter, Multnomah County, the City of Portland and many of our public safety partners understood that system transformation is an undeniably urgent matter. The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) has been essential to leaning into — and making progress toward — a new vision of our public safety system. In collaboration with our system partners and community members, we are striving to make our community safer for everyone by building a system of true public safety that is grounded in a foundation of equity, restoration, evidence-based practices and data-driven decisions.

For decades, the task of comprehensively overhauling the criminal legal system has been painted by some as an idealistic, if not prohibitively broad and long-term, goal. This characterization has too often led to delaying the effort to pursue lasting, meaningful and transformative change. Even with earnest efforts that result in incremental changes to policies and programs, the harms of institutional inertia continue to fall disproportionately on people of color, individuals living with a mental health diagnosis and/or substance use disorder, and those experiencing homelessness. Changes made in the margins will not bring about true and equal access to justice, safety and healing.

Despite — and in some cases, because of — COVID-19, LPSCC and our partners have found ways to advance meaningful, systemic changes. More than two years after the pandemic started, we've maintained many of the strategies that were deployed early in the public health crisis to reduce the jail population in ways that account for and reduce racial disparities in who is incarcerated. Well into 2022, the jails were operating at 75% capacity.

Further, our work with the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge continues. Our ongoing attempts to reform an inequitable and inefficient pretrial system have experienced significant challenges, but we remain committed to the work. We've also invested heavily in behavioral health services, as well as culturally specific violence prevention programs that have shown to be effective at reducing racial disparities in the juvenile justice system and interrupting cycles of community violence. And spurred by local data, we made investments in an initiative to offer housing as a potent stabilizing intervention for individuals who were identified as being among the most frequent users of local jails.

And notably, despite the constraints of the pandemic, we launched and have made significant strides in our Transforming Justice initiative, which will ultimately put in our hands a roadmap to implementing a fully realized vision of public safety that's been designed by both the community and stakeholders in the criminal legal system.

The passionate protests and sustained movement for racial justice that shook our nation out of complacency in the wake of George Floyd's murder made it clear that we can't wait any longer. Meanwhile, the system-wide changes we made during and in response to the pandemic showed

us that we can, in fact, quickly make significant changes. As we pivot into a new stage of the pandemic, the work of LPSCC will continue to be informed and propelled by a sense of urgency and possibility.

It is an incredible undertaking to transition from a system that is based on an overreliance of incarceration and punishment, to one that is sufficiently equipped to address behaviors born out of trauma, poverty, racial inequities and health disparities. Moving forward with broad buy-in from a system as diverse and decentralized as the public safety system, as well those who have lived experience within it, requires not just collaboration, but a deep commitment to the process.

As leaders within our own government jurisdictions, and as LPSCC Co-Chairs, we are grateful for and proud of LPSCC's refusal to settle for small policy wins, instead focusing on building momentum toward the creation of the kind of equitable and restorative public safety system we all deserve. There is much more work ahead, but LPSCC is building the framework for transformational and lasting change.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Kafoury".

Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair
Co-Chair of Multnomah County LPSCC



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo Ann Hardesty".

Jo Ann Hardesty
Portland City Commissioner
Co-Chair of Multnomah County LPSCC



About

The Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) was established by Senate Bill 1145 (1995) to coordinate local criminal justice policy among affected criminal justice entities.

To carry out this mission, LPSCC's Executive Committee meets during monthly meetings convened by the LPSCC co-chairs to enhance participation of countywide leadership, foster close collaboration in the development and operation of public safety policy, and promote coordinated, data-driven public safety operations.

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury has served as the LPSCC co-chair since 2017. In 2020, she welcomed Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty as her co-chair. Together, they have helped lead conversations on criminal system reform and community healing.

The Executive Committee directs the work of several subcommittees, working groups and affiliated committees that focus on key issues within the public safety system.

For more information, visit multco.us/lpscc.

LPSCC Successes

COVID-19 response and collaboration

Despite the challenge of not being able to meet in person throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, collaboration among LPSCC stakeholders thrived. Members of the council quickly moved from conference calls to Zoom and other online video meeting tools to facilitate policy-making activities. As noted in the [2020 annual report](#), LPSCC members acted quickly to determine policies aimed at preventing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in the jail system while also upholding the health and safety of justice-involved individuals and public safety staff.

As vaccines became more widely available in the spring of 2021, partners shifted their focus to how and when to open up and return to pre-pandemic operations. LPSCC stakeholders continue to meet to discuss issues such as public health and safety in the jails, the court and in the field; ramping up hearings and trials to address the backlog of cases from the past year; appropriate use of technology and when to continue remote proceedings; communication with crime victims; and reducing the number of people in detention.

Completion of the FUSE study

With the support of the Corporation for Supportive Housing, LPSCC, the City of Portland, Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services, and Health Share of Oregon engaged in a study to learn more about the familiar faces who pass through homeless services providers, health systems and local jails. The project, Frequent User Systems Engagement (FUSE), confirmed a long-held hypothesis: That individuals who are frequently booked into jail are also ill and struggle to maintain stable housing.

The [FUSE study](#) found that connecting these frequent users to supportive housing resulted in numerous improved outcomes, including:

- Over 400 fewer jail bookings
- Over 50 fewer inpatient psychiatric stays
- Over 17,000 fewer Emergency Department (ED) visits
- Over 5,000 fewer avoidable ED visits
- Over 200 fewer hospitalizations.

Justice Reinvestment turns eight

The Multnomah County Justice Reinvestment Program (MCJRP) continues to find success despite fluctuating budgets and COVID-19 impacts. MCJRP is well-institutionalized and continues to safely reduce the number of individuals sentenced to state prison.

In 2023, the County's Department of Community Justice will complete a qualitative evaluation that analyzes the experiences of MCJRP clients. The evaluation is intended to help identify what approaches have the greatest impact on successful outcomes from the participants' perspectives.

For more information, visit the [MCJRP website](#).

Specialty courts

Since 2019, LPSCC has held the responsibility of submitting specialty court grant applications to the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission. The Multnomah County District Court operates several specialty courts, including: Mental Health Court; Success Through Accountability, Restitution and Treatment (START) Court serving high-risk property offenders; and the DUII Intensive Supervision Program (DISP) Court. The newest specialty court, Strategic Treatment and Engagement Program (STEP) Court, which focuses on Measure 11 clients, was implemented in late 2021. In response, LPSCC staff now help convene an ongoing cross-system workgroup to increase equity, efficiency and the effectiveness in the administration of all local specialty courts.

Violence Prevention staff

The LPSCC office has hired a new project manager position for community violence prevention coordination. County leadership acknowledged the need for violence prevention staffing capacity and Chair Kafoury added the funding in her fiscal year 2023 executive budget. The Board of County Commissioners approved ongoing funding for this position in the adopted budget. The position will increase the LPSCC office's capacity to engage in violence prevention policy and practice improvements across the county.



LPSCC Challenges

COVID-19

As it did to most institutions across the world, the COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions to Multnomah County's criminal legal system. However, LPSCC stakeholders collaborated to quickly respond to many of these issues:

- Case backlogs increased across the country and in Multnomah County. To mitigate the backlog, system partners worked on ways to become more efficient, such as the use of remote court hearings. The Oregon Judicial Department and other partners continue to strategize innovative ways to resolve cases. Throughout the pandemic, criminal legal system partners met consistently to communicate about the impact of COVID-19 and policies to ensure quality collaboration and networking.
- The Oregon public defense system has been chronically underfunded. The COVID-19 pandemic, along with "the great resignation," worsened the situation in Multnomah County. Public defenders (as well as the District Attorney) continue to struggle with hiring and retaining lawyers, leaving some defendants without representation. While the problem is ongoing, collaboration via LPSCC has helped better plan for and respond to the shortages.

Demands for racial justice

The protests demanding racial justice that started in 2020 in the wake of George Floyd's murder challenged LPSCC partners to think transformationally about change and reform. Although the groundwork for the Transforming Justice project (see below) was laid prior to the summer of protests, the public calls for racial justice galvanized people who work with or within the criminal legal systems to think more ambitiously and to expedite their work together, even while facing the challenges presented by COVID-19.

Additionally, Chair Kafoury made a number of investments with the intent of better serving and lifting up Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color.

For more information, visit the [Multnomah County Justice and Equity Agenda website](#).

Successfully diverting and deflecting people away from entering the criminal legal system

The County has expanded our Stabilization, Treatment and Preparation (STP) program, which offers transitional housing and psychiatric stabilization services, legal skills training and a range of additional supports to help people experiencing homelessness who are also involved in the justice system prepare to rejoin the community.

The County is also expanding the service by partnering with Central City Concern to create a new culturally specific, Afrocentric 12-bed house, called Karibu, which began operating in fall of 2022. Central City Concern is finalizing renovation of a site to house the program long term. Additional funding will allow the Department of Community Justice to include services for pretrial clients, as well as those preparing to leave jail following a term of incarceration. Karibu services will include outreach, engagement, peer support and employment advocacy and support. This program is currently up and running.



Transforming Justice

Background

Spearheaded by LPSCC, the Transforming Justice project is the ambitious and necessary process to re-envision the criminal legal system that is informed by both the community and criminal legal system stakeholders.

In January 2020, the council began a process of envisioning a wholly transformed public safety system during the [What Works in Public Safety Conference](#), which gathered local and national experts from healthcare, human services and the judiciary, as well as law enforcement, defense attorneys, community providers, victims' rights advocates and representatives from county and city government.

That conference concluded with a collective pledge to focus strategies on transforming the current system into one that is adequately equipped to respond to behavior rooted in social problems, such as racism and poverty. Participants agreed that the most effective pathway toward that goal is by shrinking unnecessary incarceration and growing approaches grounded in housing, health, behavioral health and culturally specific supports.

At the beginning of 2021, an outside firm, [Territory](#), began facilitating a unique process of collaboration between criminal legal system leaders, health system leaders, elected officials, providers, victims of crime and individuals with lived justice system experience. As an agency without previous affiliations to criminal justice work, Territory is able to focus on uncovering and capturing the public safety expertise that exists among the stakeholders participating in this effort.

Goals

The ultimate goal of the Transforming Justice work is to envision and design the future state of local criminal legal policy that will be tangible and implementable over the next two, five and 10 years. Before any concrete implementation starts, the project will address reckoning for harms done, and then move to reconstruction.

In order to transform legal systems, we first need to collaboratively create a fully realized, implementable vision of a public safety system that:

- Leads with race and and prioritizes interventions, policies, and budgeting for Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC) communities.
- Focuses on shrinking the current criminal legal system footprint, while growing health, housing, and treatment responses.
- Increases restorative approaches that focus on healing, harm reduction, and restoration.

Work to-date

After two years of working together using human-centered design and uplifting the voices of people impacted by legal systems, the vision was approved by the [Transforming Justice Steering Committee](#) on June 13, 2022. [View the final report.](#)

Following approval of the vision, Territory and LPSCC staff planned and facilitated a series of sessions focused on each of the 18 core strategies. These sessions focused on what is currently happening, identified barriers and gaps, and assessed who else should be engaged.

The wisdom and information collected in each session is currently being reviewed for feedback and input, and will be made available for public consumption and comment in the new year.

Work ahead

Transformation requires vision and a clearly defined North Star. Now that the vision has been established, the work ahead will be to fine tune and implement the 18 accompanying core strategies. The timing, scope and partnerships required for success are currently being developed. However, like the visioning process, the implementation phase will focus on human-centered design.

Safety and Justice Challenge: Pretrial system reform

Since 2015, Multnomah County has been an active member of the [John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge](#) (SJC). Multnomah County was awarded \$2 million from the foundation in 2017 to implement strategies that address the main drivers of the local jail population, including unfair and ineffective practices that take a particularly heavy toll on people of color, low-income communities, and people with mental health and substance abuse issues. In 2021, Multnomah County was awarded a final \$1.2 million grant to complete pretrial system reform.

Overhauling the biggest pretrial system in Oregon requires partnership, collaboration and a shared vision. Once complete, the system will be risk-based, offer a variety of community-based monitoring options, improve the quality of first appearances and focus on equity. LPSCC has engaged in a number of efforts through its participation in the Safety and Justice Challenge to move closer to that goal:

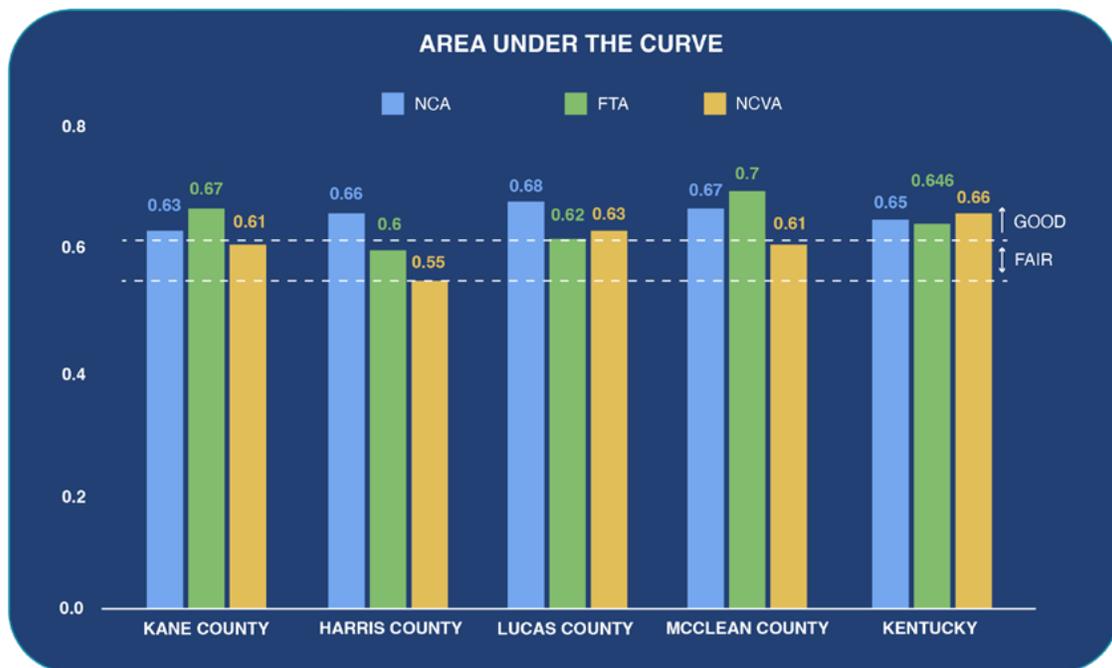
- **Implementing the Public Safety Assessment (PSA)**, an [evidence-based pretrial risk assessment tool](#). Research demonstrates that the PSA has the ability to improve the accuracy of pretrial predictions. Validation studies in the state of Kentucky, Harris County, Texas, and Lucas County, Ohio all show that the PSA accurately predicts re-arrest and Failure to Appear (FTA) outcomes for their pretrial population. The PSA can also increase rates of release without compromising public safety. For instance, the state of New Jersey implemented the PSA in conjunction with several other criminal justice and public safety reforms that coincided with a decrease in the number of arrests. Both arrests and FTAs remained consistently low years after adopting the tool despite concerns that the reforms would lead to a spike in crime and FTAs¹.

Past validation studies of the PSA have shown it to be effective in predicting an individual's risk to commit a new criminal activity (NCA), a new violent criminal activity (NCVA) or fail to appear (FTA) in court. The chart on the next page highlights Area Under the Curve (AUC) scores to show that among five available validation studies, the PSA either did a "fair" or "good" job in predicting individuals' risk for these three separate outcomes².

The current timeline indicates the PSA and the accompanying information technology tools will be implemented in spring 2023. Moving forward, Multnomah County will ensure the PSA is validated for local use and that evaluation systems for policy and practice improvement are in place.

¹ Advancing Pretrial Policy & Research. (2021). (issue brief). [The Public Safety Assessment](#).

² Most validation studies use an Area Under Curve (AUC) analysis which demonstrates the likelihood that an individual that experienced an outcome (e.g., FTA or new criminal activity) has a higher PSA score in that category than an individual that did not experience that outcome. A score of 0.55 to 0.63 is generally considered "fair" while a score of 0.64 or above is considered good.



- **Launching a Justice Fellowship**, a civic leadership opportunity to engage community members with policy-makers to hone in on policy recommendations that seek to decrease racial and ethnic disparities.
- **Aligning the County’s two unique pretrial monitoring programs**, the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office’s (MCSO) Close Street program and Department of County Justice’s (DCJ) Pretrial Services program. The purpose of alignment is to ensure defendants are monitored by the appropriate program and that the intensity of monitoring is aligned with their risk levels. The Close Street Program provides more intensive monitoring than the Pretrial Services Program (PSP), but a 2016 analysis conducted by DCJ showed that 78% of MCSO’s Close Street caseload was assessed as low risk (score of 0 to 3) compared to 37% of DCJ’s PSP caseload. Justice System Partners re-ran this analysis in 2020 and found that 53% of the cases assigned to Close Street were low risk.³
- **Supporting the implementation of Senate Bill 48**, a statewide pretrial reform bill designed to decrease reliance on security release (money bond) and set uniform standards for pretrial release.
- **Restructuring arraignments** to allow for meaningful communication between defense attorneys and their clients. Research continues to highlight the importance of meaningful engagement between public defenders and their clients at arraignment. For instance, a 2022 study from the RAND Corporation showed that “people represented by a public defender were less likely to receive a financial release condition and less likely to be detained pretrial—all without increasing failure to appear rates at preliminary hearings.”⁴
- **Distributing cell phones to defendants** through the Metropolitan Public Defenders (MPD) to communicate with their attorney, participate in remote hearings and stay in compliance with pretrial monitoring.

³ Justice System Partners. (n.d.). (rep.). [Multnomah County Pretrial System Assessment February 25, 2020 \(Revised\)](#).

⁴ Advancing Pretrial Policy & Research. (2022). (rep.). [The Positive Impact of Public Defenders](#).

Juvenile Services Division update

The Juvenile Services Division (JSD) has undergone significant changes over the last two years, launching major initiatives to transform probation, create a more trauma-informed detention space, and expand youth and family programming. These efforts work in conjunction with the County's long-running push to reduce reliance on detention.

Transforming Juvenile Probation

The Transforming Juvenile Probation initiative involves more than 150 staff members, community partners and stakeholders. The goal of this effort is to help transform DCJ's juvenile probation practices away from prioritizing surveillance and sanctions, and toward a more developmentally appropriate strategy that focuses on promoting positive behavior change and long-term success for youth.

In April 2022, the [Juvenile Justice Council](#) held a summit where participants shared strategies for advancing the three pillars of transforming juvenile probation:

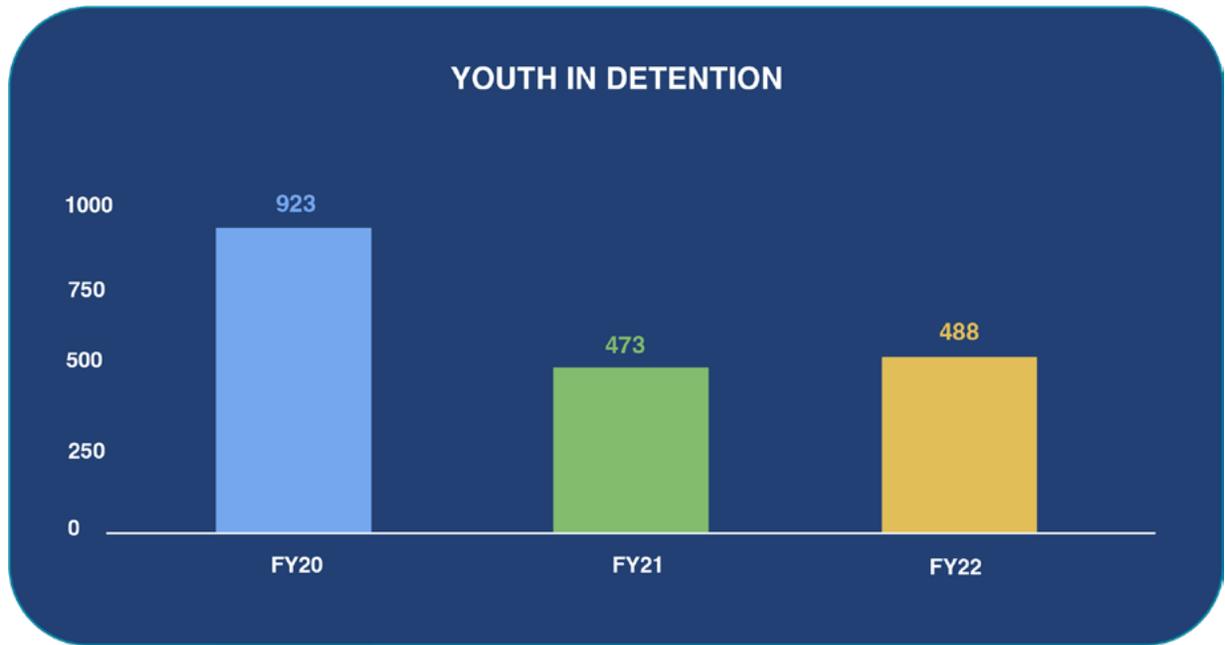
1. Expanding Diversion: Enhancing, expanding and aligning our diversion pathways with community-led solutions that prioritize healing and meaningful accountability.
2. Decreasing Court-ordered Conditions: Reducing the overall number of court-ordered conditions with a focus on individualizing conditions specific to the needs of youth
3. Increasing Incentives for Justice-involved Youth: Strengthening the ability of juvenile court counselors to promote positive behavior change through the use of incentives and identifying and building on the strengths of youth and their families.

Expanded youth and family programming

The Juvenile Services Division has partnered with Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center + Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC + RAHS) and Latino Network to implement the Families United in Safety and Empowerment (FUSE) program. This program provides an opportunity for youth and parents to learn non-violent, respectful ways of communicating and resolving conflict.

Reducing reliance on detention

In an effort to limit admissions and the overall daily population, juvenile justice partners have continued to meet regularly to analyze the number of youth who are held in detention. Intake staff have developed appropriate release plans for youth who are able to be safe in the community pending their preliminary hearing, and juvenile court counselors have supported young people with alternatives to detention. As a result, the average daily population of Multnomah County youth in 2021 was 15.6, well below the full capacity of 29 beds.



Remodeling detention

The division spent over a year bringing together staff and managers to develop recommendations for remodeling and/or refurbishing detention pods in an effort to make them safer and more developmentally appropriate, trauma informed and functional. The Board of County Commissioners approved funding to begin this project, which [broke ground](#) in June 2022.

The remodeling of two housing units at the Donald E. Long Detention Center will also integrate restorative practices that build and repair relationships and de-emphasize punitive discipline in favor of communication to resolve conflict. The use of restorative practices is expected to improve the overall safety of the facility while also reducing the use of punitive interventions such as room confinement.

Impact of COVID-19

While the Juvenile Justice Complex has remained open over the course of the pandemic, significant modifications were made to operations at the start of the public health emergency to ensure the safety and well-being of youth in custody and staff.

However, as the pandemic has evolved, many functions have since resumed with safety precautions and protocols in place. For example, limitations on visitation in detention and Assessment and Evaluation have been relaxed to allow for more in-person family and professional visits. Juvenile court counselors have resumed all home visits and in-person meetings in the office. Several programs offering valuable programming resumed activities, including community service and Project Payback, which provides youth opportunities to earn money to pay off restitution. The Culinary Arts and Hands of Wonder programs have also resumed in-person programs and instruction.

LPSCC Members

as of June 30, 2022



Chair Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County
LPSCC Co-Chair



Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty
City of Portland
LPSCC Co-Chair

Honorable Cheryl Albrecht
Chief Criminal Court Judge

Scott Asphaug
Oregon U.S. Attorney

Mohammad Bader
Director, Multnomah County
Department of County Human Services

Gunnar Browning
Field Supervisor, Oregon Youth
Authority

Ebony Clarke
Director, Multnomah County Health
Department

Deena Corso
Director, Multnomah County
Department of Community Justice –
Juvenile Services Division

Julie Dodge
Interim Director, Multnomah County
Behavioral Health Division

Djimet Dogo
Associate Director, IRCO

Lakayana Drury
Community Representative

Corey Falls
Deputy City Manager, City of Gresham

Morgan Godvin
Community Representative

Lisa Hay
Federal Public Defender

Patrick Huskey
Lieutenant, Oregon State Police

Chuck Lovell
Chief, Portland Police Bureau

Carl Macpherson
Director, Metropolitan Public
Defender

Honorable Judith Matarazzo
Presiding Circuit Court Judge

Robert Northman
Community Representative

Colette S. Peters
Director, Oregon Department of
Corrections

Erika Preuitt
Director, Multnomah County
Department of Community Justice

Mike Reese
Sheriff, Multnomah County Sheriff's
Office

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Professor, Portland State University –
Criminology and Criminal Justice

Alix Sanchez
Senior Manager, Multnomah County
Department of County Human
Services – Domestic & Sexual
Violence Coordination Office

Mike Schmidt
Multnomah County District Attorney

Honorable Susan Svetkey
Chief Family Court Judge

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Safety + Justice Challenge Data
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Seemab Hussaini
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