Justice Reinvestment Advisory Board Meeting

Monday, March 24, 2025 · 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
Google Meet joining info
Video call link: https://meet.google.com/jwf-sxps-stk

Board Attendees

- Ama Frimpong, *Casa de Maryland*
- Jen Corbin, *Anne Arundel County Crisis Response System*
- Jodi Cavanaugh, *Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)*
- Victoria Reaves, *Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)*

Minutes

- **Welcome and Introductions - Bethany Young, Director of Policy and Legislation, GOCPP**

- **GOCPP Updates - Brandi Cahn, Assistant Director of JRA, GOCPP**
    - JRA Funding
        - In FY25, GOCPP awarded about $13 million through PIGF. The Q2 reports for both JRA and PIGF funding show that around 30% of funds have been requested. Subrecipients are a bit underspent at this time.
        - This year, FY26, GOCPP released the NOFA on February 21st, and applications are due April 11th.
        - State agencies can request up to $500,000, nonprofit organizations up to $250,000, and local government entities up to $400,000 in funding.
        - Initiatives for each funding category are described. *See slides for details.*
    - Advisory Board Goals
        - Last meeting, the board discussed the importance of fostering partnerships between DPSCS and Labor, exploring linkages to gainful employment.
        - Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MEJC) released their full report on March 13th.

- **Department of Labor Reentry Efforts Presentation - Cynthia Etheridge, Director of Workforce Development, MDL**
    - About 2 years ago, the Maryland Department of Labor placed reentry navigators in all 12 regions of the state.
    - Reentry Navigators work with justice-involved individuals to provide them with

information, resources, and connections to employment.
    - Etheridge clarifies that they are not a staffing agency. They do not just match individuals with jobs or manage their cases. The individual will not automatically walk out with a job after meeting with the navigator, contrary to what individuals that get referrals from public safety often believe.
    - Navigator gets an assessment of the individual to get an idea of their skill set, experience, and desires. They then try to connect them with the relevant background-friendly employment.
    - They also hold group orientations to inform customers about what they can offer.
    - In orientation they learn about federal bonding letters, an insurance policy-like incentive for an employer to hire justice-impacted individuals.
    - The navigators operate in the American Job Centers across the state but also work out in the field and behind the fence. They get lists of people who will be soon released and tell them about their services.
    - Some offered services include expungement workshops and lawyer sessions.
        - Even being found not guilty has a blemish on one's record.
    - Women often face different issues than men when released, so Labor is looking to provide services specifically for justice-involved women.
    - Navigators work together to provide services, hold resource fairs, job fairs, etc. They all meet together once a month to collaborate and further eliminate silos.
    - The department has partnerships with DPSCS/Public Safety, American Job Centers, Local/County partners & staff in the job centers, and local detention centers. Partners do not need to be state agencies, they just need the access.
    - Ultimately, they aim to get the information out to *all* the people who need it.
    - Labor is looking to restructure their efforts to ensure they are covering all bases, since this is still a relatively new program. Governor Moore has bought into this program and seeks to make it the best it can be.
    - Cahn asks if the 12 reentry navigators are sufficient for the caseload. Etheridge says the current number is manageable, as they do not need to follow the case long-term. They may need more navigators as the program continues to grow.

- **Member Updates**
    - Cahn shares that Living Classrooms will speak at the next meeting about their workforce development training.
    - The Justice Reinvestment Reentry Simulation will be hosted by GOCPP at the Judicial College of Maryland on April 21st, at 10:00 AM.

- **Open Discussion and Next Steps**
    - The next meeting is on May 7th, 2025.