



Pretrial Technical Assistance and Training Availability

The Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI), with funding and assistance from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), is pleased to announce an historic opportunity for no-cost technical assistance or training in the administration of pretrial justice.

PJI is the nation's only nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring informed pretrial decision making for safe communities. PJI advocates for fair and effective pretrial policies and practices that eliminate inappropriate detention, optimize diversion from prosecution, and maintain community safety. PJI provides information, technical assistance and training to criminal justice officials and community leaders at the federal, state and local levels.

Requests under this project may be submitted throughout the year.

For questions regarding this project, please contact John Clark in writing, at john@pretrial.org. For more information on how a jurisdiction can ensure rational, fair and effective front-end decision-making, please contact Executive Director Tim Murray at tim@pretrial.org or 202-638-3080 x302.

Eligibility

This project is open to state, county and tribal governments as well as professional state associations. Jurisdictions must identify the category to which they are submitting a request, and may request assistance in one category per application. Multiple requests per jurisdiction are allowed.

Request Categories

Category 1A – Training. Requests to this category seek training on pretrial justice for judges, prosecutors, defenders, staff with pretrial release or diversion responsibilities, or county officials. Priority will be given to training requests for at least 12 appropriate participants, available for a minimum of six hours of training (an 8-hour day), no-cost meeting space, and reproduction of PJI-provided materials for participants. Priority will also be given to training of system-wide stakeholders, staff from multiple jurisdictions (regional training), or state-wide training opportunities provided they allow for at least 4 hours of instruction, provide no-cost meeting space and reproduction of PJI-provided materials for participants. All regional and local training will involved a pre/post test for participants as a requirement of the training.

Category 2 – Technical Assistance – Program Assessment. Requests to this category seek technical assistance to assess local pretrial justice functions against nationally accepted professional standards and best practices. Priority will be given to requests that come with letters of support from system stakeholders.

Category 3 – Technical Assistance – Evidence-Based Risk Assessment. Requests to this category seek to develop a state-of-the-art, evidence-based, and locally validated risk assessment instrument to aid bail decision-makers. Successful jurisdictions will be fully committed to and engaged in a five-step process. First, a meeting of local stakeholders is held to discuss concepts of risk management and provide an overview of current research. Second, data is analyzed to determine which elements have a relationship to court appearance and arrest while on release. Third, an instrument is developed; staff and stakeholders agree on a set of policies and procedures and are trained on the use of the instrument. Fourth, quality control measures are developed and implemented to ensure correct implementation. Finally, data is reanalyzed to ensure the validity of the instrument.

Priority will be given to requests in which all system stakeholders have agreed to participate in the process, as specifically articulated in individual letters of support included in the application. All available data for the study must be provided electronically upon notification of approved request. Quality control measures must be developed, implemented and certified by the jurisdiction. All jurisdictions approved must also agree to provide outcome data nine (9) months after the instrument has been validated (step five). A reporting template will be provided by PJI, and will include, but not be limited to: percentage of arrestees interviewed, percentage of defendants recommended for release or diversion, percentage of those recommended for release who are released, appearance rates, and pretrial behavior/safety rates.

Category 4 – Corrections Options Technical Assistance (COTA). Requests to this category may be in the areas of:

- ***Diversion/Specialty Courts:*** PJI and JFA will work with programs in addressing concerns around pre/post plea, lack of data, lack of objective assessment and appropriate referrals.
- ***Case processing analyses:*** PJI and JFA will perform case processing analyses for local jurisdictions.
- ***Jail population analyses:*** PJI and JFA will perform jail population analyses for local jurisdictions, as well as help them better identify persons who remain detained throughout the pretrial period but are then released upon disposition.
- ***Jail and Prison Classification:*** Knowing the risk levels of inmates currently incarcerated is a critical piece of information for effectively managing a jail or prison system. PJI and JFA will provide technical assistance to validate, revalidate or develop prison or jail classification systems.

- ***Correctional Population Simulation Models:*** Technical assistance will be provided for jurisdictions to either develop the capability to run their own simulation models or provide them with a set of one-time projections or simulations to address specific issues.
- ***Probation and parole risk assessments:*** Similar to prison classification, probation and parole risk assessment are based on risk factors statistically associated with the recidivism of a particular population. Technical assistance will be provided to jurisdictions in the development of these risk assessments.
- ***Parole release and revocation guidelines:*** Technical assistance will be provided to states and local jurisdictions in the development of risk based parole release instruments, and/or pre-trial, probation, or parole risk based progressive sanction revocation instruments.
- ***Offender Program Performance Measures and Accountability Systems:*** Data-merging technologies and scientific evaluation protocols can be used to track recidivism and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment programs and other intermediate sanctions. Technical assistance will be provided to jurisdictions in the development of performance measures and performance based accountability systems.

How to Submit a Request

Requests must be made electronically in Microsoft Word or PDF to pji@pretrial.org.

If applicable, a jurisdiction will be asked to complete survey instruments supported by prior BJA projects, such as PJI's pretrial program survey, the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies' diversion program survey, or PJI's scan of pretrial practice.

Request Must Include:

1. Point of Contact for discussion of request, including email address.
2. Name and contact information for agency requesting TTA.
3. Category of assistance requested and problem statement. All requests should provide a short narrative problem statement, limited to two (2) pages, that addresses -
 - What is the primary issue or concern about the pretrial justice stage of the system and your current jail population?
 - What specific training or technical assistance is being requested?
 - How is it anticipated that the requested assistance will help?

Review Process

PJI is committed to ensuring a fair and standardized process for granting requests for training or technical assistance. PJI will review requests to ensure that they are appropriate, reasonable and that the technical assistance or training provided can result in measurable and achievable improvements in policies and/or practices.

Within five business days of receipt of the request, PJI staff will contact the requestor to discuss the request in more detail. Calls may include staff from BJA.

Jurisdictions who are then selected for technical assistance or training should expect to provide additional information such as:

- Data that supports revised problem statement.
- Letters of commitment from relevant stakeholder groups, as defined by the phone conferences, to actively participate in assistance.
- List of any technical assistance or consulting work commissioned by the county since 2005. This would include any relevant criminal justice assessments, such as criminal case flow, jail assessments, pretrial program assessments, participation in any studies or research projects focuses on front-end decision-making (pretrial release, diversion, specialty courts).

Considerations may include, but are not limited to, underserved jurisdictions, strategic priorities of PJI or BJA, past performance with technical assistance investments, and available funding.

All final approval for requests lies with BJA.