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DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives Launches Virtual Officer Safety and Survival Training (OSST)/Fundamentals of Probation Practice (FPP) Academy

Special points of interest:

- > Probation Best Practice
> Virtual Ready, Set, Work! Groups
> State Director's Memoranda
> Research In Brief

The DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) earlier this month launched its first entirely virtual OSST/FPP Academy. The four-week long training consists of pre-recorded modules and live virtual instruction, as well as individual work, group work, case studies and skills practice. It provides state-of-the-art training to new probation officers consistent with requirements under Title 9 of New York Codes, Rules and Regulations Part 346 (Staff Development Rule) and is designed so new probation officers can learn, develop and practice skills that will be needed to successfully work with individuals who receive probation services. New probation officers who successfully complete the training are in compliance with peace officer training requirements detailed in state Criminal Procedure Law §2.30. The curriculum has been revised to reflect evolving research and current best practices, and to address the following topics: implementation of the state's Raise the Age law; race and equity; trauma-informed care; motivational interviewing; working with women and girls; and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. A second academy is slated to begin this summer.

Probation Departments Pilot Decision Points – DUI Program

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A dozen Probation Officers from Chemung, Dutchess, Franklin, Schenectady, St. Lawrence and Washington counties recently completed the two-week "Decision Points – Driving Under the Influence" Facilitator Training Course, a cognitive behavioral intervention program that addresses criminal attitudes and behaviors and provides long-term solutions to reduce recidivism. The departments will implement the program to assist individuals convicted of DWI crimes who represents a significant portion of individuals being supervised by probation departments throughout the state. The program's open entry/exit feature provides flexibility to probation departments with implementation and enhances the ability

for participants to successfully complete the program. Congratulations to the following probation officers who completed the Decision Points-DUI Training:

Michael Barone, Jennifer Perryman, Tracy Caprood, Ashley Pilla, Kevin Ely, Mary Redmond, Brooke McGill, Megan Schrom, Drew McNichol, Nicole Sirianni-Lucey, Suzanne Pastrick, and Scott Wilson.

OPCA is currently accepting applications for the second Decision Points – DUI Facilitator Training, which is scheduled for Monday, June 7 through Friday, June 11, and Monday, June 14 through Friday, June 18. Please contact Michele Melendez at Michele.Melendez@dcjs.ny.gov for additional information.

## Collaborative Case Work Refresher Training Completed

Orbis Partners recently completed Collaborative Case Work (CCW) training – a process of mapping, planning, and collaboratively building case plans with youth – in New York State. Case Planning Refresher sessions occurred during the fall of 2019 and more than 300 probation officers who work with juveniles from 50 counties (outside of New York City) were trained. The refresher training session offered participants the opportunity to ask questions and apply the CCW model to their daily work with assessments and building case plans collaboratively with youth. Local CCW

“coaches” were then selected to build sustainability of critical assessment and case planning skills within their departments. In total, 35 coaches from 27 counties were trained to expand upon and maintain the delivery of the CCW model. CCW Coaches expressed enthusiasm about bringing these advanced skills back to their departments to help refine the YASI assessment and make the case planning process more cohesive. Click [here](#) for a list of the CCW Coaches.

Congratulations to the CCW Coaches!

## Albany and Westchester Probation Lead Virtual *Ready, Set, Work!*

Probation Departments in Albany and Westchester counties recently delivered their first **Ready, Set, Work!** employment readiness intervention via Zoom. **RSW!** is a 20-hour employment readiness intervention designed to equip individuals who have criminal records with the necessary skills and tools to obtain and retain quality employment. Emphasis is also placed on career planning and advancement, to encourage longevity in legitimate employment. In Albany County, certified Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) Craig MacNeil, Ron “Cook” Barrett and Michelle Driscoll worked together to create and facilitate this intervention, leading groups that met twice per week.

In Westchester County, certified OWDS Sheryl Day-Davis facilitated **RSW!** for 10 participants, all of whom successfully completed the program. During the facilitation of this intervention, the Probation Department partnered with a Westchester-based nonprofit agency, Choice of New York, which provided smart phones and free data service to **RSW!** group participants so they could participate in this intervention. This allowed the participants to not only be involved in this remote group intervention but also allowed them to meet their remote probation reporting requirements implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Congratulations to Newly Certified Offender Workforce Development Specialists

In March, 18 professionals from probation departments, county re-entry task forces, and employment-focused programs funded by DCJS completed the first virtual 175-hour certified National Institute of Corrections Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) training. Niagara County Probation Officer Kimberly Vosler was the valedictorian and Pathstone Employment Focused

Program Placement and Career Services Director Rhiannon Bortle was the salutatorian. All 18 certified OWDS will now be able to facilitate the **Ready, Set, Work!** curriculum.

Congratulations to all the graduates!

## Albany County Probation Department Conducts Virtual Job Fair

Earlier this year, the Albany County Probation Department hosted its first Virtual Job Fair, which was coordinated by the department's Alternatives to Incarceration Unit and its Employment Outreach Center. The 25 participants, who attended via Zoom, heard from RedShift Recruiting, Express Employment Professionals, Aero-tek Recruiting, and People Ready Industrial Staffing. Representatives from these agencies were each given one hour to highlight their agency resources and answer any questions. The job fair provided face-to-face interaction with potential employers to help individuals better understand the use of virtual platforms and to prepare them for future use in this medium. The feedback from both the vendors and participants was positive and the Albany County Probation Department looks forward to hosting future virtual job fair events.



### Guidance Provided on Protections from Gender Identity Discrimination

For additional technical assistance, please contact Community Correction Representative [Ian Grugan](#) in the Juvenile Operations Unit.

State Director's Memorandum #2020-13 provides guidance to probation departments on the proper documentation of gender identity and birth sex at the pre-sentence investigation and supervision stages. A WebEx training, which also provided information on gender identity and recommended procedures for working with individuals who are transgender or gender non-conforming, is available on the eJusticeNY Integrated Justice Portal (IJ Portal): Resources > Reference Library > Probation > Presentations.

DCJS also has provided additional information titled "Guidance on Protections from Gender Identity Discrimination under the NYS Human Rights Law." Departments are encouraged to review this guidance and consult with their county attorney with any questions they may have. Additional information is available on the state Division of Human Rights website: [Protections for Transgender New Yorkers](#) and [Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity or Expression](#).

### State Director's Memoranda

The following State Director's Memoranda are posted to the IJ Portal: Resources > Reference Library > Probation > Director's Memoranda

- State Director's Memorandum #2021-3: Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)-Probation Regulation 9 NYCRR Part 357
- State Director's Memorandum #2021-4: Non-Citizen/Deported Probationers. **Please note that this memorandum supersedes State Director's Memorandum #2008-13.**

## OPCA Training Updates

The OPCA Training Unit is currently developing its 2021-22 training plan, which will consider input from annual plans submitted by probation departments, as well as quarterly training committee meetings scheduled for 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on the following Tuesdays: May 18; Aug. 17; and Nov. 16. The Training Unit will continue to email all training announcements to Probation Directors and Staff Development Officers and encourage participants to register as soon as possible.

For more information, please contact the [OPCA Training Unit](#).

### Probation Practice Tip – Quality Pre-Sentence Investigations

It is important to access and use all available information to complete a relevant and reliable pre-sentence investigation. Title 9 NYCRR Part 350.6 (c) (1) (d) provides guidance with respect to “Current Offense/Act.” In addition to the original charge/petition allegation, plea and conviction/adjudication, the date and nature of the offense, the arresting officer and any petitioner’s statement, victim statement(s) and any witness statements, the respondent’s/defendant’s written statement at the time of arrest and the status of co-respondent/co-defendant cases are all essential. It is important to use the IJ Portal to determine if the individual has any current or past orders of protection (OOP) and/or Domestic Incident Reports (DIRs). Officers are reminded that arrest reports and police officer comments made at the time of the arrest can provide valuable insight into the attitudes and behavior of the client.

### Probation Practice Tip – YASI

Did you know a YASI **Case Closure** Assessment performed at the successful conclusion of a juvenile adjustment, or the end of a supervision term not only demonstrates the value and impact of probation services, but also provides a quantitative measure of reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors? Probation officers work hard and demonstrate great skill in working with youth. This information becomes available to probation departments through the YASI/Caseworks Reports. Document your impact through a YASI **Case Closure** Assessment!

### Probation Best Practice

In Criminal Courts, the Waiver for Pre-Plea Probation Investigation and Report is a request from the court. Significantly, Title 9 NYCRR Part 350.9 (Special Requirements for Pre-plea Investigation and Report) *requires written authorization and a signed waiver*. The Pre-Plea Probation and Investigation and Report (such as DCJS OPCA-2.2A) shall include statements that no probation department personnel will be called to testify regarding information acquired by the probation department, that information obtained by the probation department may not be used in a subsequent trial, and that this exemption does not apply to defense or prosecutorial investigation material which may be included in the report. *Please note that all parties must sign the document*. There has been no change to these important requirements due to COVID-19, court schedule or any other such work reduction/re-allocation order that may have been issued.

## Officer Wellness and Peer Support Follow-up

OPCA recently hosted a WebEx with 30 newly trained Peer Support Team Specialists and their Probation Directors. This webinar was the first in a series of continuing technical assistance sessions to ensure that newly trained specialists have the support they need to fully implement Officer Wellness and Peer Support Programs. Many thanks to the probation departments in Rensselaer, Tompkins and Monroe counties for their continued commitment and support.

Additional resources are available through the IJ Portal: Resources>Reference Library>Probation>Peer Support & Officer Wellness

The next Officer Wellness and Peer Support Quarterly meeting will occur in July via WebEx.

### Research in Brief

*Cognitive Life Skills (CLS)* [has been rated promising](#) by the National Institute of Justice Crime Solutions. This cognitive behavioral intervention seeks to reduce recidivism by addressing antisocial attitudes and decision making. In addition, the program addresses common issues individuals face (antisocial attitudes, poor problem-solving skills, and weak decision-making skills) through cognitive thinking skills.

The *Community Reporting Engagement Support and Training (CREST) Center*, based in New Haven, Conn., also [has been rated promising](#) in reducing the risk of recidivism of individuals with mental illness who are on probation. The Center provides substance abuse, daily living skills training, transportation services and cognitive skills trainings to participants. In addition, the Center utilizes interventions such as Illness Management and Thinking for a Change to target interpersonal problem-solving skills.

Click [here](#), for more information on the National Institute of Justice CrimeSolutions research database.

### Update: Employment, Vocation, Education Community Resources in Interactive Google Maps

Since launching the [Vocation, Education, and Advocacy Resource Map](#) in December 2020, the map has more than [15,000 hits!](#) Developed by DJCS staff, the interactive map links contains information on 450-plus programs offering education, job training, advocacy and mediation services to assist their clients.

A [webinar about this resource](#) is available for more information.



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The National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) has officially launched [The NCJA Podcast](#). Produced with support from the [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#), this series will explore promising practices, provide guidance on strategic planning and discuss the fundamentals of the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program.