

Cumberland County

Adult Probation Newsletter

Welcome!

Hopefully you received a copy of Adult Probation’s first Newsletter in January 2021. We were happy to share with you what had been happening in our office since the beginning of COVID. As everyone has adjusted to the “new normal” of COVID, our office would like to share with you our successes and changes that have continued to occur.



Departmental Response to COVID-19

Mitigation efforts that had been put in place in April, 2020, are still in effect. To date, there has been no transmission of COVID within the department. Officers still supervise alone and our staff continues to work in shifts to avoid transmission. At the current time, officers are meeting with offenders at outdoor locations. Inside visits have occurred when there have been concerns about the safety of the offender or drug use.

21 members of the Adult Probation staff signed up for the COVID vaccine. First doses of the Moderna vaccine were administered on February 8, 2021, second doses of the vaccine were given March 8, 2021. Our office is extremely grateful for Public Safety’s assistance in this matter. With officers being vaccinated, the plan is to resume “normal” supervision at the beginning of April. PO’s will be able to enter offender’s homes for supervision purposes and officers will be permitted to supervise in pairs. PPE will still be required but PO’s are anxious to get back to regular supervision.

EBP Initiative

Supervision failures are a major driver of incarceration. Forty five percent of all prison admissions nationally are for supervision violation, and almost a quarter are for technical violations. Pennsylvania has one of the highest rates of adults on parole in the United States, and parole violators account for nearly half of prison admissions. A probation officers everyday interaction with people they supervise can have a profound impact on success rates. Research shows that training staff in evidence based practices designed to boost the officer’s individual skills can contribute to positive outcomes. A meta-analysis of training programs found that individuals supervised by probation officers trained in Core

Correctional Practices were thirteen percent less likely to reoffend compared to those supervised by officers who had not undergone the training.

In 2017, the department’s officers were trained in Core Correctional Practices. CCP is an evidence based practice that directly targets how officers interact with people under supervision. Officers are trained on fairness, using positive reinforcement, teaching problem solving techniques, providing appropriate treatment services, and establishing open lines of communication with people on supervision. In 2019, the department’s officers were trained in the use of Motivational Interviewing. MI is another practice, proven through research to improve outcomes, that enhances the officer’s communication skills. Officers are trained how to conduct collaborative conversation in order to strengthen a supervised person’s own motivation and commitment to change. The department’s MI certified trainer also provides ongoing monthly booster training to officers in an effort to improve their skills. Several staff members have also been trained in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy,



another practice proven to be effective at reducing recidivism. CBT is facilitated by staff and designed to change the supervised person's criminal thinking and negative behaviors while also providing the person with social skills that create long-term prosocial behavior change. Treatment Court clients participate in CBT and a nine week CBT course will be provided to day reporting clients starting in April. Just last year, during COVID restrictions, officers were trained in organizational change as the department aims to become an evidence based organization. The training, conducted by a former probation officer in the department and current Criminal Justice Chair at the University of New Haven, was designed to help create an evidence based organization that values strong leadership, collaborative learning, and proactive planning and evaluation in sustainable fulfillment of the department's vision and mission.

The department is currently working with the Carey Group, a nationwide evidence based practice recognized consulting firm, to provide case plan training to officers. Once training concludes and case planning is implementing later this year, officers will be focusing on working collaboratively with clients to address criminogenic needs, factors identified through assessment that lead to future criminal activity if not properly addressed.

Office Updates

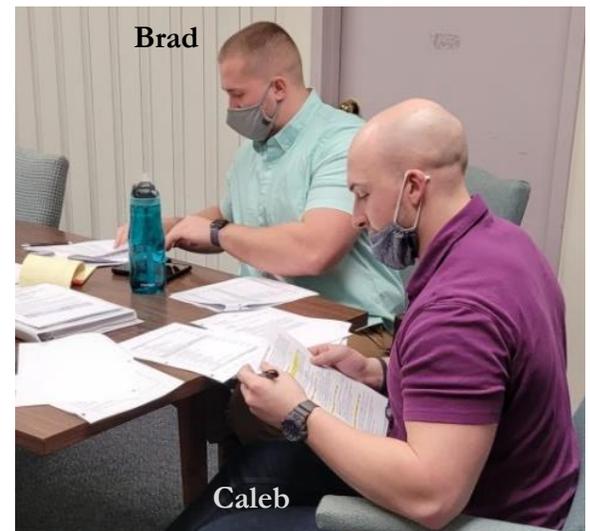
PO Becky Coe has assumed the duties of retired PO Jaime Rivera. Becky is now a line PO on the West Shore. Becky had previously been the PO assigned to "problematic" DUI cases, which she has handled since 2012.

Kara Stepanchick is now assigned to the Sexual Offender caseload. Kara had worked for almost 1 year as the PO for Day Reporting and Treatment Court.

New Employees:

Caleb Bartlett started in Adult Probation on February 1, 2021. Caleb graduated from Shippensburg University with a degree in Criminal Justice in 2017. Caleb was also on the Track team at Shippensburg and threw the shot put. Prior to joining our office, Caleb worked for one and one half years as a Correctional Officer in the Booking Center at CCP. Caleb is now assigned to the "problematic" DUI caseload left vacant by Becky Coe.

Brad Stubbs also started with Adult Probation on February 1, 2021. Brad graduated from Lycoming College in 2018 with a degree in Criminal Justice. He played center on Lycoming College's football team. Brad comes to our office after serving as a PO in Clearfield County for the last eighteen months. Brad has re-located to Carlisle from Curwensville, PA and so far, does not regret the move. Brad is now assigned to the Treatment Court and Day Reporting caseloads.



Reentry

We are excited to announce that the department's existing re-entry program is joining a coalition of community partners to expand re-entry services throughout the county. A kick-off event for the newly formed Cumberland County Re-entry Coalition is scheduled for June 2, 2021. Key stakeholders from throughout the county will meet at that time to discuss a strategic plan. Once the planning stage is completed in six months the Coalition's expanded services will further support re-entrants transitioning back to the community.

Until the Coalition is formally established the department's existing re-entry program will continue to help our offenders in many areas including housing assistance, employment opportunities, providing bus passes and maintaining a supply cabinet with basic needs for our offenders. Over recent weeks, our Re-Entry Coordinator, Ashley Rohm, has been



in contact with the Homeless Assistance Program regarding grant money they have available for people who need assistance with paying rent and utilities. This collaboration will help our many offenders who have faced financial hardships due to COVID. Additionally, the Re-Entry Coordinator receives numerous job postings each week from community businesses that are passed on to our offenders. Over recent years, Re-entry has received donations from the Cumberland County Bar Association and

members of the community. With this money, Ashley keeps a supply closet with toiletries, food and other essentials for individuals just released from CCP, inpatient treatment or for offenders who find themselves homeless. Most recently, a young female who has been involved with our office for many years, began to embrace recovery and went to inpatient treatment. When she was released from inpatient, she did not have money to pay the co-pays for the necessary psychiatric medications she needed to stay on track. Re-Entry was able to pay the pharmacy.

Department Statistics (January 1 – March 31, 2021)



- 184 ORAS/CST Assessments completed
- 211 Pre-Sentence Investigations completed
- 1,171 successful field visits made
- 318 additional attempted field visits
- 52 Pre-Parole Investigations

thank you!

In every issue of our Newsletter, we will continue to thank our Support Staff, who help us out in so many ways every day. Our Support Staff is now ZOOM efficient after agreeing to help with Miscellaneous Court and Pre-Trial Conferences. Thanks for hanging out in the “break out rooms” ladies. We hope you know how appreciative we are for all you do.

We would also like to give a shout out to all the amazing people who work in the Restorative Sanctions Office. In case it has not been said before, Probation would be lost without you. Between urine testing, TAD bracelets, phone calls with observations and concerns about our clients, you guys are an asset that we are grateful for every day. Thanks to Erin for coordinating all our OIC referrals!!

Our Vision

The Cumberland County Adult Probation Office is committed to rebuilding the lives of the people we serve to provide for healthier and safer communities.

Our Mission

To increase the quality of life of offenders by focusing and building on their strengths and working towards reducing their thinking errors and harmful behavior patterns. Our office is focused on meeting the individual needs of our offenders through the use of Evidenced-Based practices by utilizing opportunities for offender rehabilitation and treatment. By doing this, we will be able to reduce recidivism and increase public safety.

Guiding Principles

- Engages collaboratively with our stakeholders and the community
- Honors the belief that people can change
- We value impartiality, accountability, professionalism and a strong work ethic
- Promotes honest, respectful and forthright communication
- Integrity and ethical conduct is essential at all times