



## **Pretrial Technical Assistance and Training Availability October 2010 – September 2011**

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

BJA first made this no-cost technical assistance available in Fiscal Year 2010, and the results for local jurisdictions have been so beneficial that BJA committed to continue this effort through at least Fiscal Year 2011, which ends September 30, 2011. As a result, requests under this project should be submitted by June 1, 2011 to assure that the technical assistance can be completed by the end of the current grant period. If contemplating a request for technical assistance after that date, check with PJI to determine the availability of funding

This Announcement describes who is eligible to receive this assistance, what assistance is available, and how to submit a request, and where to go for further information.

### **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 involve a pre/post test for participants as a requirement of the training.

Topics for trainings, which can be combined and/or tailored, include:

- **Historical and Legal Foundations of Pretrial Justice.** Previously entitled Pretrial 101, this popular training provides those new to the pretrial justice field

- an overview of the historical and legal foundations. Faculty will review the long-standing history of bail, surety bond, and pretrial services. Case law and an analysis of state bail laws will also be presented.
- **Professional Standards for Pretrial Release.** This training is a modified version of the 4-hour course offered to students at the National Institute of Corrections' bi-annual Orientation for New Pretrial Executives. Attendees will review the current standards for pretrial as promulgated by the American Bar Association, National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, and National District Attorneys Association.
  - **Professional Standards for Pretrial Diversion.** This training is completely new and based on the 2008 revised NAPSA Pretrial Diversion/Intervention Standards. Attendees will review the standards for practice, and actively engage in a discussion of the impact and potential benefits of pretrial diversion and intervention on the criminal justice system.
  - **Interviewing Techniques.** This training provides a brief overview of the best techniques for successfully interviewing defendants during a difficult time in their lives. Attendees will be entertained and educated during an interactive and fun session. Prizes are given for the best performances or stories of real interviews!
  - **Ethics for Pretrial Professionals.** The way in which pretrial professional present themselves and the standards of personal conduct to which we hold ourselves are cornerstones of public service. This training provides an overview of ethics, the NAPSA Code of Conduct.
  - **Risk Assessment and Recommendations to the Court.** With the heavy focus on evidence-based practice, more and more jurisdictions are utilizing objective risk assessment criteria. This is great! But how do these tools work, how are they developed, who's using what and what should staff know about risk scores and making recommendations to the court? This training was designed to answer some basic questions and provide attendees with an overview of the current state of pretrial risk assessment research, policy and practice at the local level.
  - **Courtroom Etiquette.** We all know that how defendants present themselves in court can make a difference to the outcome of that event. Did you also know that how pretrial staff present themselves in court affects their credibility and may impact the recommendations they make? Attendees will be entertained and educated about courtroom etiquette, engaging in fun exercises.
  - **Supervising Defendants.** This training provides a brief overview of the best techniques for successfully supervising defendants. Based on training provided to federal pretrial and probation officers, attendees will be entertained and educated during an interactive and fun session.

*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. This would include assessments of existing pretrial release or pretrial diversion programs, or assessing the feasibility of establishing such programs. 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 Classification:*** Knowing the risk level of inmates currently incarcerated is a critical piece of information for effectively managing a jail system. PJI and JFA will provide technical assistance to validate, revalidate or develop 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.
- ***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 submitted electronically in Microsoft Word or PDF to PJI Senior Associate John Clark at [john@pretrial.org](mailto:john@pretrial.org).

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 requesting?
  - 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 focused on front-end decision-making (pretrial release, diversion, specialty courts).
- 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.

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.

**For Further Information**

For questions regarding this project, please contact John Clark at [john@pretrial.org](mailto:john@pretrial.org) or 202-638-3080 x 301. 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](mailto:tim@pretrial.org) or 202-638-3080 x302.