

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



JRCC Advisory Stakeholders

Fri. Nov. 6, 2015, 2-4PM

Joint hearing room of the Legislative Services Building in Annapolis (90 State Circle).

The **Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council** has two more years to develop policies to reduce mass incarceration in Maryland. This is your **last opportunity** this year to give voice to your concerns and help the Council develop strong policy recommendations. Everyone is invited to give testimony.

If your organization would like to speak at the 11/6/2015 meeting, please RSVP to Cara Sullivan, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, at cara.sullivan@maryland.gov or 410-821-2851.

Focus Groups

MAJR has brought together several focus groups to recommend action on critical policies for justice reform. The purpose of these groups is to focus the discussion on selected topics which will lead to effective legislation in the coming sessions.



1. Alternative Dispute Resolution

MAJR believes that community mediation, community conferencing, and mediation programs connected with the State's Attorneys Offices are promising evidence-based practices for criminal diversion. These programs save resources for the state and local agencies and provide more holistic solutions to the community and individuals involved in conflicts.

MAJR's Alternative Dispute Resolution focus group recommends that the

Maryland Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council propose criminal justice diversion policies that:

Study and document ADR practices in use in several established programs in order to facilitate replication statewide. This includes analysis of screening and referral protocols, which are critical to program success, and identification of best practices the state should support.

Increase the state's investment in ADR, both through expansion of existing programs and through establishment of new programs.

[Read the Focus Group report.](#)



2. Reentry in Maryland's Criminal Justice System

[Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform](#) (MAJR)'s 2015 initiatives offer the General Assembly a toolkit to begin repair of our state's corrections system. Central to those recommendations were several initiatives to reduce low-risk prison populations and repurpose the same funds for screening, reentry, offender employment, and other services to lower recidivism and to increase public safety.

An expert panel was assembled to consider further those initiatives and to make explicit recommendations to pursue in the near future. Those recommendations focused on the following eight areas:

- Risk-Needs Screening
- Limited and Full Reentry Programs
- Statewide Coordination
- Gaps in Mental Health/Substance Abuse Treatment
- Transitional Staffing
- Differentiated Employment Assistance
- State/Local Coordination
- Specialty Court Staffing

[Read the Focus Group report.](#)



3. Employment For Those In Maryland's Criminal Justice System

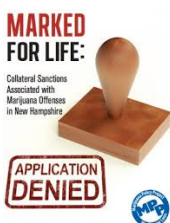
Both **federal** and state studies clearly show that ex-offenders who are employed are much less likely to commit new offenses than those who are unemployed. Unemployed offenders are twice as likely to return to prison than those who have a job.

Maryland also has recognized that an ex-offender's ability to support himself "as soon as possible after release is important to reentry success ..." But, despite this, Maryland now offers only 1 in 10 inmates the opportunity to participate in job-training programs while in state prisons.

An expert panel was assembled to consider further employment initiatives and to make explicit recommendations to pursue in the near future. Those recommendations focused on the following five areas:

- Employment as Priority
- Recruiting of Employers
- "All of the Above" Employment Strategies
- Transportation for Employment
- Higher Risk Inmates

[Read the Focus Group report.](#)



4. Collateral Consequences

Students in the University of Maryland's School of Law issued this [Report on the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions in MD](#) (2007) examining the consequences of incarceration for the state's returning citizens.

A major conclusion was "at the time of sentencing, criminal defendants and their counsel are often unaware that collateral consequences will attach to the conviction. Recognizing the direct relationship between collateral consequences and the ability of those with criminal convictions to productively re-enter society, the ABA standards recommend that each jurisdiction collect its respective collateral consequences and codify those consequences in a centralized location, implement mechanisms to inform defendants of these consequences as part of the guilty plea process, require sentencing courts to consider these consequences as part of the sentencing process, and narrow the range of these consequences."

An expert panel was assembled to consider further collateral consequences of

imprisonment and to make explicit recommendations to pursue in the near future. Those recommendations focused on the following four areas:

- Notice of Collateral Consequences
- Discretionary Collateral Consequences
- Automatic Shielding for Dismissed Charges
- Earning a Chance to Shield or Expunge

[Read the Focus Group report.](#)

Help us by forwarding this newsletter to your community!

Stay in touch with MAJR! We will need your help for the 2016 legislative session in Annapolis!

Visit: <http://www.ma4jr.org>

Copyright © 2015 Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

MailChimp.