San Francisco’s Unprecedented Reduction in Criminal Justice Populations

Between 2009 and February, 2015, the San Francisco Adult Probation Department’s (SFAPD) total client population reduced by 43%, from 6,779 to 3,849. In 2013, over 1,300 individuals completed probation, with 80% completing successfully. From 2009 to 2013, SFAPD reduced the annual number of probationers revoked to state prison by 83%, from 256 to 44. As a result of this achievement, SFAPD received an SB678 High Performance Grant in 2013.

Due to the implementation of evidence-based practices in community corrections and sentencing, including expanded alternative sentencing options, the average daily jail population has decreased by 40% since 2009, from 1,954 to 1,181.¹ At a cost of about $140 per jail bed per day, this represents an annual savings of over $39 million. Individuals in custody under AB109 as of September 2014 comprised just 8% of the total jail population.

A Snapshot of San Francisco’s Criminal Justice Initiatives and Innovations

- Evidence-based sentencing and supervision employing risk/need assessment information
- Extensive collaborative court programs (Behavioral Health Court, Community Justice Center, Drug Court, Intensive Supervision Court)
- Community Assessment and Services Center (CASC), a one-stop reentry center serving SFAPD clients; partnerships with Child Support, Public Health, Human Services Agency and many CBOs
- Reentry Pod, an in-custody reentry programming unit for SFAPD clients in partnership with the Sheriff’s Dept. and with CDCR
- Community-based alternative sentencing options; Alternative Sentencing Planner in DA and Public Defender’s Office
- Emphasis on services to address needs and increase self-sufficiency: education, job training and placement, cognitive behavioral programs, housing assistance, financial literacy and parenting
- Heavy investment in training and professional development of SFAPD staff
- Robust partnership with Dept. of Public Health for behavioral health treatment and linkage to primary care
- Citywide commitment to justice reinvestment and reduction in reliance on incarceration

¹ As of February 27, 2015

March 1, 2015