

Office of National Initiatives and Recovery and Reform Team

For nearly 30 years, the Center for Justice Innovation has worked in the criminal legal system in support of recovery and reform and the Office of National Initiatives contains national experts in intimate partner violence, substance use disorders, mental and behavioral health, tribal justice, community justice, and complex systems change. Within this ecosystem, the Recovery and Reform team provides high-quality training and technical assistance to improve community and legal system responses to behavioral health and reduce harm to individuals and communities. This work is guided by our values: person-centered practices, equitable collaboration, transformative impact, and anti-racist and anti-oppressive framework.

Recovery

As is well-documented, communities across the country struggle to address the effects of substance use and associated policies. There is an ongoing need for prevention and interventions that are innovative, rooted in anti-oppressive practices, evidenced-based, and are person-centered. The Recovery and Reform team is well-positioned to continue to move the needle on community responses to substance use and systems change.

Addressing the opioid crisis through innovative overdose prevention strategies

Jurisdictions across the country are looking for ways to prevent and mitigate the harms of the overdose crisis. The Recovery and Reform team can work with sites on individualized, innovative, and trauma-informed strategies for overdose prevention. From being a leading voice in the integration of [harm reduction in treatment court programs](#)

to being at the forefront of new ideas such as Opioid Intervention Courts, we are well-positioned to facilitate interventions that are rooted in evidenced-based, person-centered, and anti-oppressive practices.

Enhancing problem-solving courts to address the changing criminal legal landscape

Problem-solving courts are one of the many justice reform tools available to help people with substance use disorders entwined in the criminal legal system. The Recovery and Reform team's decades-long work in problem-solving courts positions us to help jurisdictions with fidelity to evidence-based practices like certification, constitutional issues, and training. We recognize the ever-changing legal landscape presents challenges and opportunities to problem-solving courts and we help programs work in collaboration with important reforms such as decriminalization, bail reform, and increased access to early diversion.

Centering equity in systems change

The Recovery and Reform team has centered the core values of anti-racism and equity in the implementation and enhancement of problem-solving courts across the country through participation in the development of culturally specific programming, collaboration on training and technical assistance to address racial and ethnic disparities in statewide jurisdictions, and the creation of a novel implicit bias tool for treatment court professionals. Additionally, our work has provided guidance to jurisdictions on how to address specific populations moving through

the system, such as veterans, women, and those with disabilities, who have varying and complex needs.

Reform

A hallmark outcome of our work is the facilitation of multiple agencies, interests, and partnerships to identify innovative and strategic solutions around complex issues. Our focus is sustainable change, and we have proven methods for achieving this result.

Sustainable change through strategic planning

Reform requires strategic interventions, and the Recovery and Reform team has decades of experience facilitating in-depth strategic planning to achieve a wide array of systems change. Using the Center's strategic planning model, jurisdictions can develop training programs, allocate resources efficiently, and strengthen inter- and cross-agency collaborations. Our team's strategic planning process has resulted in improvements in South Dakota's defense bar's role in treatment courts and implementation of teleservices across the state of Montana.

Systems change in complex agencies

The Recovery and Reform team has made inroads in systems that have historically been siloed or had difficult political buy-in to engage in reform efforts. Through trust building and deep subject matter expertise we can engage partners from every level of an agency and provide pathways to change. In the Connecticut prosecutorial system,

prosecutor culture change was viewed as a difficult process due to the political, cultural, and process challenges. The Recovery and Reform team worked with various partners to identified concrete short- and long-term strategies for enhancing efficiency and fairness in Connecticut's prosecutorial system. Those strategies are memorialized in the Moving Justice Forward blueprint, which collaborators can lean on for implementation.

Systems change through our values

Our values as an agency and as a team are paramount to our work. All our projects are rooted in practices that are person-centered, equitable in collaboration, transformative, and anti-racist and anti-oppressive. Our values are operationalized in the development of trauma-informed practices for criminal courts, which recognizes the role trauma plays in an individual's life and provides courts guidance on appropriate responses to the experiences individuals engaged in while in the legal system.

What We Can Do for You

The Recovery and Reform team takes pride in its approach to collaboration and partnership. Our approach allows us to hold true to our values and work with agencies to realize their values through system improvement, change, and innovation. To find out what we can do for you, contact our Director of Recovery and Reform Monica Christofferson at christoffersonm@innovatingjustice.org.