

What is A Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)

The issues the United States faces in the 21st Century are multidimensional. To address them properly requires strategic planning and a multidisciplinary approach. Nowhere is this more evident than in our country's Criminal Justice System. Today, one in every thirty-one adults is under correctional supervision in the United States. Over the past twenty years, U.S. correctional costs have risen 315%. Criminal justice advocates say "we can do better."

To accomplish this local governments have joined forces with justice system decision makers and formed multidisciplinary Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils in Wisconsin. The goal is safer communities, improved outcomes, lower costs and reduced recidivism. Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils do this through collaboration, cooperation, human development and scientific research.

Collaboration and coordination: The Criminal Justice System is diverse, independent and fragmented. It is made up of elected officials, county and state agencies, local government officials, advocate groups and citizens. All of these entities are autonomous decision makers in the justice system. At the same time they are interdependent upon each other. When key decision makers collaborate and coordinate services, they are more knowledgeable, effective and efficient. *County* Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils are the ideal vehicle for decision makers to come together; establishing clear missions, adapting policies and establishing programs that make effective use of limited resources.

More effective results needed: Decreased funding for agency operations, disproportionate minority contacts, jail overcrowding and pretrial release safety issues all point to needed change. Local governments must use their limited resources wisely. The National Institute of Corrections has analyzed and identified over 500 evidence-based programs and practices that show increased effectiveness and lower financial costs. These programs and practices evaluate the risk of offenders to the community and the cognitive-behavioral needs that must be met to reduce recidivism. Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils are established to learn about these practices within a framework that is flexible for each community.

Meeting today's needs: Rather than functioning in isolation, justice decision-makers pool resources within a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to meet community needs, increase public safety and lower incarceration costs. This meets the goals of improved justice quality, getting to the root causes of crime and increasing community support. Council members commit themselves to getting smarter on crime. They realize that together they can accomplish larger goals for community safety and offender accountability than any one agency can do alone.