

Transforming Justice Vision + Core Strategies

We envision a county where...

The criminal legal system is equitable and just. Racial and ethnic disparities (and other disparities) are eliminated

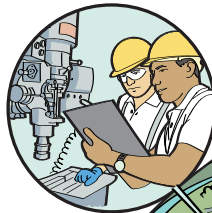


Root causes are acknowledged and addressed—but the criminal legal system is not the tool used



Communities create their own localized solutions; place-based solutions work the best

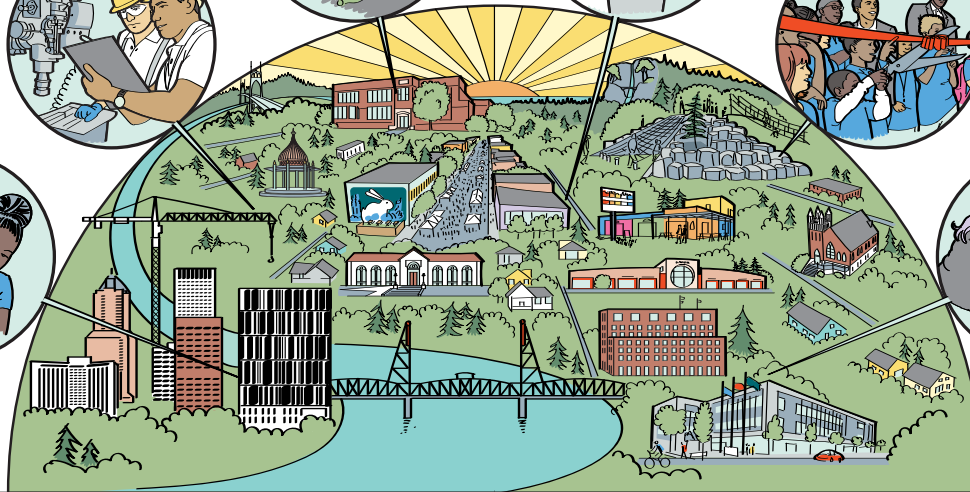
Collateral consequences of criminal convictions are non-existent so people can heal and thrive



The criminal legal system is smaller, focuses on relationships and healing, is trauma-informed, and is used as a last resort



Humans are treated like humans—we recognize and value the human condition—and restorative interventions are the norm



Human-centered, Community-led Design



Reimagine Behavioral Health



Make the Case for Change



Incentives + Positive Reinforcement



Incorporate Victim Voices



Build Trust Between Officers + Neighborhoods



Meet Basic Needs



Diversify Accountability



Criminal Record Reform



Partner with the Community



Prioritize Treatment



Change Inequitable Policies + Laws



Safely Limit Criminal Justice Intervention



Job Training + Opportunities



Center Wellness



Hold the System Accountable



Increase Support for Families



Eliminate Collateral Consequences



For more detail on the vision and core strategies, visit <https://multco.transformingjustice.report>

Transforming Justice Vision

We envision a county where...

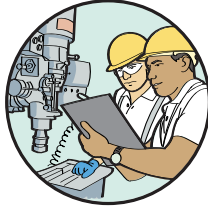
1



The criminal legal system is smaller, focuses on relationships and healing, is trauma-informed, and is used as a last resort

Prioritizing opportunities for change and healing over punishment, the criminal justice/legal system must change how it treats people under its control, including victims. Incarceration should be limited whenever possible, and when used should have a wholly different – inclusive, healing, and therapeutic – culture. A wide continuum of non-jail options should be developed. Policing—while needed in some shape or form—should be significantly different and focus on being community-centered, responding to a smaller category of situations. And alternatives to police should be used whenever possible (like non-armed community members, technological opportunities for simple reporting, and other non-armed police responses). This theme is also supported by recent research for what victims of crime desire.

2



Collateral consequences of criminal convictions are non-existent so people can heal and thrive

When an individual is arrested for and convicted of a crime, the downstream impacts are significant. The biggest consequences, ironically, keep someone from doing things expected of them like finding work and stable housing. Under Oregon state law alone, there are well over a thousand statutory and regulatory collateral consequences, many of which challenge an individual with a criminal conviction and their ability to construct a productive life post-incarceration. Even more damaging is the lifelong stigma associated with criminal system involvement, even years after successful exit.

* "Collateral consequences are distinguished from the direct consequences imposed as part of the court's judgment at sentencing, which can include terms of imprisonment or community supervision, or fines." - DOJ's National Institute of Justice

3



The criminal legal system is equitable and just. Racial and ethnic disparities (and other disparities) are eliminated

Racial equity is key to transforming all systems. In criminal legal, housing, and health systems, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are disproportionately involved and negatively impacted. In addition to the requirement to increase racial justice and equity, other types of equity must also be included in a transformed system: sex, gender, class, religious, mental health/ substance use status, etc. This theme also acknowledges the lack of community- developed and BIPOC-centered supports for victims of crime, particularly for young men of color.

4



Root causes are acknowledged and addressed—but the criminal legal system is not the tool used

All too often, the criminal legal system is the emergency response for people in crisis and in extreme need. Incarceration should not be the solution to getting three meals a day; arrest should not be the response to a parent stealing food for their hungry children; and prosecution should not be the door that opens eligibility to services and treatment. Social service, housing, health, and behavioral health systems should be adequately resourced to meet the most challenging needs, from food deserts to people experiencing extreme behavioral health distress and acute/chronic trauma. The criminal legal system should be reserved for a small percentage of the instances it currently is required to manage.

5



Communities create their own localized solutions; place-based solutions work the best

The Working Group has heard through stakeholder engagements and academic research that communities must lead the effort to define, design, and implement solutions for their own neighborhoods. Neighborhoods and communities vary wildly in needs and assets and the people closest and most committed to solutions are the ones who live there. It is the funder's (government) responsibility to partner with and allow communities and neighborhoods to lead in ways that augment public safety on their own terms for their own families and neighbors.

6



Humans are treated like humans—we recognize and value the human condition—and restorative interventions are the norm

Quality criminal legal, housing, and health systems would help people heal, meet them where they are (physically and emotionally), and acknowledge that hurt people hurt people. Removing people who have been harmed from their families/communities (child welfare) or have caused harm (jail) is how our society has functioned for generations. This is the opposite of honoring the community and relationships that truly help people heal and change. Systems must acknowledge and remedy the dehumanizing aspects of the criminal legal system that cause further harm to individuals, victims, families, and communities (and arguably also add to recidivism). Rather, public safety systems should center wellness and healing through connection, community, and belonging.



For more detail on the vision and core strategies, visit <https://multco.transformingjustice.report>

Transforming Justice Core Strategies (1-6 of 18)



1

Across everything we do, use human-centered, community-led design

There's a need to create a deeply-rooted, community-led coalition that is aligned around the right goals that are specific to community wants/needs to increase public safety. Members of communities should identify their own needs, barriers, and solutions. Community voices that have been most harmed by justice systems and lack of services should be prioritized. This is particularly true for BIPOC communities and individuals who have been harmed by systems as well as individuals. Strategies should include and uplift community voices at policy and decision-making tables.



2

Allocate funds to the community to create place-based solutions to public safety

To shift from equality to equity to liberation, lift up community voice to address alternatives to jail across housing and treatment continua. Using human centered design, partner with community and create flexible funding to create a continuum of services and alternatives to legal system involvement/intervention. Policy and budget decisions will be made with stakeholder input. Elected officials shall share power to support self-efficacy of community/neighborhood residents by standing behind the community instead of in front of it.



3

Prioritize and fund behavioral health treatment and services that are relevant for the needs of the people

Criminal legal systems will collaborate with behavioral health to ensure services and treatments meet the needs of justice-involved individuals. Behavioral health help will not retraumatize people who need it. In collaboration with behavioral health providers and patients, we will reimagine, invest in, and create flexible, outcome-based behavioral health services that are much different from the continuum available today. Behavioral health providers and systems are integral in this reimagination. These services will be quality alternatives to incarceration. Behavioral health services need to be better resourced (including workforce) and be more culturally and gender specific.



4

Prioritize treatment over punishment when applicable and create partnerships and opportunities to do that effectively

Identify the laws and policies that are barriers change and create "off ramps" from the criminal legal system at every juncture. In this process, marginalized, over-targeted populations should be prioritized. The law and policy changes should be evaluated for effectiveness and tweaked as indicated.



5

"Election-cycle" proof the work – build resilience to counter messaging

This work requires community-wide buy-in for the vision. Elected officials who are aligned with this work should be identified and cultivated; they will be willing to take steps to move it forward. This work also requires a communications plan and education campaign that drives toward public buy-in for this work.



6

Change and/or eliminate law, budget, and policy that disproportionately harms people of color

Create data-driven strategies that intentionally reduce racial and ethnic disparities (RED) in the criminal legal system. To do this, we must look very closely at, with intent to change, current policies and laws that harm communities of color disproportionately. We must also intentionally develop budget and policy shifts to prioritize non-criminal legal interventions for communities of color/BIPOC.



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Transforming Justice Core Strategies (7-12 of 18)

7



Use positive reinforcement more than punitive measures

Public safety systems should incentivize everything and provide positive reinforcement (treatment, alternatives, system planning/community design work) rather than punitive measures. Be willing to create and use off ramps from the criminal legal system and innovate engagement by incentivizing participation and meeting people where they're really at.

8



Deploy interventions that reduce harm and use the criminal legal system in a more limited way

- Build community-driven relationships with law enforcement that respect the community's expertise
- Improve incarceration culture (center wellness)
- Use trauma/experiences as mitigation in prosecution and prosecute less
- Identify and eliminate collateral consequences
- Elimination of legal impediments to realizing this vision—mandatory minimums in particular
- Equip the criminal legal system workforce with the skills, background, resources (center wellness) needed to do the work
- Minimize criminal legal system impacts that occur early in life
- Eliminate fines, fees, and bail

9



Incorporate a variety of victim voices in all system reform efforts

Victims of all types of crime and violence shall help design processes, services, and supports that help individuals, families, and communities heal. Incorporate victim voices and develop options for survivors to access healing and restoration, particularly survivors of color who are historically the most harmed and least helped.

10



Develop non-traditional partnerships to enhance prosocial opportunities

Partner with business community and trade organizations to generate job training and job opportunities and prioritize connections for people with criminal legal system involvement.

11



Prioritize community- building between law enforcement officers and the neighborhoods they patrol

Encourage law enforcement to live in the neighborhoods they work in. Provide time for officers to engage in positive interactions with the community outside of crisis or calls for service. Include historical perspective and lived experience in officer trainings. Increase opportunities for community to build relationships with law enforcement.

12



Focus on wellness as a key strategy for everyone

Wellness should be a key strategy for people who work in public safety systems and those who have contact with it. Each provider, department, etc., will deploy strategies to increase wellness and all organizational cultures shall prioritize wellness. People employed in criminal justice system should focus on the overall wellness of themselves, the people they work with, and the community they serve.



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Transforming Justice Core Strategies (13-18 of 18)

13 Enhance safety-net services to address basic needs and root causes of crime

Root causes of suffering and crime will be met and addressed outside the criminal legal system. In addition to significant enhancements and improvement to behavioral health systems, develop additional shelter, permanent supportive housing, and other housing supports/services with special focus on criminal legal system population. Other interventions to meet basic needs, like food insufficiency and employment supports, shall also be developed with meaningful participation of stakeholders. Public safety systems will make strides to decriminalize the challenges presented by houselessness and poverty.

14 Establish systems of accountability for criminal legal system change

Define and deploy accountability measures for systems, policies, and programs. Measure and evaluate consistently for efficacy, outcomes, equity, and cost.

15 Increase public safety by ensuring the right use of accountability

Study, explore, and deploy alternatives that are proven to increase public safety. Victim-centered, restorative interventions are used in lieu of typical justice interventions to promote healing. Create choices for accountability for the person who caused harm to increase buy-in for responsibility and change. We should also increase use of community-centered alternatives, like probation in lieu of prison, community services, H.E.A.T. (Habilitation Empowerment Accountability Therapy), required volunteering, etc. Create options for survivors of harm or violence and their families to access services that are culturally specific, trauma informed, and do not require engagement with law enforcement.

16 Identify ways to increase supports, resources, and legal system alternatives to families and children

Create a concrete list of budgets, legislative concepts, and policy changes to increase supports, resources, etc. to families. The goal with this strategy is to decrease the negative impact and consequences to families created by legal system involvement (including victims), incarceration, and imprisonment.

17 Reform policies and laws surrounding criminal records

We acknowledge the negative impacts and barriers created by having a criminal record, even when an individual has served their time and exited the legal system. We should increase criminal expungements by identifying legislative and policy tasks and increase prosocial and volunteer opportunities for people with criminal records (for example, parents with criminal records shall not be excluded from volunteering at their child's school).

18 Ensure criminal background is not a barrier to housing access, employment opportunities, and education

First assess the breadth of the problem of collateral consequences in Multnomah County; identify all the ways our policies and laws create collateral consequences and remove as many as possible. We can also better utilize the Family Sentencing Alternatives Program (FSAP) in Multnomah County to keep families together and use more diversion and restorative justice alternatives to keep people from being incarcerated and increase wellness of communities and families.



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