State of Illinois

THE JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE

Executive Order 2019-09

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Office of Lieutenant Governor
Juliana Stratton

Introduction

Governor JB Pritzker and Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton stood in solidarity with community members and elected officials to peacefully protest for justice and equity.

I am the daughter of a man who took part in the Selma March who instilled in me the value of education and the value of fighting for what is right. It is because of this legacy, and that of others, that I can lead the charge for justice, and be a voice for compassion in government and policy making.

- Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton

JEO INITIATIVE

On February 11, 2019, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker signed Executive Order 2019-09 to establish the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative to be led by the Lieutenant Governor. The JEO Initiative will help to fulfill the Administration's vision to shift from unsuccessful punitive methods towards more restorative, inclusive, and cutting-edge practices and programs that result in true justice and equity. This initiative centralizes the state's justice reform efforts and promotes economic opportunities for communities impacted by the justice system.

This is a first-of-its-kind effort in Illinois. The JEO Initiative serves as a model for the nation's efforts to reform the justice system by:

1. Convening and creating a collaborative environment, especially among stakeholders, state agencies and partner organizations;
2. Improving communications across state agencies and ensuring a coordinated, holistic effort to transform the criminal justice system and implement those changes;
3. Supporting research and pilot programs that will test groundbreaking efforts to reform the criminal justice system and provide data analysis to assess program efficiency and guide new efforts; and
4. Weighing in on decision making to ensure that the different branches of Illinois government work proactively to create a more fair and equitable criminal justice system.

Governor Pritzker and Lieutenant Governor Stratton convened 400+ stakeholders to discuss the Administration's bold criminal justice reform agenda. The fireside chat was moderated by Michelle Morales, President of the Woods Fund Chicago.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deep inequities in our society and underscores the need for an approach to justice that extends beyond policing, jails and prisons. In 2020, the JEO Initiative led a variety of projects aimed at not only reforming the justice system, but also strengthening communities and addressing root causes of justice involvement. This report outlines the JEO Initiative's work in 2020 and priorities for the fiscal year (FY) of 2022 (July 2021-June 2022).

Goals

The JEO Initiative's work focuses on four goals that guide short-term and long-term efforts:

1. Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration.
2. Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.
3. Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities.
4. Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

2020 - 2021 Deliverables

The JEO Initiative advanced various deliverables for each of the above goals.

Goal #1: Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration.

The Restore, Reinvest and Renew (R3) Program: The R3 program, established in the 2019 Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, invests 25% of tax revenues from adult-use cannabis sales into communities most impacted by mass incarceration and the war on drugs. A leader in innovative and equitable government grantmaking, the R3 program funds community planning processes and service delivery in five areas: civil legal aid, economic development, reentry, violence prevention, and youth development.

In January 2020, a working group of research experts from around the state identified areas that are eligible for R3 funding based on their rates of gun injuries, child poverty, unemployment, and incarceration. Of the eligible census tracts, 48% were designated as "high need," indicating that these census tracts fell in the top quartile of the above indicators.

Outreach and technical assistance webinars for potential applicants about the state grant application process began in February and March 2020. In May, the Notices of Funding Opportunity, or NOFOs, became open to eligible applicants. It remained open for 60 days, instead of the traditional 30 days, due to the impact of COVID-19 on potential applicants. The NOFOs were posted on a standalone, user-friendly R3 website that allowed for easy public access. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) and the JEO Initiative hosted several virtual community meetings to build awareness for the program. ICJIA's technical assistance workshops were attended by over 500 unique individuals. In July, both NOFOs closed and ICJIA received over 400 applications, a historic number for the agency.

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The NOFOs' scoring structure contained five equity provisions that reflect the R3 program's goal to prioritize locally-based, restorative programs for funding. They are:

1. **Local Preference:** whether the applicant is located within an R3 zone.
2. **Local Preference – Collaborative:** whether half of the applicant's collaborative members are located in R3 zones OR whether half of the applicant's employees live in R3 zones.
3. **Geographic Area:** whether the applicant serves a high-need R3 zone.
4. **Community Involvement:** how the applicant's program design embraces solutions that incorporate the knowledge and perspectives of local community stakeholders.
5. **Restorative Justice:** how the applicant and the proposed program both reflect and promote the value of restorative justice.

A subcommittee of board members conducted an equity scan to determine if the R3 program had successfully met its goals of prioritizing locally-based, restorative organizations for funding. In January 2021, the R3 Board voted to approve $31.5 million to 80 organizations and 120 partners. These grants will fund a variety of innovative and evidence-based programs. Funded programs will be subject to a full evaluation process, including grant and process monitoring, an in-depth impact evaluation for selected grantees, and evaluation of the program's impact on the community level.

The McCormick Foundation Executive Fellows on Childhood Trauma with Lieutenant Governor Stratton and the Erikson Institute: The JEO Initiative has prioritized trauma-informed and early childhood research and programs to address the needs of children with parents who are incarcerated and apply such trauma-informed approaches to justice system responses and processes. The JEO Initiative partnered with the Erikson Institute, one of the country's foremost child development research institutions, to customize programs to research and understand how childhood trauma influences justice involvement and life outcomes. In January 2020, the first cohort of 23 cross-sector leaders formed and began their work to advance equity-focused programs and policies that use a trauma and racial equity-informed lens. Inaugural cohort members identified projects that range from trauma training for Chicago Police Department detectives, to developing a peace academy aimed at breaking the cycle of street violence, housing insecurity and other issues impacting child welfare.

Lieutenant Governor Stratton with the inaugrual *The McCormick Foundation Executive Fellows on Childhood Trauma* (in partnership with Erikson Institute).

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Criminal Justice Legislation: In January 2020, Governor Pritzker and Lieutenant Governor Stratton announced the administration's criminal justice priorities, including an end to cash bail. Under the leadership of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus (ILBC), a broad Criminal Justice package (HB 3653) which included provisions for police accountability, police training policies, removing barriers for victim compensation, ending prison gerrymandering, and making Illinois the first state to end cash bail, passed the General Assembly on January 12, 2021. Governor Pritzker signed this bill into law on February 22, 2021.

Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force: State Representative Delia Ramirez, in partnership with the JEO Initiative and Cabrini Green Legal Aid, led the Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force, which was established by legislative statute to develop recommendations that will improve outcomes for children of incarcerated parents. The Task Force's findings were announced at an event in January 2021. Key recommendations include ensuring family visitation options at all detention facilities statewide, involving youth in the development of training for law enforcement, and creating a standing commission to coordinate work on these issues.

Violence Prevention: The JEO Initiative has been working with various state agencies to develop violence prevention strategies. This work includes supporting ICJIA's development of a statewide violence prevention plan and the Illinois Department of Public Health's (IDPH) violence prevention task force to conceptualize a robust public health approach to violence prevention.

Health Equity Working Group: The JEO Initiative facilitated the creation of the Health Equity Working Group which convened 25 healthcare professionals from across Illinois to explore low- or no-cost solutions, points of synergy, and opportunities for collaboration that can improve health outcomes for Black and Latinx communities that have been hit the hardest by this global pandemic.

Racial Equity Training: The JEO Initiative co-hosted a racial equity training for senior-level leaders within Chicago, Cook County, and Illinois government. The training, which included a panel featuring Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, and Lieutenant Governor Stratton, provided attendees with the tools and resources needed to create racial equity plans for their teams.

Walk. Listen. Learn. Our Journey to Justice Podcast: In October 2020, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, launched a podcast series entitled "Walk. Listen. Learn: Our Journey to Justice". The intent of the podcast series is to bring awareness to topics critical to justice reform. There are 13 episodes and each one offers an introduction to various aspects of justice. The Lt. Governor had one-on-one conversations with subject matter experts so every Illinoisan has access to information that will better equip them to understand and advocate for equity, inclusion, and opportunity. The podcast series can be found at: https://anchor.fm/ltgovstratton.

Lieutenant Governor Stratton discusses jobs and economic opportunity for re-entry with Cheryl Parks, the Executive Director of Jobs Partnership Peoria, and Mila Brown, Administrative Assistant of Jobs Partnership Peoria during an episode of "Walk. Listen. Learn. Our Journey to Justice" podcast.

Goal #2: Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.

Illinois Mental Health Summit: The Illinois Supreme Court's Mental Health Task Force partnered with the JEO Initiative and the National Center for State Courts to host a mental health summit to improve court and community responses towards individuals with mental illness. Convened by Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Anne Burke, the summit offered five sessions in September and October focused on compassion and hope in diversion.

Goal #3: Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities.

COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Donations: At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the JEO Initiative coordinated the donation of over 100,000 pieces of PPE from the Reform Alliance, designer Barbara Bates, and apparel company Pair of Thieves. The PPE was distributed to IDOC facilities and the Cook County Jail.

John Howard Association (JHA) Prison Monitoring: In November 2020, the JEO Initiative began facilitating discussions between IDOC and JHA to increase information sharing. Due to COVID-19 outbreaks in some of the IDOC facilities, the JHA prison monitoring team was disallowed inside of the prisons because of health risk factors. JHA monitors state prisons and publicly reports its findings and recommendations. Some of that work includes conducting onsite prison monitoring visits, conducting interviews, surveying thousands of people who are incarcerated in Illinois and staff who work inside the prisons in order to gather their thoughts, concerns, perceptions and experiences. The discussions have provided options for transparency, accountability and an avenue to resume in-person prison monitoring once conditions are safe enough to do so.

Illinois becomes the first state in the nation to provide pretrial detainees with the right to vote. Voters in Cook County Jail were able to cast their ballots in-person, access same-day registration, and polls monitored by registered poll watchers.

Voting in Jails: In 2019, alongside advocates throughout the state of Illinois, the JEO Initiative helped to champion the passage of HB 2090, historic legislation which requires jails to facilitate access to the ballot so people being detained in jails can vote in elections. On March 7th, 2020 history was made in Illinois as Cook County Jail became the first jail facility in the nation to establish an on-site polling place so that people being detained pretrial can vote.

As people are released from the IDOC, the legislation also requires that individuals being released within 30 days receive a voter registration form and information on their voting rights. In September 2020, the JEO Initiative and Chicago Votes hosted a virtual panel with advocates and sheriffs from around the state to discuss implementation of the law.

Governor Pritzker, Lieutenant Governor Stratton, and Director Mueller announce the 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model that will transition youth in our juvenile justice system to smaller, community-based centers over the next four years.

The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model: The JEO Initiative, in partnership with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) and the Governor's Office, created a new model of juvenile justice. It is designed to reduce the harm of incarceration for youth committed to IDJJ, which are disproportionately Black and Brown youth. The JEO Initiative and IDJJ partnered to host roundtable discussions with formerly justice-involved youth and their families to better understand how IDJJ can improve their experiences and engage with families. Community voices advocated for closer, more family centric facilities that have programs connecting them with resources and organizations in the communities youth will return to post-release. The 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model seeks to accomplish that and more. Seventy-five percent of the youth will have access to frequent family visits through the new model which looks to bring love and compassion into policymaking and program delivery to some of our most vulnerable children.

Lieutenant Governor Stratton stands with Director of the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative, Yaacov Delaney, who will continue the work to transform the justice system within the State of Illinois.

Goal #4: Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

State ID Pilot Program: Successful reentry includes the ability to possess state identification which increases the likelihood that formerly incarcerated people can gain employment, find safe and supportive housing, and access social services. Research indicates that effective reentry also reduces the rate at which individuals are reincarcerated. With this knowledge, the JEO Initiative, in partnership with the Office of First Lady MK Pritzker, the Illinois Secretary of State (SOS), and the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), launched a pilot program to support successful re-entry. The program arranges for State ID's to be provided to people who are being released from IDOC facilities.

This pilot includes coordination between the IDOC, SOS, IDPH and local county clerk offices' department of vital records, and the Social Security Administration in an effort to drastically improve the chances of successful reentry by addressing a barrier that impacts thousands of people who are released from IDOC annually in need of a State ID.

Restorative Justice Pilot: Restorative conference sessions have been recognized as immensely healing for the person harmed, their loved ones, as well as for those that caused the harm. This realization led the JEO Initiative to work with stakeholders, identifying ways to increase restorative justice (RJ) options for crime survivors as well as those who caused the harm.

In partnership with the Illinois Prisoner Review Board (PRB), IDOC and community-based RJ practitioners, the JEO Initiative designed a RJ pilot program. The program will include healing conference sessions, where crime survivors are able to initiate a facilitated conversation with the person who caused the harm. The program will also include an apology letter bank that will allow an incarcerated person to write a letter of apology to their victim. The Restorative Justice Pilot aims to address personal and systemic trauma by restoring balance to the primary stakeholders and communities that have been impacted.

Reentry Housing Pilot: The JEO Initiative worked in partnership with the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) and IDOC to launch the pilot for a permanent housing support program for people being released from prison. IHDA entered into funding agreements with four local administering agencies (LAA) for a total of $3 million dollars. These funds were allocated to support housing placement and ongoing rental subsidies for eligible participants, including seniors and those with disabilities, who are specifically referred by IDOC's new Re-entry Division.

College Savings Program for Children of Formerly Incarcerated Parents: Research suggests that children are three times more likely to pursue higher education if they have a college savings account, no matter what the amount. However, many formerly incarcerated people and their families don't have the information they need to start a college saving account.

This insight led the JEO Initiative to collaborate with the Office of Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs. Focus groups were convened and group members, in turn, connected the JEO Initiative to five organizations that will participate in a pilot program that enrolls children of formerly incarcerated people into Bright Start, the state's college savings program. The organizations are located in

Safer Foundation/TASC Reentry Housing Pilot: The JEO Initiative participated in the design and implementation of a Reentry Housing Pilot. Launched in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the help of philanthropy, and overseen by Safer Foundation and TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities), the pilot is designed to provide rental assistance and supportive services to recently released persons who experience a disruption in their home site.

Hunt Institute: Inspired by the Walk, Listen and Learn: Our Journey to Justice podcast, the JEO Initiative partnered with Hunt Institute to facilitate a webinar to discuss the patterns, stereotypes, and systemic restraint of resources that contribute to the marginalization of Black women and girls in education. The conversation focused on preschool expulsions, mental health stressors, and more with information and expertise supplied by stakeholders from the University of Illinois, the National Alliance on Mental Illness Chicago, and the Education Trust.

2022 Projected Deliverables

The JEO Initiative will work towards the following deliverables in the 2022 fiscal year:

I. Goal #1: Address the Social Determinants of Crime and Incarceration

- **Restore, Reinvest and Renew (R3) Program:** The JEO Initiative, in conjunction with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), will continue to equitably implement the R3 program and prepare for the release of the second Notice of Funding Opportunity. This will include continued outreach efforts and engaging community-based organizations that may need technical assistance to apply for the funding. The JEO Initiative will also facilitate the evaluation process for the program for recent awardees, as well as provide ongoing technical assistance and learning opportunities for current and new grantees and applicants.

- **Violence Prevention:** The JEO Initiative will work with legislators, state agencies and philanthropy to ensure violence prevention funds continue to be distributed equitably and effectively.

- **Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice 21st Century Transformation Model:** The JEO Initiative will collaborate with IDJJ, the Civic Consulting Alliance, and Chapin Hall to support the implementation of the 21st Century Transformation Model, particularly opportunities for continued community input and ongoing evaluation of the model's success.

- **Advancing Children of Incarcerated Parents Policy:** The JEO Initiative will work with members of the Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force to implement directives and recommendations.

- **Advancing Policy for Non-Binary People and Trans Women:** The JEO Initiative will continue to work with stakeholders to develop policy and program solutions for a range of issues affecting trans and non-binary people of color.

- **Health Equity Working Group:** The JEO Initiative will implement the recommendations of the Health Equity Working Group, prioritizing access to mental health care and ending the opioid epidemic.

II. Goal #2: Improve Equitable Deflection and Diversion Opportunities from the Justice System

- **Advising on Juvenile Detention Policy:** The JEO Initiative will continue to collaborate with Mayor Lightfoot's office and other stakeholders to reimagine the city's approach to juvenile crime and recidivism.

- **Advising on Opioid Overdose Prevention and Recovery:** The JEO Initiative collaborated to address deflection/pre-arrest and diversion program implementation barriers in order to increase capacity of these programs statewide and ensure that justice-involved people and their loved ones receive naloxone and naloxone training.

III. Goal #3: Improve Conditions and Address the Needs of Vulnerable Populations in Correctional Facilities

- **Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project:** The JEO Initiative will work in collaboration with IDOC and the Prison and Neighborhood Arts Project's (PNAP) Think Tank members to ensure inclusivity of incarcerated people's voices in rehabilitative programming efforts.

- **Workforce Development and Trauma-Informed Education:** The JEO Initiative will work in collaboration with stakeholders and IDOC to incorporate workforce development and trauma-informed educational programming for people who are incarcerated.

- **John Howard Association Prison Monitoring:** The JEO Initiative will continue to work in partnership with IDOC and John Howard Association to ensure transparency and accountability in the information sharing process.

IV. Goal #4: Support Positive Reentry Outcomes to Reduce Recidivism

- **State ID Program:** The JEO Initiative will continue to work in partnership with First Lady MK Pritzker's office, the SOS and IDOC to ensure that State Identification is provided to people being released from all IDOC facilities.

- **College Savings Pilot Program:** In partnership with Treasurer Frerich's office, the JEO Initiative will expand the number of organizations participating in the college savings pilot program.

- **Restorative Justice Alternatives:** The JEO Initiative will continue to work with the PRB to develop restorative justice options for individuals who are returning to their communities from IDOC and seek to repair harm that was caused.

- **Developing Reentry Housing Recommendations:** The JEO Initiative will continue to explore opportunities to expand reentry housing, particularly for women and individuals with extensive mental health needs.

- **Parole Reform:** The JEO Initiative will work closely with IDOC and PRB to implement recommendations from the Council on State Governments about reform to the state's parole system.

- **Illinois Reentry Council:** The JEO Initiative will continue to work in collaboration with the stakeholders of the newly formed Illinois Reentry Council to create an equitable and effective process for people leaving prisons and jails to support productive returns back to their communities.

Conclusion:

The aforementioned goals and deliverables reflect the Pritzker-Stratton Administration's holistic and restorative approach to justice reform. Justice is not possible without equity and access to opportunity and the work to build stronger, healthier communities will help keep more people out of the system in the first place. We will continue to do our part to combat systemic racism and transform our justice system to better reflect the values of the people of Illinois.

The JEO Initiative thanks staff from the Office of the Governor, as well as members of the Illinois General Assembly, agency heads and community stakeholders for their commitment to the state's communities and a more equitable and just future.

Lieutenant Governor Stratton commemorates the 100th year anniversary of the 1919 Chicago's Race Riot as known as the Red Summer.

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois
6/21 web IOCI21-0746