

The Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI) is centering racial justice as the foundation of our vision, mission and work to advance pretrial justice in order to end mass incarceration. This document may contain language choices or recommendations that are no longer aligned with this vision, but it remains in the UP library because of technical, subject-matter or historical merit.



Recommendations of the 2011 National Symposium on Pretrial Justice

Recommendations for Policy and Practice Enhancement

Recommendation 1: Jurisdictions should use citation releases by law enforcement in lieu of custodial arrests for non-violent offenses when the individual's identity is confirmed and no reasonable cause exists to suggest the individual may be a risk to the community or to miss court dates.

Recommendation 2: Jurisdictions should eliminate bond schedules that allow a defendant to pay money to get out of jail without appearing before a judge.

Recommendation 3: Jurisdictions should have a pretrial services program or similar entity that conducts a risk assessment on all defendants in custody awaiting the initial appearance in court. Jurisdictions should also have a mechanism to regularly review the pretrial detainee population in the jail to see if circumstances may have changed that could allow for pretrial release.

Recommendation 4: Jurisdictions should have a pretrial services program or similar entity that provides supervision and monitoring of defendants released by the court, reminds them of their upcoming court dates, and other court orders.

Recommendation 5: Jurisdictions should ensure that an experienced prosecutor conduct screening of criminal cases before the initial court appearance.

Recommendation 6: Jurisdictions should ensure that defense counsel is engaged prior to the initial appearance and is prepared to represent the defendant on the issue of bail.

Recommendation 7: States should ensure that bail statutes include a provision for risk-based preventive detention.

Recommendation 8: Jurisdictions should require the collection and publication of pretrial justice performance and outcome measures.

Recommendations for Stakeholder Groups

Recommendation 1: Stakeholder groups and constituent organizations should maintain a policy statement or resolution calling for the reform of pretrial justice practices.

Recommendation 2: Stakeholder groups and constituent organizations should educate their members regarding pretrial justice through conferences, publications, and trainings.

Recommendations for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Recommendation 1: Establish a multidisciplinary Pretrial Justice Working Group.

Recommendation 2: Provide state and regional pretrial justice symposia through efforts such as state or local data collection or analysis, legal analysis of state bail laws, and roadmaps for achieving pretrial justice reform.

Recommendation 3: Convene a judicial roundtable to develop a strategic approach to training and educating judges.

Recommendation 4: Take full advantage of OJP's communications assets by highlighting the need for pretrial justice reform while showcasing best practices.

Recommendation 5: Demonstrate the effectiveness of pretrial justice best practices through a dedicated Bureau of Justice Assistance grant program.

Recommendation 6: Collect a comprehensive set of pretrial data needed to support analysis, research, and reform through the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Recommendation 7: Embark upon a comprehensive research strategy that results in the identification of proven best pretrial justice practices through the National Institute of Justice.

Recommendations for Legislators

Recommendation 1: Review proposed pretrial bills for their compatibility with the policies and practices for pretrial release decision-making outlined by the American Bar Association in its Standards on Pretrial Release.

Recommendation 2: County legislative bodies should ensure that any local ordinances pertaining to pretrial release decision-making are compatible with the state law.

Recommendations for the Philanthropic Community

Recommendation 1: Convene a comprehensive philanthropic roundtable to identify areas that federal support cannot address.

Recommendation 2: Examine state statutes relating to pretrial release decision-making and develop a Model Code.

Recommendations for the Academic Community

Recommendation 1: Develop and seek funding for research proposals relating to pretrial justice.

Recommendation 2: Prepare future practitioners and leaders to effectively address pretrial justice issues in a fair, safe, and effective manner.