

*Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance
Grant (JAG) Program*
OHIO STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2023

MISSION
**to serve as the lead justice
planning agency for the state of
Ohio**

Strategic Goal 1:
Improve criminal justice
outcomes through effective
grant management

Strategic Goal 2:
Encourage the use of
evidence-based criminal
justice programming

Strategic Goal 3:
Support collaboration
within the criminal justice
community

Strategic Goal 4:
Promote the use of criminal
justice data and research

MISSION

- To serve as the lead justice planning agency for the state of Ohio.

VISION

- Through research, technology, evaluation, grants administration, and programmatic initiatives, the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) strives to positively impact the state of Ohio in the prevention and reduction of crime and delinquency throughout Ohio.

VALUES

- **Collaboration.** OCJS seeks solutions to critical issues in criminal and juvenile justice by working with other state and local agencies, associations, and citizens.
- **Commitment to Service.** Continuous improvement is the mark for service. OCJS is committed to applying this principle to the services we offer and to the development of our employees.
- **Striving for Excellence.** OCJS serves the public and criminal justice organizations by delivering quality services in a highly professional and cost-effective manner.
- **Innovation.** OCJS develops creative solutions and programs for continued advancement in the criminal justice area.

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Introduction

Overview

The Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) is the lead justice planning agency for the state of Ohio. OCJS administers grant funds to Ohio's criminal justice constituents, and coordinates Ohio's comprehensive criminal justice plan. The agency safeguards federal and state criminal justice funds against waste to maximize the resources available in Ohio's fight against crime. Grants are monitored for compliance, audited for accuracy, and evaluated for effectiveness. OCJS also houses its own team of researchers and policy specialists who provide practitioners and policymakers with valuable information on many of the critical criminal justice issues facing our state. A substantial amount of this data is obtained from the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System, which is one of the state's most significant justice technology links. Lastly, OCJS facilitates a number of high-priority initiatives from the Governor's office, including the Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, and the Ohio Collaborative on Police-Community Relations.

Organizational Structure

Grants Administration

The Grants Administration section is responsible for administering state and federal criminal justice grants to both state agencies and local subrecipients. OCJS also administers and coordinates other competitive criminal justice grant programs awarded to Ohio by the federal government. Grants administration staff provide technical assistance to subrecipients regarding the purpose areas of programs, allocable costs, and eligibility. Basic grant writing trainings are also offered several times throughout the year and are free of cost to participants. Some of the grants administered by OCJS include:

- The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)
- The Violence Against Women Act Program (VAWA)
- The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)
- The Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program (RSAT)
- The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program
- The Drug Law Enforcement Fund (DLEF)

More information about these grants is provided on the OCJS grants website: <https://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/grants.stm>.

Grants Monitoring and Fiscal Compliance

Staff from the Grants Monitoring and Fiscal Compliance section conduct on-site fiscal reviews to ensure subrecipients are spending dollars in accordance with federal and state guidelines. Grant monitors also provide technical assistance to local subrecipients regarding compliance, accuracy, and accountability of reported expenses and budgeting issues.

Policy and Research

OCJS's Policy and Research (P&R) section serves many functions, and can be divided in to two sections. The Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) is responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating criminal justice data. There are SACs in nearly every state in the U.S., and Ohio's SAC is located within the P&R section of OCJS. The Ohio Family Violence Prevention Center (FVPC) serves as an information clearinghouse for public and private organizations that assist crime victims. The Center promotes awareness, intervention, and prevention of domestic violence and family violence-related issues in Ohio. The FVPC hosts the Ohio Family Violence Prevention Advisory Council, which is comprised of Ohio's top experts in domestic and family violence intervention and prevention. The Council provides guidance, evaluates and informs policy, and promotes systemic collaborative action to prevent and respond to family and intimate partner violence. Staff from both the SAC and the OFVPC conduct on-site programmatic monitoring of OCJS subrecipients across the state. These subject matter experts ensure projects are executing programs as specified in approved grant proposals and are in alignment with the requirements outlined by the grant program. More information about the P&R section is available at: https://ocjs.ohio.gov/policy_research.stm.

Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator's Office

Through the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, OCJS houses the State Anti-Trafficking Coordinator's Office. This team works in close partnership with local service providers, law enforcement, public officials and advocates to strengthen the state's coordinated approach to combat human trafficking. Additionally, OCJS provides technical assistance and training to professionals and grassroots efforts to better equip individuals to identify and respond to potential cases of human trafficking. OCJS also oversees the implementation of federal grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice to support local communities' anti-trafficking efforts. For more information on Ohio's response to trafficking, visit www.humantrafficking.ohio.gov.

Law Enforcement Services

The Law Enforcement Services section is responsible for the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System (OIBRS), which is Ohio's version of the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). OIBRS is a voluntary reporting program in which Ohio law enforcement agencies can submit crime statistics directly to the state and federal government in an automated format. The OIBRS standard is suited to meet planning and resource allocation needs. It also allows Ohio law enforcement agencies and policymakers to speak the same language in discussing and analyzing crime. In 2019, OCJS is releasing a new version of the system used at the state level for processing the OIBRS data reported by participating law enforcement agencies. The updated technology will provide better tools for law enforcement to improve data completeness, accuracy, and overall quality. Over 550 Ohio law enforcement agencies representing approximately 80% of the Ohio population currently report their crime data through OIBRS.

Programs

Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board

In December 2014, Governor John R. Kasich signed Executive Order 2014-06K, announcing the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations after a series of incidents in Ohio and around the nation highlighted the challenges between the community and police. The task force included 24 members representing the governor, legislature, attorney general, the Supreme Court of Ohio, local law enforcement, organized labor, local community leaders, the faith-based community, business, municipalities and prosecuting attorneys.

On April 29, 2015, the Governor signed Executive Order 2015-04K, establishing the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board (Ohio Collaborative) to oversee implementation of recommendations from the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations. The Ohio Collaborative, now a 12-person panel of law enforcement experts and community leaders from throughout the state, were brought together to establish law enforcement state standards. All law enforcement agencies who participate are expected to meet or exceed the newly created standards as they develop policies and procedures to meet these new expectations. OCJS communicates these new standards to Ohio's 875 law enforcement agencies. As of 2019, nearly 500 agencies employing over 26,000 officers (representing 75 percent of all law enforcement officers in Ohio and most of Ohio's metropolitan departments) are participating in the certification process.

National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Compliance Working Group

The National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), mandated by the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993 and launched by the FBI in 1998, is a national system that checks available records on persons who may be disqualified from receiving

firearms. In response to national concerns around NICS compliance, on April 23, 2018, Governor John R. Kasich signed Executive Order 2018-03K, National Instant Criminal Background Check System (“NICS”) Compliance. The Executive Order directed the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) to investigate the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of records submitted by Ohio agencies into the NICS databases, and to issue a report on how to improve NICS reporting, including policy recommendations. A report was submitted in August 2018 summarizing key findings, and provided three categories of recommendations:

- Expanding training and education;
- Reducing duplicative, unclear or lack of express reporting responsibility; and
- Strategic planning and structured coordination.

On February 13, 2019, newly appointed Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed Executive Order 2019-10D, replacing this working group with the Governor’s Warrant Task Force, which will examine the current system of issuing and serving arrest warrants in Ohio, in addition to monitoring the compliance of local and state agencies with the recommendations adopted in the 2018 report.

Governor’s Warrant Task Force

On February 13, 2019, Governor Mike DeWine signed Executive Order 2019-10D, expanding the role of the National Instant Background Check System Compliance Working Group to improve the current system of issuing and serving warrants in Ohio. The Governor’s Warrant Task Force examined the current process, best practices, and areas of improvement in issuing warrants to make legislative, procedural, and technological recommendations to improve Ohio’s system of issuing and serving warrants. Ultimately, the Task Force developed fifteen recommendations that were designed to encourage a more efficient warrant system that ensures the safety of citizens, victims, and law enforcement in Ohio and other states.

Ohio Consortium of Crime Science (OCCS)

The Ohio Consortium of Crime Science, or OCCS, is an association of researchers from colleges, universities, and state agencies working together to provide evidence-based solutions to the real-world problems faced by local criminal justice agencies. OCCS brings together social science researchers across Ohio into one resource to help criminal justice agencies conduct research, disseminate knowledge, and foster relationships between practitioners, policy makers, and academics. To date, the OCCS has more than 40 members representing 15 colleges and universities in Ohio.

Local government agencies initiate contact with OCCS by filling out a Request for Assistance form in which they identify the problem they have encountered, the kind of assistance they are looking for, and the outcomes they wish to achieve. Members of the OCCS meet to discuss the feasibility of the request given the resources of the Consortium. If OCCS approves the request, a qualified

researcher from an OCCS affiliate will be provided with resources to assist the agency. The researcher will then work with the agency to develop a solution to the problem that is based on empirical research.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a process for developing an organization's purpose and goals, as well as the actions needed to achieve those goals. The FY 2019 federal JAG solicitation required applicants to submit a comprehensive statewide strategic plan with their application. To meet this requirement, the OCJS P&R section conducted four different analyses to obtain information about either OCJS or local criminal justice stakeholders. Results from these analyses enabled OCJS to evaluate its internal processes, better understand its current funding strategies, learn about the needs of local justice stakeholders, develop priorities, align statewide resources with those priorities, and create organizational goals and objectives. A summary of each of these evaluations is provided in the following sections, and comprehensive reports for each analysis are available on the P&R website:

https://ocjs.ohio.gov/policy_research.stm.

The four analyses included:

1. **SWOT Analysis** – An internal assessment of the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
2. **Funding Analysis** – An analysis of JAG funds administered by OCJS.
3. **Focus Groups** – Guided discussions about criminal justice priorities with JAG subrecipients.
4. **Needs Assessment Survey** – A statewide, multidisciplinary survey of key criminal justice stakeholders with questions about agency priorities and needs.

SWOT Analysis

Overview and Stakeholder Engagement

On March 5, 2018, OCJS conducted the first step of the 2019 strategic planning process by conducting a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is an examination of an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as its external opportunities and threats. Strengths refer to those qualities of the agency that promote and respond to criminal justice needs, whereas weaknesses refer to those qualities internal to the agency that may be hindering the response. Opportunities and threats are external environmental factors that respectively can either be leveraged to benefit the response or should be addressed as challenges. A SWOT analysis serves as a useful starting point for a strategic plan since it provides a broad overview of an organization and the environment in which that organization operates. To conduct the SWOT analysis, P&R staff led a roundtable discussion with agency leadership. Staff participation included individuals representing executive-level policy makers, grant administration and fiscal supervisors, law enforcement liaisons, and key data administrators.

Data Collection

P&R staff facilitated discussion by asking participants to provide responses to questions about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (e.g. "What do you see as the agency's strengths?"). Participant responses were recorded, and at the end of the section, staff were asked to list the top three most relevant responses for each section. These rankings were combined to determine the four highest priority items for each of the sections.

Summary of Key Findings

Table 1 highlights the criteria identified throughout the SWOT analysis as the top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in regards to OCJS's ability to respond to the criminal justice needs within Ohio through JAG funding.

Table 1. Top Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified

<p>S Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansive expertise of agency personnel • Experience of personnel creates a strong foundation of institutional knowledge • Internal and external collaboration between sections and agencies • Grant administration processes – three tier peer review process and extensive subrecipient monitoring
<p>W Weaknesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of personnel and human capital to accomplish all tasks requested of the agency • Technology – Grants management system is difficult to modify • Grant review process is time consuming • Lack of up-to-date materials
<p>O Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and statewide presence • Travel opportunities with key stakeholders • Data and information available to the public • Scope of expertise of agency personnel
<p>T Threats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent funding streams • Administration changes • Policy changes

Recommendations

1. OCJS should use its strengths to take advantage of the opportunities highlighted in this assessment. For example, OCJS can leverage the expertise and experience of its agency personnel to maintain a strong national and statewide presence, which will enable OCJS to continue to make positive contributions to the criminal justice system.
2. OCJS should work to address the weaknesses identified by the SWOT analysis by updating its technology, grant review process, and materials. These changes will increase overall OCJS efficiency, thereby reducing the need for human capital within the organization. Overall, these weaknesses are relatively minor, and do not currently affect OCJS’s ability to pursue opportunities or address environmental threats.
3. OCJS also can utilize its strengths to address external threats. For example, staff expertise, knowledge, and collaboration can be used to demonstrate the value and capability of OCJS when administrations and policies undergo change. Similarly, OCJS can use its grant administration process to ensure that federal funds are spent judiciously, even when funding streams are inconsistent.

Funding Analysis

Overview and Stakeholder Engagement

P&R staff analyzed OCJS grants data from 2014 to 2017 to better understand JAG funding and JAG programming in Ohio. For JAG funding, P&R staff examined changes in funding over time, funding distributions by budget and JAG subcategory, the geographic distribution of JAG funding in Ohio, and the relationship between JAG funding and crime. For JAG programming, P&R staff analyzed changes in programming over time, application approval rates, the distribution of grants per subcategory, the stepdown¹ program, implementing agencies with multiple grants, and the types of evidence-based programs being funded. Results from these analyses were used to evaluate the JAG program, and to determine if any changes in policies or procedures were needed. OCJS P&R staff met with OCJS stakeholders when developing research topics for the funding analysis. These individuals included executive-level policy makers, grant administration and fiscal supervisors, law enforcement liaisons, and key data administrators. Findings from the funding analysis were also presented to these individuals to guide the interpretation of the results and the recommendations for the report.

Data Collection

Funding data for the JAG, JAG-LE, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), FVPSA (Family Violence Prevention and Services Act), and Drug Law Enforcement (DLEF) programs were obtained from the OCJS online grants management system. While the VAWA, FVPSA, and DLEF grants are not part of the JAG program, data from these similar, federally-funded programs were included in the analysis to provide context for the results.

Table 2: JAG Funding Categories

A01 – Multijurisdictional Drug Task Forces

A02 – Law Enforcement

B01 – Crime Prevention Programs

C01 – Adult and Juvenile Corrections, Community Corrections, and Reentry Programs

D01 & D02² – Courts, Defense, Prosecution, and Victim Services Programs

E01³ – Cross-Agency and Cross-System Collaboration and Training Programs

¹ The Office of Criminal Justice Services administers JAG funding through a stepdown process. If a project is a continuation of a previous project it may be funded for up to four years with a smaller percentage of federal funding awarded for the project each year, and a larger match requirement. For example, in the first and second years of the project, programs are required to meet a 25% match. In their third and fourth year this percent increases to 50% and 75%, respectively.

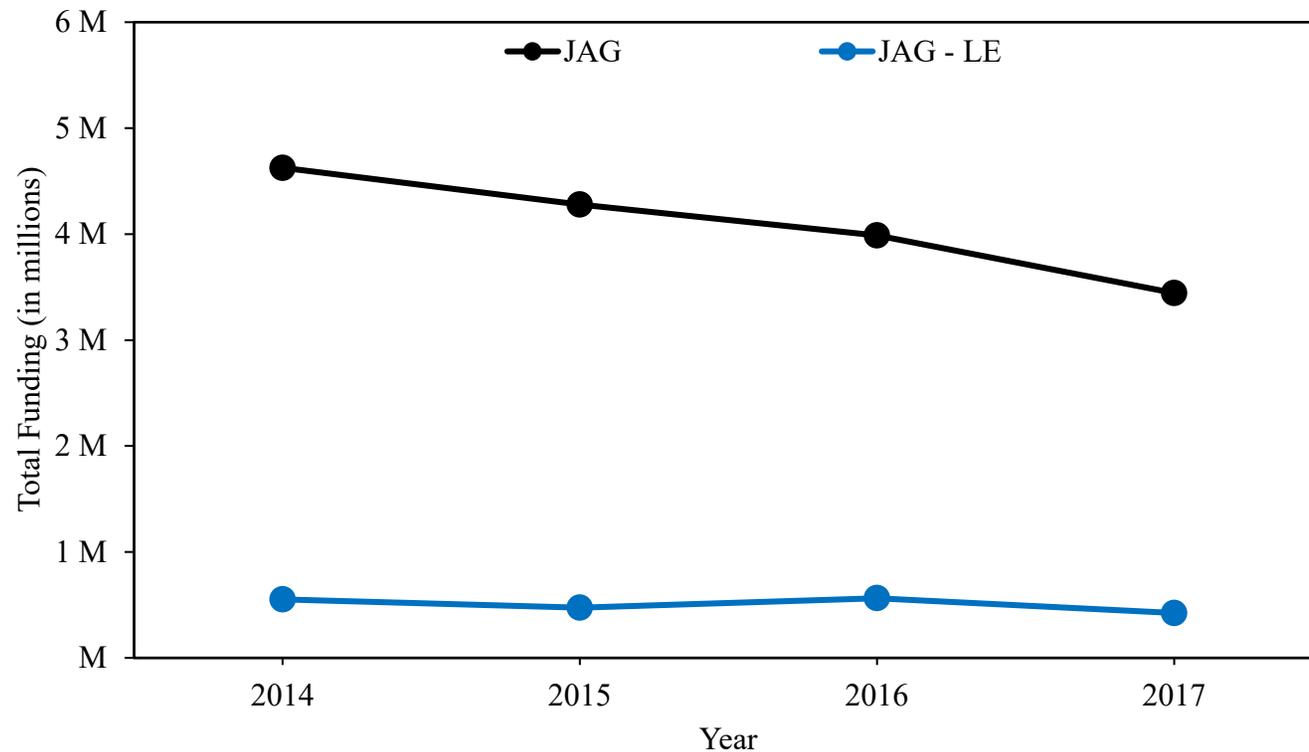
² The D01 program was split in to the D01 (victim services) and D02 (courts, defense, and prosecution) program categories starting with the 2016 funding cycle. In order to maintain consistency, the D01 and D02 program categories are combined for analysis throughout this report.

³ Some analyses of E01 programs are omitted from the funding analysis, as they are not informative due to the substantial amount of variation in E01 programming.

Summary of Key Findings

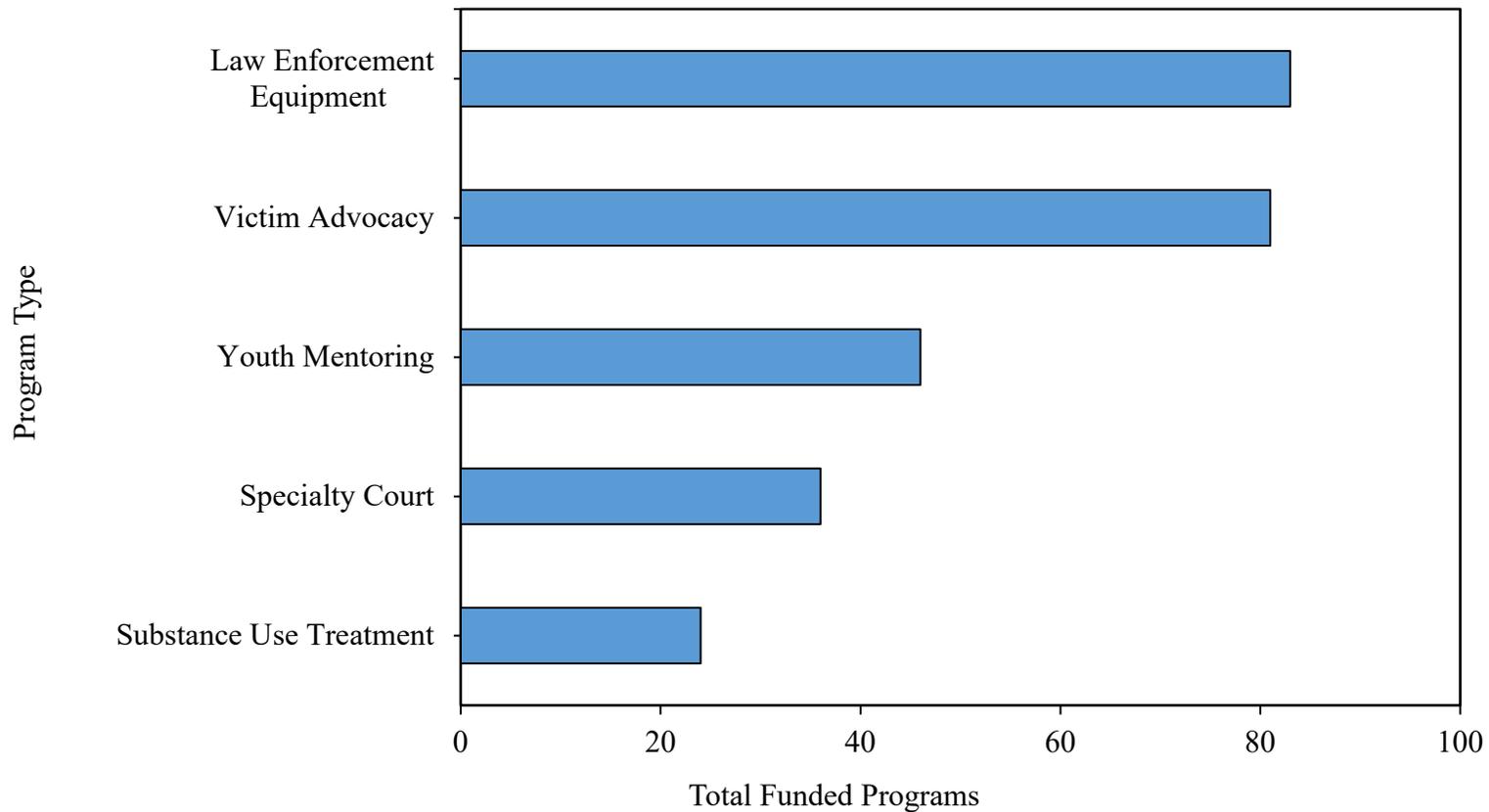
1. OCJS has been effectively allocating JAG funds despite decreases in funding and funding requests. Analyses indicated that JAG funding is generally being distributed fairly throughout the state and among the different JAG categories. Most JAG funding is also being allocated to evidence-based programs, which means that it is being used to effectively address crime in Ohio. The success of the JAG program is partially accomplished through a grant review process that is more selective than other OCJS programs, and a stepdown process that encourages programs to pursue both innovative practices and long-term sustainability.

Figure 1: JAG Funding, 2014-2017



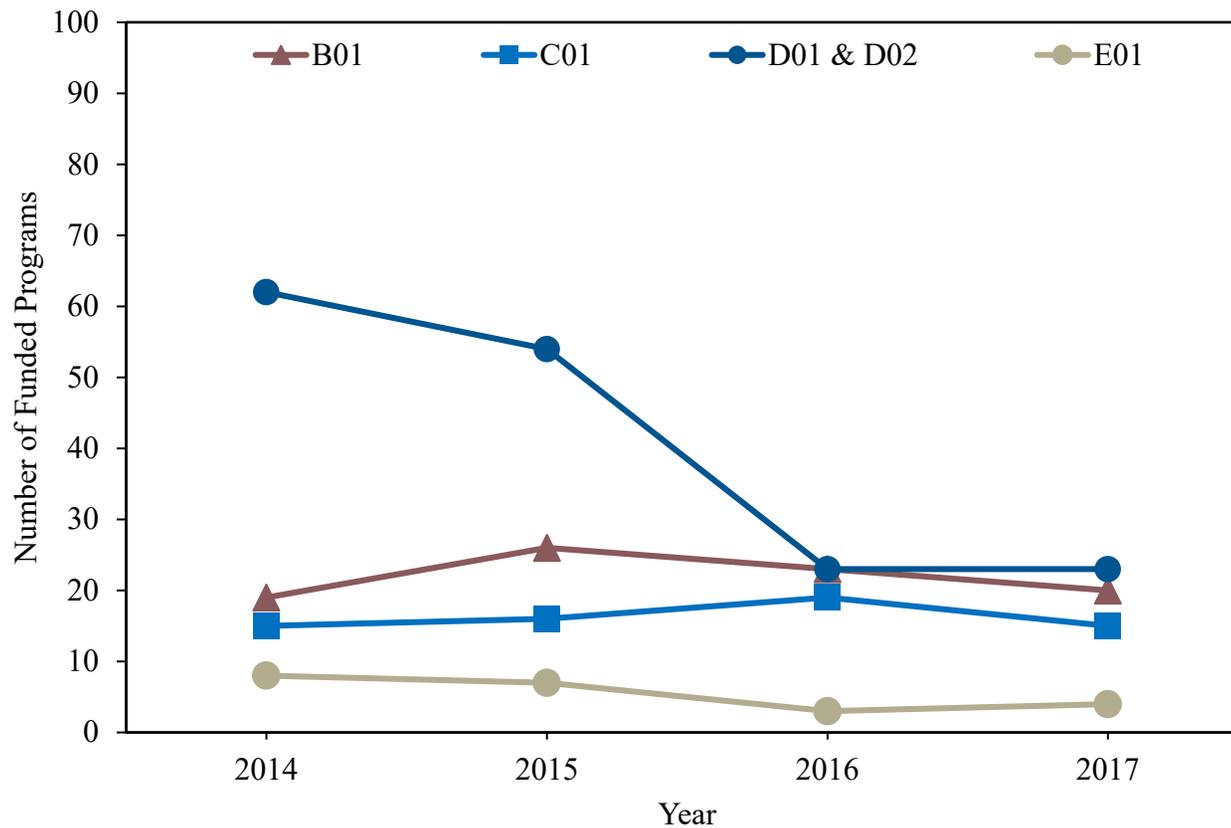
2. A significant amount of funding is being devoted to equipment for law enforcement in the A02 category (Figure 2). Currently, more JAG money is spent on equipment for law enforcement than on any other type of program. While the other JAG program categories typically spend the bulk of their funding on personnel costs for evidence-based programming, A02 programs appear to be primarily for equipment. As a result, the A02 and JAG-LE programs are serving the same purpose.

Figure 2: Types of JAG Programs, 2014-2017



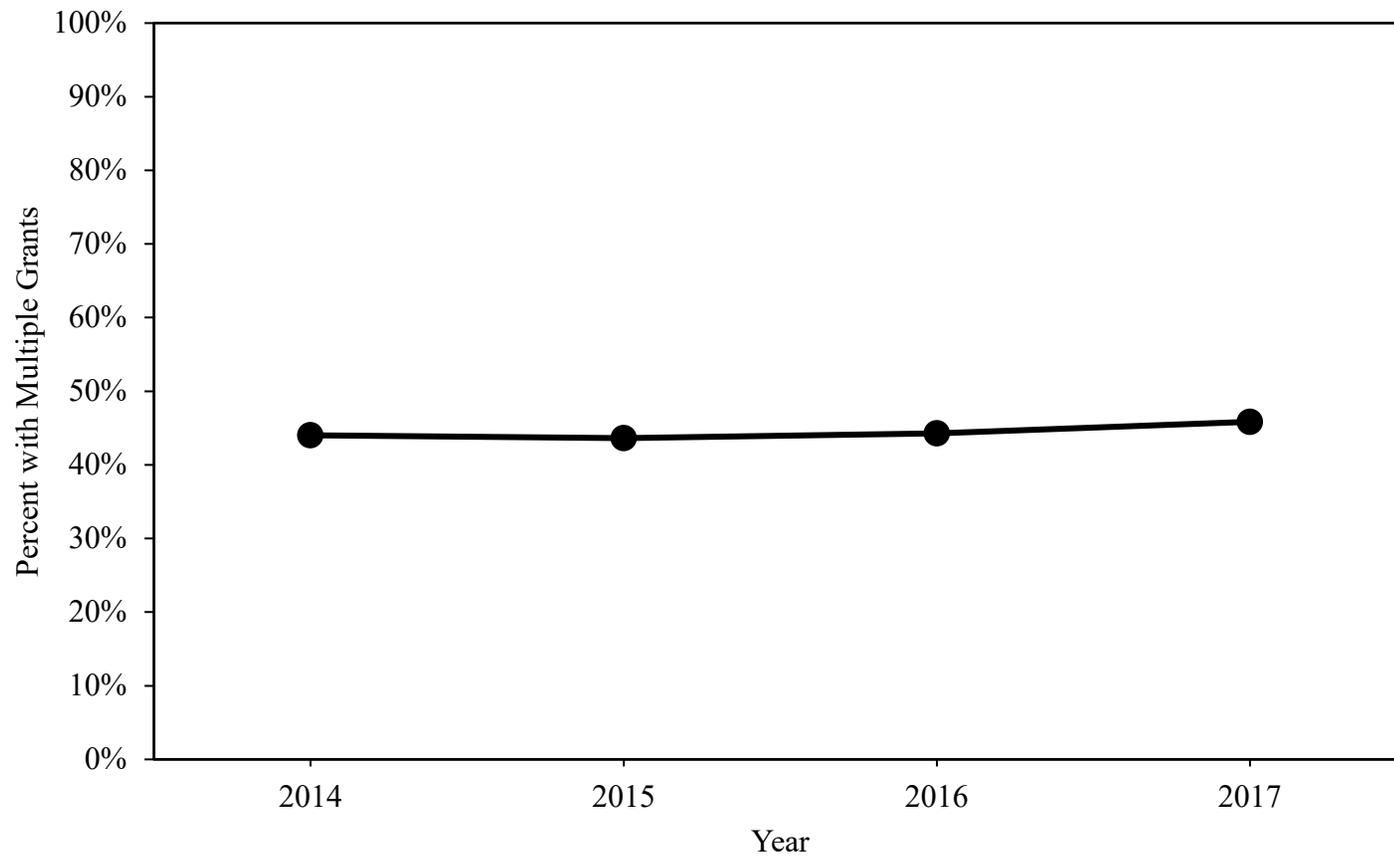
3. The total number of D01 and D02 programs decreased substantially after 2015 (Figure 3), likely due to a combination of stepdown and a significant increase in the availability of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. While other program areas experienced an influx of new grants at the end of the first stepdown cycle, this does not appear to be the case for the D01 and D02 category.

Figure 3: Number of Funded JAG Programs by Sub-Category (Non-Law Enforcement), 2014-2017



- 4. Many JAG programs receive multiple grants from OCJS during the same year (Figure 4), which means that OCJS funding is being concentrated in a smaller number of organizations.

Figure 4: Percent of Implementing Agencies with Multiple OCJS Grants, 2014-2017



5. OCJS grants data are difficult to access and analyze. The data for this report needed to be aggregated from multiple different reports from the grants management website, which took a substantial amount of time. Additionally, the data had to be re-analyzed several times due to lack of clarity about some of the information in the reports. The institutional knowledge of the grants management system within the Grants Administration section was critical in learning about how the system works and has evolved.
6. Additional work is still needed to better understand OCJS funding. There were a number of questions asked by OCJS stakeholders that could not be answered using the current grants management system's reporting mechanisms.

Recommendations

1. In general, OCJS should continue its process for allocating JAG funding, though some possible considerations for discussion and change are mentioned below.
2. OCJS staff should discuss both the current method for allocating funds to law enforcement, as well as the trend of providing multiple grants to the same organization. These outcomes have emerged from the way that OCJS structures its grants process, and should be discussed to determine if any policy changes are needed.
3. OCJS staff should also discuss the possibility of outreach to organizations eligible for D01 and D02 grants. These grants were previously the largest JAG funding category, and OCJS should seek to understand why application rates have declined over time.
4. OCJS Policy & Research staff should create and maintain a dashboard of grants information. This would make it easier to access information about OCJS grants, which will enable more staff from OCJS to effectively utilize grants data, and reduce the amount of time needed to answer grant-related questions. P&R staff should also investigate the quality of the grants data maintained in AGATE, as some concerns about the reliability of the information have been expressed.
5. Once the grants dashboard has been created, P&R staff can work to answer additional stakeholder questions, with the goal of guiding and evaluating OCJS policies.

Needs Assessment Survey

Overview and Stakeholder Engagement

As a first step in assessing priorities across multiple systems, OCJS developed and administered a needs assessment survey. The survey contained questions regarding overall priorities within the criminal justice system, as well as discipline-specific sub-sections for individuals to provide specialized insight based on their role within the criminal justice system. Table 3 provides an overview of the included disciplines.

Table 3. Discipline categories for survey administration.

Discipline Category	N	Description
Academic/Research	11	An individual whose primary emphasis is on research, whether within an academic setting, a state agency, a non-governmental agency (NGO), or the private sector.
Adult Corrections/ Community Corrections/ Halfway House	36	An individual who works with programs where the primary purpose is to increase community-based alternatives to incarceration and detention for non-violent offenders.
Court System	53	Includes individuals working within the courts, defense, and prosecution settings with the goal of promoting fair and equitable treatment of victims and defendants/offenders. Activities might include assisting in the timely clearing of cases, decreasing dockets, and ensuring accountability of offenders while they return to the community with appropriate services and supervision to help lower recidivism.
Government	39	An individual whose primary role is in public administration and policy-making. Examples include elected officials, civil servants, advisory board or commission members, council members, or any other public official.
Juvenile Justice	6	An individual who works primarily with criminal justice-involved youth.
Law Enforcement	91	Includes personnel who work in law enforcement agencies such as police departments, sheriff's departments, highway patrol, college/university police, and similar agencies.

Offender/Ex-Offender⁴	2	Any individual currently or formerly incarcerated, under probation, or supervised release (parole) in the state of Ohio. Family members of an offender or ex-offender are also eligible to participate in this survey.
Prevention/Diversion/Early Intervention	14	Crime prevention personnel work with individuals prior to commitment of crimes or work to improve the environment wherein crime may develop or occur (e.g. families, schools, communities).
Treatment/Service Provider	43	A professional or para-professional who works within settings that provide a broad range of planned and continuing care, treatment, and rehabilitation, including, but not limited to, counseling, psychological, medical, and social service care designed to influence behavior.
Victim Services	45	An individual who provides victims of crime with services to help them overcome the trauma of victimization, participate in critical stages of the criminal justice process, and to help assist them in returning to full active lives.

Data Collection

Invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to grant subrecipients, Ohio law enforcement officers, academic collaboratives, statewide coalitions and more. Participants were also asked to forward the invitation to colleagues. The survey was open from August to October 2018, and periodic reminders were sent to increase survey responses. Overall, there were 392 total survey respondents. The total number of participants with complete answers for each of the subsections is included within Table 3.

The first part of the survey contained 20 questions about resource-based priorities, and 17 questions about priorities for improving collaboration. Every participant completed this section of the survey. The next component of the survey had a range of 12 to 50 questions, depending on the participant’s specific criminal justice field. These questions were about resources available for the population served by the participant, priorities on collaboration with other community-based services, training, data, and research. Questions also referenced the evidence-based programs that stakeholders utilized and the resources for accessing information on those programs within the participant’s respective field. The following table (Table 4) provides an overview of the priorities identified across the different disciplines, broken down into the following categories: resources, collaboration needs, training, and research and data.

⁴ Given that only two participants identified as an offender or ex-offender, a representative sample was unavailable to draw conclusions for needs and priorities of the field. Sample sizes in general were low, particularly for the juvenile justice subcategory.

Summary of Key Findings

Table 4. Identified needs and priorities for resources, collaboration, training and data/research from the statewide needs assessment survey.

Identified Needs and Priorities	Academics	Adult Corrections	Courts	Government	Juvenile Justice	Law Enforcement	Prevention/ Diversion	Community-Based Treatment	Victim Services
RESOURCES									
Central resource for criminal justice evidence-based practices	X								
Resources for CJ agencies to pursue research involvement and partnerships	X								
Grants specifically for research and evaluation	X								
Community-based treatment services for adult offenders with alcohol and/or substance use issues and mental health diagnoses.		X	X					X	
Effective drug specialized-docket programs.			X						
Timely and relevant data/reports on program outcomes for vulnerable populations				X					
Development of evidence-based practices for delivery of criminal justice funding, programming and service delivery.				X					
Community-based services for underserved juvenile offender populations					X				
Funding for up-to-date equipment and technology						X			
Effective prevention and early intervention programs for individuals with mental health diagnoses and substance use problems.							X		
Apartments for survivors and the ability to provide assistance for the first month									X

of rent and security deposit (addresses housing)									
Civil attorneys and legal aid for survivors.									X
Trauma-informed counseling and support groups for survivors.									X
COLLABORATION NEEDS									
Improved collaboration between state agency and academic researchers.	X								
Research involvement in program planning and implementation.	X								
Improved collaboration across service systems for adult and juvenile offenders with alcohol and/or substance use problems.		X	X		X			X	
Improved collaboration across service systems for adult and juvenile offenders with or mental health diagnoses.		X	X		X			X	
Improved cross-system collaboration to minimize barriers to services and institutional supports for criminal justice-involved populations.				X					
Improved services for individuals seeking mental health assistance and individuals seeking assistance in response to domestic violence.						X			
Coordination between funding sources to support effective programming.							X		
TRAINING									
Training on treatment for adult offenders with alcohol and/or substance use problems or mental health diagnoses.		X	X						
Specialized training on trauma-informed care					X		X	X	X

Specialized training on de-escalation techniques						X			
Public education to community interest groups on available prevention and intervention options, services and the impact of these on the criminal justice system.							X		
RESEARCH AND DATA SOURCES									
Accessible data through a central repository that connects data across jurisdictions and between systems.	X					X			
Data and research on recidivism and treatment outcomes for adults with alcohol and/or substance use issues or mental health diagnoses.		X	X					X	
Evaluation on the impact of the sentencing reform on current criminal justice and correctional practices.				X					
Evaluation on the use of standardized risk and needs assessments of offenders to determine the appropriate criminal justice response and services.				X					
Evaluation on the impact of trauma-informed care on recidivism rates and treatment outcomes.					X				
Research on prevention and early intervention programs and their impact on alcohol and substance use problems.							X		

Recommendations

1. OCJS should prioritize the funding of programs for mental health and substance use disorder treatment, as these themes were identified as priorities by multiple different disciplines.
2. Many programs highlighted the need for increased collaboration across a variety of different program areas. For this reason, OCJS should continue to prioritize programs that encourage collaboration among multiple different organizations.
3. Programs across different disciplines have a variety of unique needs. For this reason, OCJS needs to ensure that its funding is flexible enough to accommodate the different needs of criminal justice stakeholders throughout Ohio.

A note on key stakeholder engagement

External participants in the strategic planning process were primarily OCJS subrecipients. While efforts were made to engage a variety of groups, representation from several communities is missing from the environmental analysis. The first of these groups includes individuals who are either currently accessing services, or have accessed services provided through the criminal justice system in the past. This may include offenders, victims, their families and members of the general public. While service providers who engage with these individuals provide insight about the needs of clients, their perspectives may be confounded or limited given that they are part of the system which is being assessed. The second group lacking extensive and intentional representation includes agencies that provide services for marginalized and underserved populations. This limitation again is due to the sampling pool from which participants were recruited. While JAG funding through OCJS is provided to several agencies which provide culturally-specific services or services to traditionally underserved communities, representation for these communities is not available; this limits the ability to draw strong conclusions regarding specific needs within the context of Ohio's criminal justice agencies. As the lead justice planning agency for the state, OCJS continues to strive toward inclusivity and equity in the management and distribution of funding for criminal justice. Recognizing that these two groups were not accessed and given the opportunity to share critical insights, OCJS will incorporate specific action points within the implementation plan to ensure these voices are included in the planning and measurement process. More information on this issue is discussed within the Strategic Plan Discussion section.

Focus Groups

Overview and Stakeholder Engagement

P&R staff coordinated five focus groups throughout January and February 2019. Focus groups were utilized to gain contextual insight on the criminal justice priorities of programs funded through JAG, specific to OCJS's funding categories and disciplines. Key stakeholders involved in the focus group process and evaluation included individuals who received funding during 2017 and 2018. Input from grantees included drug task forces (A01), law enforcement (A02), crime prevention (B01), adult and juvenile corrections, community corrections and reentry programs (C01), courts and victim services programs (D01), and defense and prosecution programs (D02).

Data Collection

Focus Groups ranged in size from five to eight participants, and were two hours long. Each of the focus groups was held centrally at the Department of Public Safety in Columbus, Ohio, with the exception of the focus group for drug task force members, which was held at the annual Task Force conference in Zanesville, Ohio.

Summary of Key Findings

The following sections provide an overview of common themes, including summaries identified across all focus groups for each question, with the exception of law enforcement and drug task force focus groups.⁵

While different themes emerged from each of the focus groups, each of the groups were asked the same broad questions with similar prompts. These questions included:

- What do you see as the highest priority, or biggest problem, for your agencies and the communities that you serve?
- Are there any issues that you face in coordinating efforts and sharing information? (outreach efforts with the community, etc.)
What needs to be done to better address these problems?
- What recommended best-practices should agencies be focusing on?
What are barriers that you see for agencies in implementing them?
- What has to be in place for you to more effectively plan for meeting future needs?

⁵ During analyses, similar themes were identified across service providers in non-law enforcement categories. Law enforcement, whether or not directly involved in a drug task force, tended to identify similar themes within the two focus groups. As such, law enforcement results are summarized in different subheadings unless otherwise stated.

Question One: What do you see as the highest priority, or biggest problem, for your agencies and the communities that you serve?

Identified Priority #1: Improved collaboration and coordination between services are needed to increase accessibility and decrease duplication of services for clients.

Summary: Clients are unfamiliar with the different types of services, whether referred to or not, and how to access and navigate different systems. Given the unfamiliarity, there are often lapses in time from when a referral is made to the time that services are accessed. During this time there is increased risk for reoffending/reoccurring violence.

Identified Priority #2: Inability to access systems is perpetuated by certain barriers including: childcare, transportation, job security, language access and citizenship status

Summary: Environmental and resource gaps greatly affect the ability of survivors to access systems. Service providers across all systems echoed the identification of childcare, employment access and security, transportation, language access and citizenship status as barriers to accessing systems that assist crime victims and other clients.

Identified Priority #3: Improved/evidence-based intervention programs for offenders that are affordable and practical

Summary: According to service providers a “one-size-fits-all”, or standardized, response is not appropriate or helpful when it comes to the justice response. Additionally, there is a need for evidence-based models that are practical and affordable to implement.

Identified Priority #1LE: Health and safety of officers

Summary: Health and safety of officers was identified as the highest need when interacting with law enforcement officers. Wellness in general was discussed, including wellness assessments and checkups for physical and mental health. A large portion of time spent reviewing this topic included discussion on the importance of addressing officer and first responder mental health and crisis management response. More agencies are partnering with mental health programs, but participants voiced that clinical diagnoses such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are very prevalent and treatment is highly needed.

Identified Priority #2LE: Training

Summary: Ongoing training was referenced as a high priority for agencies as well. A barrier identified in relation to training was the ability for agencies to take the training and information learned and applying/implementing it in the field.

Identified Priority #3LE: Funding for personnel

Summary: Participants from the drug task force focus group specifically emphasized the need for more people and more time to dedicate to the higher-level drug traffickers. So much of the officer's time is spent going after the low-level drug offenders because there are so many and these are the individuals that calls for service reference.

Identified Priority #4LE: Equipment and Technology

Summary: Equipment and technology were also identified as significant priorities. Focus group participants explained that constant advances in technology results in an emphasis on equipment in grant proposals. Similarly, having individuals who are specifically trained in new technology is essential to supporting local agencies. Focus group participants discussed the critical benefits a local criminal intelligence analyst would provide for law enforcement. There are resources for criminal intelligence assistance from the

state, but these individuals are generally unconnected to local investigators or are missing institutional knowledge that would inform investigations. With additional intelligence supports at the local level, participants voiced that time of field officers would be freed to prioritize other work.

Additional Areas of Need

In priorities identified under Question 1, participants also discussed the need/increased need for the following services:

1. Better assessment for homicide risk in domestic violence cases, not only with law enforcement but in direct services and after-care services;
2. Therapeutic mentoring for youth who have experienced trauma;
3. Prevention programming in schools. A large barrier communicated by participants is that funding is often limited for prevention and it is difficult to show successes because the outcomes take time to see.
4. Treatment for substance use disorders. Providers are seeing a resurgence of meth and heroin. As a result more kids are getting placed outside of the home, as more and more parents face substance use problems. Relatedly, participants expressed that more emphasis needs to be placed on the intersection of drug misuse and its impact on crime.

Question Two: What can be done to better coordinate services?

Identified Priority #1: Assistance in collecting and interpreting data

Summary: Participants identified a large barrier in the way data is collected, managed, and shared within and across systems. Focus group participants stated that standardizing the way data are collected and improving data sharing systems would also help mitigate duplication of services, because service providers would be able to see what services have been provided to clients. Similar sentiments were provided during the law enforcement and drug task force focus groups.

Identified Priority #2: Remove duplicative resources

Summary: Focus group participants across each group mentioned that sometimes multiple agencies use funding to address the same problem, in different capacities. Feedback indicated that this creates confusion and competition in how resources are used and divided.

Identified Priority #3: Cross training to inform the role that agencies play in the system response

Summary: Participants mentioned several times that certain figures within the system set expectations for clients without having an accurate understanding of what services are available. Different parts of the system are creating expectations in the eyes of the clients on what services they need, without knowing if those services exist. Professionals who are not directly involved with the systems being utilized seem to struggle with collaboration and ensuring that referrals are being made appropriately. Cross training and improved systems knowledge are needed.

A Special Note on
Cultural Humility

Focus group participants emphasized that services and providers for immigrant survivors/victims and individuals who do not have citizenship are lacking in general. Some areas across the state are able to support the needs of underserved populations, but for mainstream agencies the work to serve these populations seems to be coming more from the individual-level/personal interest within the agencies rather than instilled throughout the culture of the agency and movement of the system.

Question Three: What needs to happen to encourage more agencies to use evidence-based practices?

Identified Priority #1: Improve accessibility to information on evidence-based practices and best practices from other community stakeholders

Summary: The major themes presented during this section emphasized that evidence-based practices were difficult to access and implement. Some group participants seemed confident in the models and practices used, while others were not sure where to find the models or voiced concerns that they felt restricted by evidence-based models (e.g. they're too prescriptive when flexibility is needed). Participants would like to see a more structured way of sharing practices with others in the field, along with a place to have conversations about different approaches for the same problem across communities. Additionally, some participants voiced that there is a lack of evidence-based treatment programs and providers for specific special populations, such as youth on probation. Similar sentiments were provided during the law enforcement and drug task force focus groups.

Question Four: What has to be in place for you to more effectively plan for meeting future needs?

Identified Priority #1: Funding for future activities and consistent funding flow

Summary: Overall, focus group participants referenced the need for funding as the most critical element to meeting future needs. The need for services is larger than what programs are able to meet. While funding was generally referenced, specific elements about funding were made evident as well. For example, participants said clear communication from funders was helpful in being able to determine when funding gaps would occur (e.g. due to delayed funding announcements). The threat of decreased funding from the federal level also was raised as a concern from each of the focus groups (including law enforcement), as well as decreased funding through the OCJS step-down process.

Identified Priority #2: Emphasis on creating stakeholder buy-in

Summary: Focus group participants also emphasized the need and importance of creating stakeholder buy-in for programming. Revisiting collaboration and the importance of working together, most participants emphasized that work with other groups and agencies allows them to leverage additional resources within the community. Collaboration and creating stakeholder buy-in also helps to break myths and assumptions about what programs do and what services are provided. Staying current with legislation, rules, and regulations also is critical in not only relationship development, but also in the provision of key services.

Identified Priority #1LE: Increased flexibility for funding

Summary: Participants expressed that when there is not flexibility in funding, agencies cannot adapt to the changing environment. For example, opiates were a huge problem previously, so funding became opiate specific. However, the drug problem has begun to shift to meth and cocaine, but there are limited resources available to address the problem.

Identified Priority #2LE: Increased need for personnel

Summary: Participants identified a significant need for increased funding for personnel and officer time. From their perspective, there is a lot of funding available for collaboration with treatment and recovery related services, but not for enforcement and community outreach.

Recommendations

1. Priorities for specific programming needs varied greatly depending on discipline and focus group category. While groups varied on specific recommendations, central to each of the focus groups was the importance of collaboration, treatment for substance use disorders, regardless of whether the individual is seen as an offender or a victim within the criminal justice system, and meeting the basic needs of clients (i.e. transportation, shelter, childcare, etc.). Based on the needs identified, OCJS should prioritize funding for programs that work with community partners to provide holistic services.
2. Relatedly, OCJS should avoid funding duplicative services within the same community. Duplicative programs can create confusion within communities with regards to referrals, ultimately increasing the time that it takes for individuals to access services. Funding allocated to these programs can be utilized more effectively elsewhere. OCJS should promote collaboration and information sharing within communities to support an efficient system response to crime.

3. For law enforcement agencies, OCJS should prioritize the funding of officer wellness, officer training, personnel, equipment, and technology.
4. Though many priority areas were identified, OCJS should ensure that funding is flexible enough to address emerging agency needs. OCJS also should be sure to communicate changes in funding in a timely manner to ensure that agencies are able to address gaps in funding that emerge as a result of unexpected circumstances.
5. A key theme identified across each group was the need for additional support for information and data sharing, technical assistance on data collection and increased accessibility of information about evidence-based practices and how to implement them. OCJS should work to improve the accessibility of information for stakeholders, including evidence-based programming, best practices, and data collection, as well as promote information sharing between collaborative partners.

Summary of Recommendation

SWOT

1. OCJS should use its strengths to take advantage of the opportunities highlighted in this assessment. For example, OCJS can leverage the expertise and experience of its agency personnel to maintain a strong national and statewide presence, which will enable OCJS to continue to make positive contributions to the criminal justice system.
2. OCJS should work to address the weaknesses identified by the SWOT analysis by updating its technology, grant review process, and materials. These changes will increase overall OCJS efficiency, thereby reducing the need for human capital within the organization. Overall, these weaknesses are relatively minor, and do not currently affect OCJS's ability to pursue opportunities or address environmental threats.
3. OCJS also can utilize its strengths to address external threats. For example, staff expertise, knowledge, and collaboration can be used to demonstrate the value and capability of OCJS when administrations and policies undergo change. Similarly, OCJS can use its grant administration process to ensure that federal funds are spent judiciously, even when funding streams are inconsistent.

Funding Analysis

1. In general, OCJS should continue its process for allocating JAG funding, though some possible considerations for discussion and change are mentioned below.
2. OCJS staff should discuss both the current method for allocating funds to law enforcement, as well as the trend of providing multiple grants to the same organization. These outcomes have emerged from the way that OCJS structures its grants process, and should be discussed to determine if any policy changes are needed.
3. OCJS staff should also discuss the possibility of outreach to organizations eligible for D01 and D02 grants. These grants were previously the largest JAG funding category, and OCJS should seek to understand why application rates have declined over time.
4. OCJS Policy & Research staff should create and maintain a dashboard of grants information. This would make it easier to access information about OCJS grants, which will enable more staff from OCJS to effectively utilize grants data, and reduce the amount of time needed to answer grant-related questions. P&R staff should also investigate the quality of the grants data maintained in AGATE, as some concerns about the reliability of the information have been expressed.
5. Once the grants dashboard has been created, P&R staff can work to answer additional stakeholder questions, with the goal of guiding and evaluating OCJS policies.

Needs Assessment Survey

1. OCJS should prioritize the funding of programs for mental health and substance use disorder treatment, as these themes were identified as priorities by multiple different disciplines.
2. Many programs highlighted the need for increased collaboration across a variety of different program areas. For this reason, OCJS should continue to prioritize programs that encourage collaboration among multiple different organizations.
3. Programs across different disciplines have a variety of unique needs. For this reason, OCJS needs to ensure that its funding is flexible enough to accommodate the different needs of criminal justice stakeholders throughout Ohio.

Focus Groups

1. Priorities for specific programming needs varied greatly depending on discipline and focus group category. While groups varied on specific recommendations, central to each of the focus groups was the importance of collaboration, treatment for substance use disorders, regardless of whether the individual is seen as an offender or a victim within the criminal justice system, and meeting the basic needs of clients (i.e. transportation, shelter, childcare, etc.). Based on the needs identified, OCJS should prioritize funding for programs that work with community partners to provide holistic services.
2. Relatedly, OCJS should avoid funding duplicative services within the same community. Duplicative programs can create confusion within communities with regards to referrals, ultimately increasing the time that it takes for individuals to access services. Funding allocated to these programs can be utilized more effectively elsewhere. OCJS should promote collaboration and information sharing within communities to support an efficient system response to crime.
3. For law enforcement agencies, OCJS should prioritize the funding of officer wellness, officer training, personnel, equipment, and technology.
4. Though many priority areas were identified, OCJS should ensure that funding is flexible enough to address emerging agency needs. OCJS also should be sure to communicate changes in funding in a timely manner to ensure that agencies are able to address gaps in funding that emerge as a result of unexpected circumstances.
5. A key theme identified across each group was the need for additional support for information and data sharing, technical assistance on data collection, and increased accessibility of information about evidence-based practices and how to implement them. OCJS should work to improve the accessibility of information for stakeholders, including evidence-based programming, best practices, and data collection.

Strategic Plan Discussion

Each of the individual strategic planning components yielded useful and actionable recommendations. Some of these recommendations were used to develop the goals and objectives described in this report, while others will be used to make changes to OCJS's daily operations. Since some of these specific, micro-level details are beyond the scope of the strategic plan, OCJS is developing an implementation plan to facilitate these changes. The implementation plan will include detailed steps for executing organizational changes based on findings from the environmental analysis, as well as specific timelines for implementing these changes.

Results from all four analyses were compared to develop organizational goals and objectives for the strategic plan. The primary finding from this comparison was that OCJS is effectively administering grant funding. Results from the funding analysis indicated that funding is being distributed equitably among different program areas and regions of the state. Funding has also been primarily allocated to high-priority, evidence-based programs. The most common types of JAG-funded programs address substance use disorder treatment, mental health treatment, trauma informed care, and domestic violence; importantly, these were all identified as high-priorities by survey and focus group participants. OCJS has been able to do this by leveraging the expertise and experience of agency personnel, statewide collaborative efforts, and a well-constructed grant administration process. Overall, these results suggest OCJS should generally continue its current process for administering grant funding, while working to implement changes such as improving internal grant processes.

Comparing findings from all four analyses revealed several common problems for local criminal justice stakeholders. Participants from both the survey and the focus groups reported that access to relevant data is a significant barrier. Individuals from multiple different fields noted that they struggled with data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Local organizations have difficulty tracking data within their own programs, either due to a lack of technical expertise or a lack of human capital, and often have trouble accessing relevant, local data from other organizations. Even if there is access to this information, programs often are not sure how to analyze the data and communicate findings to stakeholders. A related problem is that some organizations struggle with evidence-based programming. Focus group participants reported that it is difficult to find information on evidence-based programs, and that information on the identified programs is presented inconsistently or in a disorganized way. Participants also noted that some evidence-based programs are inflexible and do not meet the needs of the communities served. Lastly, participants mentioned that evidence-based programming still needs to be developed and improved within several important areas (e.g. offender-based programs for juveniles and family violence abusers). These results are consistent with the findings from survey participants, which noted an increased need for evidence-based programming across a variety of different program areas. One final issue highlighted by the

different analyses was the need for increased collaboration and coordination among local agencies. Focus group participants noted that they have problems with duplication of services, data sharing, and finding information about other local resources; each of these issues occur due to lack of collaboration. The needs assessment survey had similar findings, with participants reporting an increased need for collaboration at the local level. Lastly, the funding analysis demonstrated that the category for cross-agency collaboration had the fewest amount of programs out of any JAG program category.

OCJS developed four specific organizational goals based on these findings: 1) Improve criminal justice outcomes through effective grants management; 2) Encourage the use of evidence-based programming; 3) Support collaboration within the criminal justice community, and; 4) Promote the use of criminal justice data and research. These goals were designed to leverage OCJS's strengths, and to address the problems identified through the strategic planning process. The first goal ("Improve criminal justice outcomes") was created to fulfill OCJS's overall mission, and to serve as a mechanism for addressing the other objectives. The second, third, and fourth goals were based on the three primary problems that were identified during the strategic planning process. To accomplish these goals, OCJS will leverage the strengths identified during the SWOT analysis. For example, OCJS can utilize staff experience, institutional knowledge, and collaboration among sections in order effectively manage grants and provide technical assistance. Experienced staff with detailed knowledge about evidence-based programming can serve as subject matter experts for grant review, institutional knowledge about previously funded programs can be used to evaluate the likelihood of project success, and multiple different OCJS sections can work together to address problems that arise during the lifecycle of the grant. This approach will enable OCJS to accomplish these goals, and improve the criminal justice system in Ohio.

Goals/Objectives

Goal 1: Improve criminal justice outcomes through effective grant management

Goal 1 Overview

OCJS has a commitment to preventing and reducing crime and delinquency as the lead criminal justice planning agency for the state of Ohio. One of the primary functions of OCJS is to effectively administer criminal justice grants to maximize the resources available in Ohio. This involves several different processes, including a three-step grant review process, fiscal and programmatic monitoring, as well as on-going grant management and technical assistance. These activities ensure grant funding is being allocated to both high priority and emerging issues, which increases the overall efficiency of criminal justice grant funding.

Objective 1.1: Maintain a high quality grant review process

The grant review process begins after grant applications have been submitted to OCJS. It has three different stages, including internal compliance analysis, subject matter expert and peer review, and Director's review. During the subject matter expert and peer review process, OCJS staff and outside reviewers read and score grants according to the criteria in the OCJS scoring matrix. Outside reviewers are able to leverage field experience, knowledge about local programs, and information about best practices to evaluate grant applications. The subject matter expert from the OCJS P&R section use knowledge of both best practices and experiences from programmatic monitoring visits to provide additional insight about grant applicants. These review processes are performed in conjunction with an internal compliance analysis, which is designed to ensure that implementing agencies have abided by fiscal and programmatic guidelines for previous OCJS grant awards. The grant review process culminates in Director's Review, where the aforementioned information is discussed by OCJS executive staff and policy experts from the P&R section. Director's Review scores are then incorporated in to the OCJS grant scoring formula to make a final funding determination. Overall, this process enables OCJS to rigorously evaluate every grant submitted, which ensures that high quality and high priority programs are funded.

Objective 1.2: Conduct routine fiscal and programmatic monitoring to ensure the success of funded programs

While the grant review process is important for selecting and funding high quality programs, additional work is needed once programs receive those funds. Two important components of this process are the fiscal and programmatic monitoring of funded grants. For fiscal monitoring, OCJS fiscal monitors from the Grants Monitoring and Fiscal Compliance section review program expenditures to ensure grant funds are being spent appropriately and on approved items. If issues are found, Fiscal Monitors provide corrective feedback to ensure that programs are in compliance with state and federal spending guidelines. For programmatic monitoring, P&R staff review program activities to ensure programs are adhering to the activities described in the grant application, and that relevant

best practices are being followed. P&R staff review general program activities, progress towards objectives outlined in the grant, and collaboration board meeting minutes. P&R staff work with programs to resolve any issues, and to ensure high quality programming is being administered by OCJS grant-funded projects. Both fiscal and programmatic monitoring enable OCJS to provide oversight and support for grant funded programs, which increases the effectiveness of criminal justice grant funding in Ohio.

Objective 1.3: Provide quality grants administration services

Grants administration services often begin before applications are submitted to OCJS. Oftentimes, potential applications require assistance to understand the requirements of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for grant funding, navigate the OCJS grants website, and write grant applications. To address these needs, the Grants Administration section works diligently to provide assistance to grant applicants. Prior to the release of the RFP, the Grants Administration section hosts multiple grant writing webinars and trainings to inform grant applicants of the rules, regulations, and expectations for a grant application. Once applications have been approved, the Grants Administration section works to process applications and send award notices in a timely fashion so that programs can make programmatic and fiscal arrangements. Throughout the grants process, Grants Administration staff are available to answer questions for grant applicants and subrecipients. Overall, the Grants Administration section provides a number of different grants management services that enable the grant funding process to work efficiently.

Objective 1.4: Ensure that funding is being allocated to high-priority and emerging issues

Grant funding needs to be distributed to programs that will effectively use funds to address local criminal justice needs. To do this, it is important for OCJS to understand both high priority and emerging issues so that relevant programs can be funded. Currently, OCJS is providing funding to priority areas such as equipment for law enforcement, victim advocacy, juvenile justice, and treatment for substance use disorders. To maintain the alignment between OCJS funding and high priority issues, OCJS will continue to compare currently funded programs to the areas of greatest need as identified by local criminal justice stakeholders. Additionally, OCJS will prioritize the funding of emerging criminal justice problems. For example, several focus group participants noted that it was difficult to obtain funding for emerging issues like methamphetamine-related crime, because most funding for drug-related crime was dedicated to opioid use disorder. For this reason, OCJS has constructed JAG funding categories that are not overly-specified, and are broad enough to apply to developing criminal justice problems. Additionally, OCJS staff communicates with programs throughout the state on a regular basis, which enables them to quickly identify and address new problems.

Goal 2: Encourage the use of evidence-based criminal justice programming

Goal 2 Overview

Evidence-based programs are programs that have been shown to be effective through rigorous, empirical research and evaluation. These programs demonstrate reliable, positive results that have been shown to improve criminal justice outcomes. The implementation of evidence-based programming increases the likelihood of program success, which leads to positive outcomes in the criminal justice system. Evidence-based programs are efficient and cost-effective because organizations are able to allocate limited resources toward initiatives that are known to work (as opposed to initiatives that may or may not be effective). These organizations can focus on program implementation instead of program development, which means higher-quality services are provided sooner, and resources are used more efficiently. Lastly, evidence-based programs are shown to be effective, and not harmful. Oftentimes programs with positive intentions can have no or even negative effects on target populations, which are outcomes that should be avoided; it is possible to reduce the likelihood of these outcomes by using evidence-based programming. For these reasons, OCJS prioritizes the funding of evidence-based programming, provides information on evidence-based programming to stakeholders, funds the research of evidence-based programs, and leverages the Ohio Consortium of Crime Science to facilitate the implementation and analysis of programming in Ohio. Through these efforts, the goal is not only to share information on evidence-based programs, but to foster and promote research partnerships with programs implementing the best practices that have yet to be paired with empirical research.

Objective 2.1: Prioritize the funding of evidence-based criminal justice programming

OCJS prioritizes the funding of evidence-based criminal justice programming to ensure the most effective programs are being funded in Ohio; this is done in several different ways. First, individuals reviewing grants note if a program is evidence-based, and analyze the degree to which the program maintains fidelity to the model. As a result, applications that describe the successful implementation of evidence-based programming are prioritized during Director's review. Additionally, programmatic monitoring site visits are used to evaluate the quality of grant-funded programs. These visits incorporate a number of questions about program activities to ensure that agencies are maintaining adherence to the program model outlined in the approved grant application. Results from the funding analysis indicate that OCJS has been successful at prioritizing evidence-based programming, as the majority of the programs funded by OCJS use evidence-based program models.

Objective 2.2: Provide information on evidence-based programming to stakeholders

Though many OCJS grant-funded programs utilize evidence-based programming, focus group and survey participants noted that it can be a challenge to implement evidence-based programming at the local level. These individuals mentioned that stakeholders are often not aware of best practices and evidence-based programs within the criminal justice field, which leads to less effective programming.

and hinders progress. These participants also noted that some agencies still struggle to learn about new programs and best practices because they are occupied with the day-to-day activities of the organization. To address these issues, P&R staff work to disseminate information on evidence-based programs to relevant individuals. As part of the previous strategic plan, P&R staff created a website with information about evidence-based programming. The site has links to resources with data, research, and evidence-based practices in criminal justice and related fields. This information is also included in the JAG RFP, which has specific examples of evidence-based programs, and includes information about effect sizes and cost-benefit analyses. Outside of specific examples within the RFP, the links also provide references to information clearinghouses where program personnel can access additional resources on evidence-based programs.

OCJS P&R staff also provide information to local programs about current evidence-based practices during programmatic site monitoring visits. P&R staff knowledge about evidence-based practices is enhanced by participation and partnerships with statewide coalitions, such as the Ohio Domestic Violence Network, The Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence, the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections, and the Ohio Injury Prevention Partnership. These partners provide ongoing training information about the practices of their respective fields. Overall, these activities enable OCJS to provide important information to local organizations, ensure that new best practices are funded through OCJS grants, and address significant issues identified by stakeholders.

Objective 2.3: Fund research and evaluation of new evidence-based programs

While there has been a significant amount of progress in developing new evidence-based criminal justice programming in the last few decades, more research is still needed. For example, focus group participants noted that more evidence-based programming for both juvenile and domestic violence offenders should be developed because current programs have limited effectiveness and scope. Though OCJS has devoted some resources to the development of new evidence-based programming, results from the funding analysis reveal that only a few of these projects have been funded. Additionally, conversations about fidelity to evidence-based programs during focus groups revealed that some evidence-based programs are viewed as inflexible and unable to meet programmatic needs. For this reason, OCJS should prioritize the funding of research designed to develop evidence-based programming that aligns with the needs of focus group participants. For example, law enforcement focus group participants noted that officer wellness is a priority, but there has been very little research released on programming in this area. To encourage research on officer wellness, it has been listed as a suggested research topic in the JAG E01 section of the grant, and programs applications about this topic will be strongly considered for funding. OCJS also should work to develop implementation guidelines for evidence-based practices, which incorporate flexibility for local programs and variations in funding. These procedures demonstrate that OCJS works diligently to prioritize topics for program evaluation, and contribute to the evidence base for criminal justice programming.

Objective 2.4: Facilitate the implementation and evaluation of programs through the Ohio Consortium of Crime Science (OCCS)

The OCCS addresses problems with the implementation and evaluation of programming by creating partnerships between social science researchers and criminal justice programs. Many organizations struggle to properly implement evidence-based programming, as it can be challenging to find the right type of program, maintain fidelity to the program model, collect data on important outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Social science researchers are uniquely equipped to assist with this problem, as they have significant subject matter knowledge, strong research skills, and the ability to facilitate data collection and analysis. Through the OCCS, researchers work with organizations to select relevant evidence-based programming, implement programs with good fidelity to the original model while adapting the model to the program's environment, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs that have been implemented. By encouraging partnerships between researchers and local practitioners, programs are able to utilize the skillsets of social scientists to improve and evaluate the overall quality of programming by incorporating the expertise and experiences of the practitioners. In this way, OCJS is able to foster relationships practitioners and researchers to benefit both groups and expand the use of evidence-based programming.

Goal 3: Support collaboration within the criminal justice community

Goal 3 Overview

The criminal justice system is complicated and successful outcomes depend upon the collaboration and coordination of many different organizations. Progress can only be made when agencies work together to provide services, address problems, and manage different incentives and objectives. When organizations work together, they are able to utilize a diverse set of personnel, experiences, and knowledge to provide holistic services for those involved in the criminal justice system. This enables them to problem solve more effectively, and increases the overall quality of services. Collaborative programs also are more successful than programs that do not involve collaboration, as more creative solutions to problems are developed and limited resources are better utilized. This ultimately creates cost savings, reduces the duplication of services, and enables staff to use time more efficiently. OCJS seeks to support collaboration within the criminal justice community by funding cross-training and multi-agency programs, utilizing regional planning units, requiring funded programs to use collaboration boards, and working with local stakeholders to inform strategic planning efforts.

Objective 3.1: Provide funding to cross training and multi-agency programs

Participants in focus group sessions mentioned that the lack of collaboration between organizations was a barrier to improved outcomes within the criminal justice community. Lack of collaboration leads to duplicated services, wasted resources, misinformation, data silos, and a less effective criminal justice system overall. One way of addressing this issue is through the JAG E01 program area,

which provides funding for cross training and cross-agency collaboration. Individuals in the focus groups noted that cross training initiatives are helpful because it enables organizations to learn more about local programs, increases communication, and decreases the spread of misinformation. Multi-agency programs also enable organizations to combine resources and engage in collaborative problem solving to address problems. Since findings from the funding analysis indicate that the E01 program area is the smallest JAG program area, OCJS should promote and prioritize funding E01 grants to support collaboration within the criminal justice community.

Objective 3.2: Utilize regional planning units to leverage local program knowledge

JAG funds are coordinated with other funding sources at the local level is through the use of regional planning units (RPUs), which operate in Franklin, Cuyahoga, and Lucas counties. These initiatives promote and foster cooperation and coordination among governmental units and agencies, and improve the justice system through planning, analysis, technical assistance, and information management. RPUs conduct their own criminal justice assessments to determine the best use of justice funds at the local level. Information gleaned from these assessments is used to project spending trends for current and future grant cycles. By working with RPUs, OCJS is able to leverage its relationships with local organizations to address local priorities. During the focus groups, individuals noted that flexible funding is needed to respond to emerging issues within communities. One way of addressing this problem is through RPUs, which have detailed knowledge of local issues, and can prioritize the funding of programs working to address these problems.

Objective 3.3: Require the use of collaboration boards for funded programs

OCJS requires each JAG-funded program to host or participate in a collaboration board. Collaboration boards meet quarterly, at a minimum, and involve local criminal justice stakeholders. These groups are designed to ensure that communities are communicating and coordinating on relevant issues, and provide agencies with the opportunity to discuss progress on local issues, address problems, provide support to other agencies, and stay informed about criminal justice trends. OCJS subrecipients are required to submit collaboration board letters of commitment with grant applications, and P&R staff review collaboration board meeting minutes during programmatic site monitoring visits. These steps are taken to ensure that collaboration boards include staff from relevant agencies, meet on a regular basis, and share important information. As a result, collaboration boards increase interaction among local agencies, which ultimately leads to improved criminal justice outcomes.

Objective 3.4: Collaborate with local stakeholders to update the strategic plan

OCJS is most successful as an organization when it is able to leverage its institutional knowledge, staff experience, and external relationships with local stakeholders. The strategic planning process combines all of these attributes, and enables OCJS to better understand the criminal justice system in Ohio, allocate funding, and provide technical support to priority areas. For example,

analyzing criminal justice data, grant funding information, and focus group responses revealed that intimate partner violence accounted for a significant amount of violent crime in Ohio. However, focus group participants reported that there is a lack of evidence-based practices for working with offenders, and OCJS funded very few programs that address this issue. This information suggests that OCJS should prioritize the funding and evaluation of programs that work to improve outcomes for intimate partner violence offenders. This analysis demonstrates that working with local stakeholders enables OCJS to address their needs and priorities at the state level, and demonstrates that collaboration between state and local agencies is an essential component of the criminal justice process.

Goal 4: Promote the use of criminal justice data and research

Goal 4 Overview

Criminal justice data and research can be used to help organizations determine priorities, implement evidence-based programs, and evaluate program effectiveness. However, many stakeholders reported difficulty finding and utilizing data and research in their programs. Organizations frequently report that they struggle to collect data, find relevant and timely data from other organizations, use data to make relevant decisions, conduct organizational research, and evaluate research findings. For these reasons, it is important for OCJS to provide access to criminal justice data, as well as resources to facilitate the use of criminal justice data and research.

Objective 4.1: Provide access to criminal justice data

The OCJS P&R section serves as the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) for the state of Ohio. SACs collect, analyze, and report statistics on crime and justice to local and national stakeholders. Research conducted by SACs provides an important source of evidence for policymakers, which promotes the effective administration of criminal justice programming at the state level. OCJS provides access to criminal justice data through its website in the form of interactive dashboards, full reports, and downloadable data sets. Currently, the OIBRS database and website is being updated to make data more accessible to stakeholders. The website also will contain links to relevant data from other criminal justice agencies in Ohio, to make it easier to find state-level criminal justice data. Additionally, SAC staff handle approximately ninety data requests per year from local stakeholders. These data requests frequently involve manual OIBRS database queries, which provide individuals with specific, relevant data. In general, these activities are designed to help organizations find and utilize data, which was identified as a need by many focus group participants. Ultimately, these activities demonstrate that the SAC increases the accessibility of criminal justice data in Ohio in many different ways.

Objective 4.2: Provide access to criminal justice research

OCJS provides access to criminal justice research through the OCCS, its website, and through staff. As previously mentioned, the OCCS helps agencies with the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data and research. Since many organizations often do not

have the experience and resources needed to review and conduct their own research, creating partnerships with social science researchers throughout Ohio enables them to incorporate research in to their organizations. Additionally, OCJS makes research findings available through its P&R website, which has links and information about relevant criminal justice research topics. This free resource is a comprehensive resource of criminal justice research, which makes it easy for organizations to find and understand relevant information. P&R staff also conduct research and evaluations on behalf of local organizations. Data and program analyses performed by P&R staff have helped criminal justice programs throughout Ohio make hiring decisions, allocate resources, and develop programs for addressing local issues. Lastly, OCJS provides resources for criminal justice research through the E01 category, which enables local organizations to conduct research on emerging crime and justice issues. Overall, these different mechanisms enable OCJS to increase access to and promote relevant criminal justice research for local stakeholders.