

Probation Task Force
Date: February 13th, 2009, 8:30am-10:30am

Attendees:

Gil Martinez, Chair
Christine Adams, Facilitator
Sherri Hufford, Judicial/Probation
Germaine Miera, DCJ/Research
Mike Riede, Task Force Leader
Tom Moore, Community Corrections
Paul Herman, CCJJ Consultant
Larry Abrahamson, District Attorney
Allison Boyd, 1st Judicial District DA's office Victim Advocate
Nicki Griffin, CU
Meg Williams, DCJ/OAJA
Paul Cooper, Chief Probation Officer
Charlie Garcia, Community Corrections
Mary Clare Mulligan, Defense Attorney
Bill Kilpatrick, Golden Police Department
Kevin Ford, DCJ/Research
Ann Terry, CDPS

Absent:

Ken Plotz, Senior Judge
Steve Siegle, Victim's Right
Michael Kirkland, Douglas County Sheriff
Brian Connors, Defense Attorney

Issue/Topic:

Welcome and Introduction

Issue/Topic:

Critical Issues Priorities
Identification

Discussion:

Judge Martinez welcomes the group.

Discussion:

Paul Herman leads the group in an exercise to get their feedback on what they believe to be the top priorities when it comes to the following three Critical Issues.

Minority Over-representation

1. Do we really know the extent of the problem? To what degree does this exist in Colorado? Is there any data or analysis?
2. Economic obstacles/poverty hinders minority success on probation
3. Ability to get out of jail pre-trial and receive probation
4. Success on Probation
5. Education level
6. Language barrier issues
7. Social/Cultural

Data

1. Different info systems
2. Judges do not know the details of how probation makes determination in LSIR
3. Public Defenders do not know the details of what data is collected, available and why
4. Victim Impact Statements
5. Timely Access from DA office for probation
6. Cross jurisdictional issue

Gender

1. Training on how to effectively work with women
2. Gender specific programming
3. Custody and responsibility for minor children
4. Usually victims of domestic violence
5. Break the cycle of violence

Issue/Topic:

Update - GP14

Action:

Sherri will schedule more meetings with the PAC to continue to push the Task Force recommendations forward.

Issue/Topic:

Update - Technical Violations Unit

Discussion:

In the January meeting, Sherri Hufford took on the responsibility of bringing this Task Force's issues to the PAC for their review and assistance. During this meeting she reported back on the progress made with PAC. **Below is a brief reproduction of the Power Point presentation (attached separately) along with commentary and questions discussed.** In addition, Sherri's other handouts are attached separately as well.

Standard Conditions of Probation Update

Historical Perspective

- The last major update of standard conditions of probation was 10-15 years ago.
- There have only been updates only as statutes have changed.
- Evidence-Based Practices Committee
- Principles of Effective Intervention
- What to do in the first 5 appointments , from the perspective of building a relationship with probationer that is strength-based

Probation Advisory Committee

- Members are willing to participate in a work group with the Task Force
- Consider joint recommendations/endorsement
- Most likely will require legislative changes

Discussion:

Technical Violations

Three recommendations:

- Improve **consistency**
- Develop a **comprehensive, statewide effort/program** to manage technical violators
- Continued support of **current training/education** efforts and the use of sanctions and incentives

Target Success Rates

- Quarterly rates for FY08
- Recidivism data by district

Outcome measures

- Public Safety
- Victim/Community Reparation

Question - How do you define success in the larger scheme of things?

The definition of success often ends at the end of the year or the end of the probation period. Success means different things to different agencies.

Issue/Topic:

Update - Technical Violations Unit (cont.)

Issue/Topic:

EBP Committee

Action:

Tom Quinn is applying for an inter-agency grant application for interagency training (which would include probation, community corrections, and DOC)

Discussion:

Technical Violations (cont.)

It is hard to find consensus where everyone agrees on the definition of success. There are lots of different ways to measure success. The higher the caseload of the probation officer, the more likely the failures. The heavier the caseload the more technical violations.

Discussion:

EBP Committee

Training/Education

- Supervisors
- Academy/Orientation
- PO/Probationer working relationship
- Implementation/Sustainability

Evaluation Projects

- Intensive Programs Evaluation
 - Are the right people in the program?
 - Are we serving them the way we should?
- Cognitive Behavioral Evaluation
 - Statewide folks trained in cognitive behavioral therapy
 - Right now doing an evaluation to see if the programs have fidelity to the model
 - Also to find out that the right folks are getting into the right programs
- Quality Assurance Tools

Probation has used the PR for about the last 3 years
What are we asking officers to do and what do we expect them to do?
- Contingency Management Workgroup

Use this to build a period of stability and encourage continued good behavior. Focus on the positive rather than the negative. Get a workgroup together to work further on this
- Grant Application

This will be a huge help for resources in the office to try and get some consistency across the state.

Issue/Topic:

Connecticut Model – Evaluation and Report

Action:

Issue/Topic:

Earned Time Update

Discussion:

Connecticut Model- Evaluation and Report

- Report and 2 addendums distributed

Two main pieces to the Connecticut model

1. Probation Transition Program
 2. Technical Violation Unit
- Specially trained officer (MI, CBT)
 - Reduced, capped caseload
 - Limited time frame (4 months)
 - Meets criteria
 - Specific Court Judge

Question - What does PAC think of a TV unit?

Per Sherri, the chief's are not sure this program 'matches' with how we do business in Colorado. Also, Connecticut had a lot of money to spend on this project and we don't have quite as much money. We can't just copy the program whole hog.

Intuitively this sounds like a good program but probation has some concerns about the design of the program evaluation. They didn't use a control group in the analysis. There is no info on those who didn't participate in the program.

It is hard to tell from Connecticut's data whether it was effective or ineffective. They didn't do a cost/benefit analysis. Was the savings enough to offset the cost of the program? Probation is a little skeptical and not sure if this was a good match.

Discussion:

Earned Time Update

- Extreme variations exist across the state
- Incentive-based concept
- Link earned time to specific requirements that are known to reduce recidivism
- Well designed pilot program with specific measure outcomes
- Include Stakeholders

Issue/Topic:

Chief Probation Officer Survey

Discussion:

Chief Probation Officer Survey

- 5 districts expressed difficulties
- 7 expressed interest in a pilot (3 more potential)
- Existing criteria for early termination
- Completion of ½ of sentence
- Fines, costs and restitution paid in full
- Reduction in risk
- Period of stability
- No objection from victim if VNOT case
- DDA opportunity to object

Probation’s policy on early termination-

Question - Because private probation agencies collect their dollars on supervision, do they hold on to cases just to collect dollars? It is harder to hold privates accountable

Early termination policy and checklist

Current Discussions:

- Potential measures and evaluation design
- Potential fears/consequences for stakeholders
- Existing research, current models
- Grant funds/application opportunities

Discussion:

Next Steps

Do we want volunteers from this committee to work with the PAC groups?

Probation is already doing a lot of this and we don’t have to re-invent the wheel. It is great to piggy-back with them and come back with joint recommendations.

Volunteer to pick a group you want to work with, let Sherri and Christine know

Issue/Topic:

Next Steps

Action:

Sherri to send out list of meeting dates/times for work groups.

- Standard Conditions
- Technical Violations
- Earned Time

At next task force meetings we’ll get updates from the groups