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# Evidence-Based Practices Strategic Plan 2023–25



Prepared by Carey Group for the  
Pennsylvania Partnership for  
Criminal Justice Improvement

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# Acknowledgments

This strategic plan update would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the members of the Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement:

April Billet (Chair), Director, York County Probation Services\*

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Hon. Charles Ehrlich, Judge, Philadelphia Common Pleas Court

Kelly Evans, Deputy Secretary of Reentry, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

Hon. C. James Fox, Board Chairman, Pennsylvania Parole Board

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## Consulting Team

Carey Group, a national justice consulting firm, provides technical assistance for PPCJI's evidence-based practices implementation efforts and helped facilitate the updating of this strategic plan.

Susan Burke, Executive Director

Rick Parsons, Deputy Director

# Message from the Current President and Vice President of CCAPPOAP

We are pleased to release the most recent addendum to the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania’s strategic plan for advancing Pennsylvania’s adult probation and parole system. In 2016, the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania (CCAPPOAP) released its two-year evidence-based practices (EBP) strategic plan. The goal of the plan was to “enhance public safety, reduce recidivism, and provide for a more effective use of public funds through the implementation of evidence-based practices in the county adult probation and parole system.” In 2018, the CCAPPOAP passed a resolution endorsing the Association’s strategic plan efforts and activities for an additional three years, through 2021. The resolution acknowledged the significant progress made by the CCAPPOAP with the support of its partners. The Statewide EBP Leadership Team subsequently met in July 2021 and developed an addendum to the strategic plan for 2021–23. As part of the strategic plan, the Statewide Leadership Team was renamed the Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement (PPCJI).

PPCJI and the Executive Committee of CCAPPOAP most recently met in May 2023 to acknowledge accomplishments to date, reaffirm a commitment to the EBP strategic plan, and develop this most recent addendum to the plan for 2023–25. They also revised the organizational structure of the EBP Committee, converting its current workgroups into five new workgroups. This addendum serves as a roadmap for each of the workgroups to ensure that the implementation of EBP throughout the state is purposeful, is effective, and reflects each county’s readiness, capabilities, and available resources. Our proposed strategic plan is the result of a dynamic partnership between the CCAPPOAP and many key stakeholders in Pennsylvania’s justice system.

We believe the strength of our strategic plan lies in the support and collaboration of county adult probation and parole partners and key state stakeholders. We would like to thank our partners for their dedication to the improvement of county probation and parole services. We are excited with the direction in which the Association has chosen to proceed and look forward to continuing our work and efforts to put our plan into action.



April J. Billet  
President



Douglas Wilburne  
Vice President

# CCAPPOAP Vision and Mission

The County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania (CCAPPOAP) was established in 1964 as a mechanism for advocacy, training, and networking for probation departments across the state. The CCAPPOAP consists of 64 Chief Probation Officers and 163 associate members. The Association has made great strides in advancing the field of probation and parole in Pennsylvania, beginning with the creation of its initial EBP strategic plan in 2016. Implementation of EBP has proven to reduce recidivism, promote community safety, and improve the lives of people under court supervision and their families.

## Vision

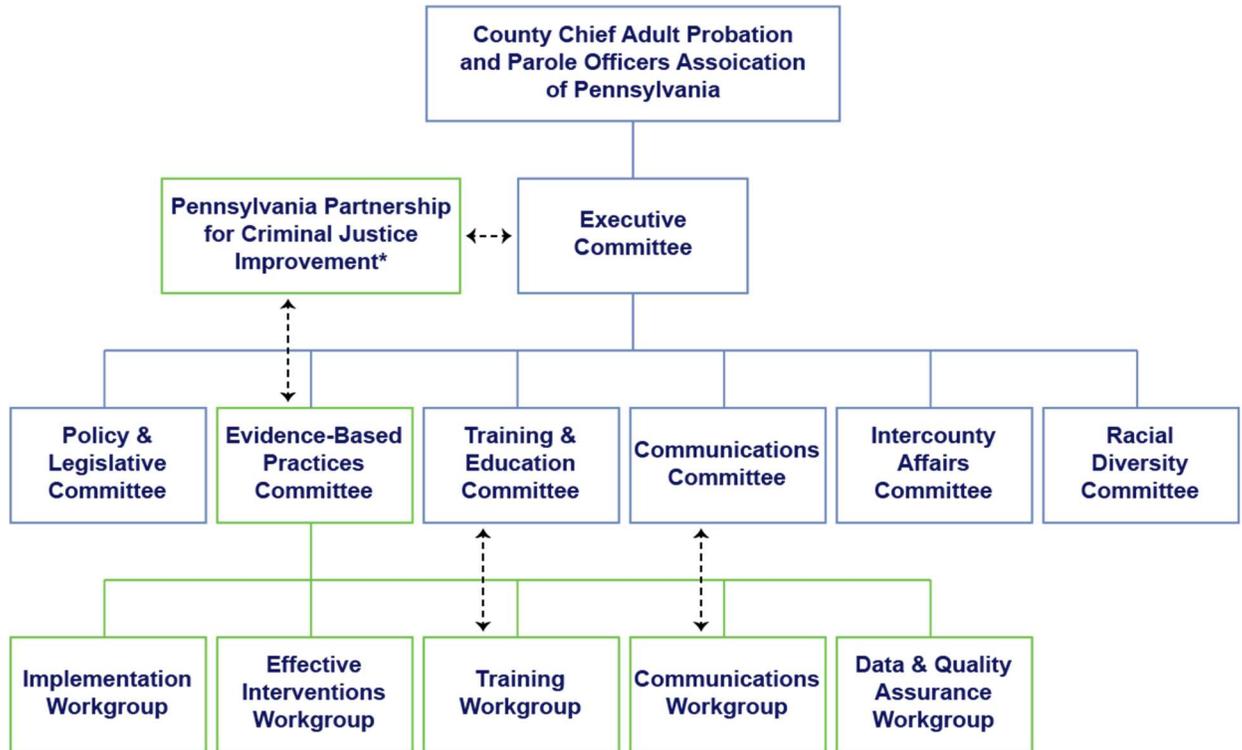
To motivate change and improve outcomes for people on community supervision.

## Mission

It is the mission of the Association to:

- promote the implementation and use of evidence-based practices;
- promote public safety in our communities;
- advance probation, parole and community corrections practices;
- promote appropriate legislation;
- promote communication and exchange of ideas;
- stimulate high standards of training and professionalization of personnel and agencies;
- promote the provision of quality information to criminal justice decision makers;
- encourage the development of innovative services, research designs, and program evaluation;
- increase community understanding of community supervision and seek greater support of strategies proven by research to reduce recidivism.

# CCAPPOAP Organizational Structure



\* Formally Statewide Evidence-Based Practices Leadership Team

# Overview: Strategic Plan Goals

## Goal One: Implementation

### Provide tools to steer counties' evidence-based practices (EBP) implementation efforts.

1. Develop strategies and tools that will assist counties in implementing EBP and evaluating EBP implementation efforts.
2. Produce a document and webinar to guide counties in restructuring caseloads and resources to reflect EBP.
3. Create, distribute, and train counties on roadmaps for the four phases of EBP implementation.
4. Develop a strengths-based risk/needs pre-sentence investigation and other court templates.

## Goal Two: Training

### Develop a statewide evidence-based practices training plan.

1. Produce a PPCJI-branded EBP Overview eLearning course available to all counties.
2. Identify PPCJI-endorsed EBP training courses for line staff, supervisors, administrators, and stakeholders and provide information on how to access the courses.
3. Sustain EBP training efforts through a statewide train-the-trainer model and network to grow and develop EBP trainers.
4. Implement a continuous quality improvement plan to develop and grow trainer knowledge of, and skills in facilitating, EBP curricula and to ensure fidelity.

## Goal Three: Effective Interventions

### Support counties in identifying and implementing effective interventions to reduce risk and enhance community well-being.

1. Implement a standardized case planning/success planning process statewide.
2. Identify tools to help counties assess the extent to which their internal and external interventions align with EBP, provide strategies for improving fidelity, and develop a resource that lists effective interventions.
3. Develop a toolkit that counties can use to implement an EBP coaching model.

## Goal Four: Communications

### Enhance people's understanding and use of evidence-based practices.

1. Develop a communications plan to assist with the successful implementation of EBP.
2. Strengthen communication throughout PPCJI using various platforms and methods.
3. Enhance the public's perception and understanding of PPCJI and its efforts to implement EBP throughout the Commonwealth.
4. Gather and distribute EBP implementation success stories from staff, stakeholders, and people with lived experience, and spread awareness of successful EBP implementation at the county level.
5. Widely implement the EBP communications toolkit, including updating terminology so that all materials reflect "person-first" language.
6. Survey counties and stakeholders to understand their experiences implementing EBP and to inform future implementation efforts.

## Goal Five: Data and Quality Assurance

### Collect and use data to inform and strengthen evidence-based practices and to ensure fidelity to those practices.

1. Educate counties on collecting, interpreting, and using data to inform EBP implementation.
2. Produce a white paper on state-required performance measures, why they are important, and how they will be used.
3. Develop a statewide data collection plan to measure the effectiveness of EBP implementation.

# Goal One: Implementation

## Provide tools to steer counties' evidence-based practices implementation efforts.

### Statement of Priority

The successful implementation of evidence-based practices is greatly enhanced when counties identify the key activities they will undertake, account for the unique challenges that rural counties face, and include tools to encourage consistency and best practices.

### Objectives

1. Develop strategies and tools that will assist counties in implementing EBP and evaluating EBP implementation efforts.
2. Produce a document and webinar to guide counties in restructuring caseloads and resources to reflect EBP.
3. Create, distribute, and train counties on roadmaps for the four phases of EBP implementation.
4. Develop a strengths-based risk/needs pre-sentence investigation and other court templates.

### Activities

1. Develop a readiness for change assessment that allows jurisdictions to evaluate office culture and other factors that will impact the implementation and sustainment of EBP. (Objective 1)
2. Create EBP implementation, fidelity, and quality assurance checklists that will enable counties to evaluate their current strengths and identify areas for improvement. (Objective 1)
3. Coordinate quarterly regional chief meetings on EBP and best practices. (Objective 1)
4. Explore possible partnerships with universities or similar establishments to assist with the evaluation of implementation efforts and outcomes in Pennsylvania. (Objective 1)
5. Produce a document and webinar to guide counties in restructuring caseloads and resources to reflect EBP. (Objective 2)
6. Develop succinct infographics on the phases of EBP implementation. The infographics should include Pennsylvania-specific strategies to address implementation barriers, and a portion should be dedicated to rural communities. A webinar on the phases of implementation will be developed, and the infographics will be shared. (Objective 3)
7. Produce and distribute a monograph on best practices with respect to reinforcements and responses to noncompliance, and conduct a webinar that summarizes the research and provides model policy examples. (Objective 3)
8. Develop templates and supporting procedures (e.g., for responses to violations, for PSIs, etc.) that use risk-needs-responsivity principles and strength-based language. (Objective 4)

# Goal Two: Training

## Develop a statewide evidence-based practices training plan.

### Statement of Priority

A successful transition to evidence-based practices requires comprehensive training in methods, theories, and behavior designed to achieve public safety objectives. Ensuring fidelity to training content is necessary to maintain high-quality EBP implementation.

### Objectives

1. Produce a PPCJI-branded EBP Overview eLearning course available to all counties.
2. Identify PPCJI-endorsed EBP training courses for line staff, supervisors, administrators, and stakeholders and provide information on how to access the courses.
3. Sustain EBP training efforts through a statewide train-the-trainer model and network to grow and develop EBP trainers.
4. Implement a continuous quality improvement plan to develop and grow trainer knowledge of, and skills in facilitating, EBP curricula and to ensure fidelity.

### Activities

1. Develop an EBP Overview eLearning course for all counties and stakeholders. (Objective 1)
2. Identify PPCJI-endorsed EBP training courses for line staff, supervisors, administrators, and stakeholders; sequence the trainings; and offer the courses online and in person using a regional approach. (Objective 2)
3. Develop training videos and discussion guides on various EBP topics such as skill practice, responding to behaviors, case planning, etc. (Objective 2)
4. Identify and provide EBP Train the Trainer courses to allow for local sustainment. (Objective 3)
5. Develop curriculum-specific virtual forums (trainer networks) at least quarterly (initially) to allow for collaboration and standardized interpretation of each curriculum. (Objective 3)
6. Develop a training quality assurance checklist template that trainer networks can customize to their specific curriculum to ensure fidelity. (Objective 4)
7. Explore and develop curriculum-specific booster trainings for trainers. (Objective 4)
8. Plan and hold a one-day forum for all trainers on adult learning theories, how to roll with staff resistance, and other identified needs. (Objective 4)

# Goal Three: Effective Interventions

Support counties in identifying and implementing effective interventions to reduce risk and enhance community well-being.

## Statement of Priority

Research has indicated that organizations that adhere to the principles of effective intervention can realize improved outcomes for those on community supervision. Structured case planning, coaching, and fidelity tools are instrumental in successful outcomes.

## Objectives

1. Implement a standardized case planning/success planning process statewide.
2. Identify tools to help counties assess the extent to which their internal and external interventions align with EBP, provide strategies for improving fidelity, and develop a resource that lists effective interventions.
3. Develop a toolkit that counties can use to implement an EBP coaching model.

## Activities

1. Develop and implement an ORAS-based, Pennsylvania-specific case planning/success planning training curriculum for both supervisors/management staff and officers. The curriculum should include example language and a video demonstrating effective case planning/success planning. The training will be implemented using a train-the-trainer model. (Objective 1)
2. Develop a manual on effective correctional programs, including in-house, community-based, and online programs. (Objective 2)
3. Identify a fidelity assessment tool and conduct a pilot with a small cohort of counties to assess a sample of their internal/external programming. (Objective 2)
4. Develop a plan to engage community providers and to implement the fidelity assessment tool statewide. This plan should include the creation of a webinar to assist with the tool's rollout. (Objective 2)
5. Create an EBP coaching toolkit to assist counties statewide in their implementation of an EBP coaching model. The toolkit should include observation checklists, feedback forms, and a framework for providing feedback to staff. (Objective 3).
6. Create a webinar to assist counties with the implementation of the EBP coaching toolkit. (Objective 3)

# Goal Four: Communications

Enhance people’s understanding and use of evidence-based practices.

## Statement of Priority

Improving understanding of and commitment to evidence-based practices requires communication channels to be open and messages to be delivered clearly and effectively to multiple and diverse audiences.

## Objectives

1. Develop a communications plan to assist with the successful implementation of EBP.
2. Strengthen communication throughout PPCJI using various platforms and methods.
3. Enhance the public’s perception and understanding of PPCJI and its efforts to implement EBP throughout the Commonwealth.
4. Gather and distribute EBP implementation success stories from staff, stakeholders, and people with lived experience, and spread awareness of successful EBP implementation at the county level.
5. Widely implement the EBP communications toolkit, including updating terminology so that all materials reflect “person-first” language.
6. Survey counties and stakeholders to understand their experiences implementing EBP and to inform future implementation efforts.

## Activities

1. Develop a plan to increase communication and collaboration between the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee and its subcommittees, the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania and its committees, and the Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement, the EBP Committee, and the workgroups. (Objective 1)
2. Develop a communications calendar that lists topic areas, documents, and webinars that will be released each month. (Objective 1)
3. Develop targeted communication strategies that address specific stakeholder groups, such as judges, prosecution, and so on, with the goal of obtaining further stakeholder buy-in. (Objective 1)
4. Continue to distribute monthly emails from PPCJI that further develop staff’s and stakeholders’ knowledge of EBP. (Objective 2)
5. Continue to develop briefs on specific evidence-based practices. These briefs should target staff, stakeholders, funders, and the community to enhance their perception and understanding of EBP. (Objectives 2 & 3)
6. Explore a plan for PPCJI to use social media platforms to communicate and enhance the public’s perception of PPCJI. (Objectives 2 & 3)

7. Develop additional county spotlights highlighting stories of successful EBP implementation. Spotlights should feature data/statistics to emphasize outcomes and information about the cost/benefit of EBP implementation. (Objectives 3 & 4)
8. Develop additional Voices from the Field that highlight success stories of staff, stakeholders, and people with lived experiences at the state and local levels. (Objectives 3 & 4)
9. Develop a brief that outlines the importance of using person-first language and that includes a list of accepted terminology. Distribute the brief statewide. (Objective 5)
10. Evaluate and update all current CCAPPOAP documents based on the list of accepted terminology. (Objective 5)
11. Conduct regular surveys of CCAPPOAP membership and other stakeholder groups to assess needs, barriers, and trends, and to assist PPCJI and the Association with completing the strategic plan's objectives and activities. When appropriate, ensure that surveys are conducted on an annual basis. (Objective 6)

# Goal Five: Data and Quality Assurance

**Collect and use data to inform and strengthen evidence-based practices and to ensure fidelity to those practices.**

## Statement of Priority

To demonstrate the efficacy of evidence-based practices and to acquire stable and adequate funding, counties must build an infrastructure of policy, practice, and data showing their value to stakeholders. A statewide coordinated effort will ensure confidence and fidelity in the process of collecting data and performance measures and will enable agency leaders to use the data to make budgetary and policy decisions.

## Objectives

1. Educate counties on collecting, interpreting, and using data to inform EBP implementation.
2. Produce a white paper on state-required performance measures, why they are important, and how they will be used.
3. Develop a statewide data collection plan to measure the effectiveness of EBP implementation.

## Activities

1. Develop a plan to educate counties and stakeholders on the benefits of collecting data related to performance measures. (Objective 1)
2. Develop a white paper that explains why data collection is important and what data—including data related to the validation of risk/needs assessments—and performance measures every county should collect and report on to assist with EBP implementation. (Objective 2)
3. Conduct a pilot program with two counties to explore the possibility of collecting the data identified in activity 2 from the primary case management systems. (Objective 3)
4. Collaborate with JNET to continue the development of the recidivism dashboard. (Objective 3)
5. Develop a data dashboard that will enable PPCJI and individual counties to monitor performance, track trends, and implement continuous quality improvement. (Objective 3)