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CITY OF NEW ORLEANS



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BCM joins Criminal Justice System Partners in Announcing the Creation of the Community Advisory Group (CAG)

In April 2016, the MacArthur Foundation awarded New Orleans \$1.5 million to implement a plan to reduce the jail population 21% by mid-2018, and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system. The two year grant is a part of the Safety and Justice Challenge—the Foundation’s \$100 million initiative to reduce overincarceration by changing the way America thinks about and uses jails. The Challenge is establishing a network of 20 jurisdictions to model and inspire effective local criminal justice reforms across the country.

New Orleans was selected as one of 20 grant recipients. With leadership from the New Orleans Mayor’s Office, BCM, and other partner organizations, New Orleans will use the Foundation’s support to address the main drivers of local incarceration. The plan, which was developed in partnership among the Mayor’s Office, criminal justice agencies and several community stakeholders, focuses on: 1) risk-based decision making; 2) alternatives to arrest for people with mental health and substance abuse problems; 3) opportunities for release and diversion; and 4) coordination among all agencies and at all decision points.



All parties agree that having community members involved in the proposed reforms are critical to the project’s success. With that essential role in mind, leaders of the initiative have created a new Community Advisory Group (CAG). The goal of the Community Advisory Group is to support and participate in the successful implementation of the Safety and Justice Challenge plan. The members will hold city, parish and state officials accountable for the commitments they have made to the plan, including the goal of reducing the jail population by 21%. The Community Advisory Group will also be represented on the Jail Population Management Subcommittee of the Criminal Justice Council. The Subcommittee, which includes representatives from all the criminal justice agencies, is the decision-making body for the Safety and Justice Challenge. Individuals selected to represent the Community Advisory Group will vote on decisions made by that body.

Recruiting for the CAG is underway. We encourage you to visit [the City’s website](#) to learn more about the initiative and download the application [here](#). Applications are due on June 8 and can be submitted in person at City Hall, Suite 8W03 or emailed to ocjc@nola.gov.

For more information, contact Baptist Community Ministries Vice President of Public Safety, [Charmel Gaulden](#).