



# Enhancing Pretrial Services Agencies in Virginia

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Virginia Department of  
Criminal Justice Services  
www.dcls.virginia.gov

## Pretrial Services Study Roadmap

1. DCJS received a letter from the Virginia State Crime Commission containing recommendations for pretrial services agencies in Virginia

2. Virginia State Crime Commission conducted a statewide pretrial services needs assessment

3. DCJS convened a stakeholder work group in order to gather feedback and recommendations from the stakeholders

4. Based on the recommendations of the stakeholder work group, DCJS developed and began implementation of a plan to improve the administration of and uniformity across pretrial services agencies in Virginia

December 2017

February 2017–September 2018

October 2018



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## VSCC Recommendations to DCJS for Pretrial Services Agencies in Virginia

1. Convene a group of stakeholders to develop specific recommendations to improve pretrial services
2. Monitor the Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment tools (VPRAI and Praxis) to examine their effectiveness and to identify any issues or unintended consequences of the application of the tools
3. Work with localities, pretrial directors, and other stakeholders to determine a funding formula for pretrial services agencies
4. Explore options for improving or replacing the case management system used by pretrial services agencies (PTCC)
5. Monitor the use of PTCC by pretrial services agencies to ensure that comprehensive definitions are developed and utilized, and necessary data is consistently and uniformly entered



## Stakeholder Work Group Composition

- Judges
- Local Pretrial Directors and Officers
- Virginia Community Criminal Justice Association
- Office of the Executive Secretary
- Magistrates
- Commonwealth's Attorneys
- Defense Attorneys
- Indigent Defense Commission
- Virginia Bail Association
- Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission
- Virginia Compensation Board
- Virginia Association of Counties
- Virginia Municipal League
- Sheriffs
- Jailers
- Police



## DCJS Response

### Pretrial Stakeholder Work Group Meetings:

1. March 26, 2018
2. July 11, 2018
3. September 19, 2018

**Work Group A:**  
Magistrate Bail  
Decision/Static Risk  
Assessment Instrument

1. March 26, 2018
2. May 15, 2018

**Work Group B:**  
Pretrial Investigations,  
Supervision, Training,  
and Resources

1. March 26, 2018
2. May 14, 2018
3. June 11, 2018
4. August 21, 2018

**Work Group C:**  
Defining and Measuring  
Data Outcomes

1. March 26, 2018
2. May 21, 2018



## Stakeholder Work Group Feedback and Recommendations

- Overall, there was broad support for pretrial services from the stakeholders who participated in the work group
- In addition, the work group provided DCJS with recommendations for improving the delivery and administration of pretrial services



## Stakeholder Work Group Recommendations

### Pretrial Services Availability and Operation

1. Pretrial services should be expanded to all localities in Virginia
2. Pretrial services should provide both investigations and supervision



## Stakeholder Work Group Recommendations

### Pretrial Risk Assessment

1. The VPRAI should include separate risk scores for:
  - The risk level to public safety
  - The risk level for failure to appear
2. The pretrial risk assessment should guide the intensity of supervision (the higher the risk, the more often the defendant is seen, and more requirements are placed on them)



## Stakeholder Work Group Recommendations

### Training and Education

1. DCJS should work with stakeholders to develop training modules that will enable pretrial services agency directors to coordinate the training of local stakeholders on pretrial services
2. Trainings should focus on the importance of the transfer of information between pretrial agencies, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and other stakeholders



## DCJS Work Plan

### Implement Revised VPRAI Report – Spring 2019

- a. Evaluate what type of information pretrial services agencies provide to assist judicial officers make more informed bail decisions
- b. Include separate risk scores for risk to public safety and risk of failure to appear
- c. Enhance general formatting of the VPRAI Report based on feedback from, judges, Commonwealth's attorneys, and defense counsel



## DCJS Work Plan

### Implement Enhanced Training for Pretrial Officers and Stakeholders – Spring 2019

- a. Develop standardized curriculum to provide consistent and accurate information about pretrial services and promote uniformity in the delivery of services
- b. Regularly deliver pretrial leadership training and stakeholder specific training (e.g. defense bar, prosecution)
- c. Enhance current pretrial officer training



## DCJS Work Plan

### Update and Replace the Pretrial Case Management System (PTCC)

- a. Perform short term PTCC modifications and enhancements to address data issues discovered by the Crime Commission study and the needs of PTCC end users. This will allow DCJS greater access to data for program analyses – Winter 2018
- b. Implement an updated case management and data analytics technology platform for use by local community-based probation and pretrial services agencies – 2021



## DCJS Work Plan

### **Implement Enhanced Monitoring Process to Ensure Pretrial Agencies are in Compliance with DCJS Standards and Guidelines**

- a. Conduct quarterly analyses of data from each pretrial agency – Spring 2019
- b. Quarterly compliance desk review of each pretrial agency – Spring 2019
- c. Conduct a site visit at each pretrial agency every 2–3 years
- d. Conduct yearly review and update of pretrial agency data and information profiles



## DCJS Work Plan

### **Implement Funding Formula Pretrial Services Agencies**

- a. Conduct a pretrial time and workload study – Fall 2019
- b. Develop and implement funding formula for pretrial services agencies



## DCJS Work Plan

### Revalidate VPRAI with Larger Dataset – 2020

- a. Utilize the newly available data to examine outcomes for all defendants released in the Commonwealth
- b. Conduct research for an improved pretrial risk assessment instrument



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