

YAVAPAI COUNTY
CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2027

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Justice Management Institute (JMI) extends its sincere appreciation to the Yavapai County CJCC members and justice system stakeholders whose contributions were instrumental in developing this strategic plan. Their expertise, dedication, and collaboration—through data sharing, participation in strategic planning workgroups, stakeholder focus groups, community surveys, and the strategic planning retreat—helped shape the direction of this plan.

Their dedication to collaboration and system improvement reflects a shared commitment to making Yavapai County’s justice system more effective, fair, and responsive to community needs. The initiatives outlined in this strategic plan will strengthen partnerships, improve policies, and enhance public trust, creating a safer and more just community for all.



1. INTRODUCTION

Yavapai County, Arizona, is a growing and dynamic region known for its historic communities, natural beauty, and strong civic engagement. With a population projected to reach 254,849 by 2025 and a steady annual growth rate, the county faces both opportunities and challenges in maintaining a justice system that is fair, efficient, and responsive to community needs. As the county continues to evolve, so too must its approach to public safety and criminal justice.

The Yavapai County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring that justice policies are informed, collaborative, and data driven. Comprised of key leaders from law enforcement, the courts, prosecution, defense, probation, municipal and county governments, and community, the CJCC serves as a forum for cross-agency coordination and strategic planning. By bringing together diverse perspectives, the council identifies challenges, evaluates policies and programs, and implements solutions that improve system performance and enhance public safety.

This 2025-2027 Strategic Plan represents the collective efforts of CJCC members and stakeholders to define priorities and establish a roadmap for justice system improvements. It outlines a series of evidence-based initiatives designed to:

- Strengthen CJCC operations to enhance collaboration and decision-making.
- Improve the use of data and technology to inform justice policies and enhance transparency.
- Support limited jurisdiction courts in streamlining case management and resource utilization.
- Enhance criminal case processing to reduce delays and improve efficiency.
- Reduce recidivism through expanded diversion programs and supportive services.

Developed through an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process, this plan reflects a shared commitment to public safety, fairness, and accountability. It is not just a document—it is a call to action for all those dedicated to ensuring a responsive, effective, and community-centered justice system in Yavapai County.

The following sections detail the CJCC’s structure, priorities, and strategies for achieving these goals over the next three years.

2. THE YAVAPAI COUNTY CJCC

The Yavapai County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) serves as a collaborative body that brings together key stakeholders from across the justice system to improve public safety, enhance coordination, and address systemic challenges in Yavapai County. By fostering communication among law enforcement, the courts, corrections, public defenders, prosecutors, and community, the CJCC ensures that justice policies and practices are efficient, evidence-based, and responsive to the needs of the community. Although the CJCC does not have the authority to mandate changes, it plays a vital role in reviewing policies, programs, and data to make informed recommendations that promote safety, fairness, reduce inefficiencies, and strengthen public trust in the justice system. Through data-driven decision-making and a commitment to transparency, the CJCC helps create a more effective and accountable criminal justice system for Yavapai County.

Vision

A cost-effective criminal justice system that serves our community with excellence, prioritizing public safety and justice while upholding fairness and trust.

Mission

The mission of the Yavapai County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is to heighten public safety through effective partnerships and collaborative efforts, advocating for systemic improvements and advancing data-driven initiatives that ensure effective services, justice and accountability.



Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the CJCC are to enhance the safety and security of Yavapai County by:

- **Upholding Law and Order:** Strengthening the understanding and enforcement of laws to ensure justice and maintain public order.
- **Enhancing Operational Efficiency:** Optimizing criminal justice processes to ensure operations are cost effective and that justice is consistently achieved.
- **Facilitating Effective Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships among law enforcement, courts, prosecution, defense, probation, and community organizations to create a cohesive approach while respecting the autonomy of each entity.
- **Driving Evidence-based Practices:** Implementing strategies and practices proven by research to effectively reduce crime rates and recidivism.
- **Promoting Accountability and Transparency:** Upholding high standards of transparency and accountability in all facets of the criminal justice system to elevate public trust and confidence.
- **Reporting and Evaluation:** Providing reviews of criminal justice policies and programs to determine their effectiveness and impact, thereby informing future decision-making and policy development.

3. CJCC MEMBERS

The Yavapai County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is composed of 20 designated voting members who represent a diverse coalition of justice system leaders, county and municipal officials, and community stakeholders. These members work collaboratively to enhance public safety, improve system efficiency, and promote fairness in the administration of justice across Yavapai County.

While the CJCC's voting members are responsible for shaping policy recommendations and strategic initiatives, the council also welcomes participation from non-voting partners and community stakeholders who share a commitment to strengthening local justice policies and practices.

CJCC Leadership

Guiding the council's work is a dedicated leadership team, including Co-Chairs, who provide strategic direction:

- **The Honorable Krista Carman**, Criminal Presiding Judge of Superior Court
- **Maury Thompson**, Yavapai County Manager

Supporting the Co-Chairs is the Steering Committee, a group of high-level officials tasked with ensuring the CJCC remains focused on its priorities and strategic initiatives. Members include:

- **Kennedy Klagge**, Yavapai County Public Defender
- **Dennis McGrane**, Yavapai County Attorney
- **David Rhodes**, Yavapai County Sheriff
- **The Honorable Anna Young**, Presiding Juvenile Court Judge of Superior Court



CJCC Voting Members

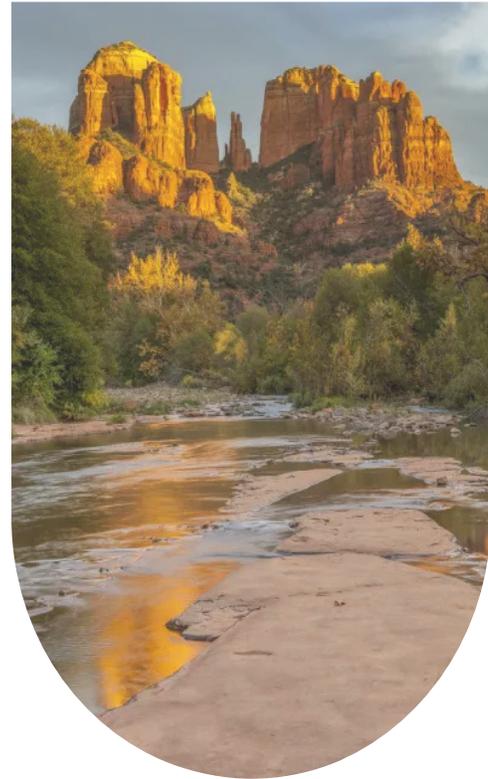
Beyond the leadership team, the CJCC includes a broad and balanced representation of the local justice system, with members from law enforcement, the courts, probation, defense, and the community:

- **Amy Bonney**, Police Chief (Prescott)
- **The Honorable Joan Dwyer**, A Municipal Court Judge (Chino Valley)
- **Rolf Eckel**, Superior Court Administrator
- **The Honorable David Gordon**, Justice Court Judge (Verde Valley)
- **Marlo Johnson**, Community Representative
- **Brent Kimbriel**, Sheriff's Office Jail Commander
- **Mary Mallory**, Yavapai County Board of Supervisors Chair
- **Donna McQuality**, Clerk of Superior Court
- **Tara Newman**, Director of Juvenile Court Services
- **Kell Palguta**, Mayor (Prescott Valley)
- **Bryan Prieto**, Chief Adult Probation Officer
- **Michael Shaw**, Defense Attorney
- **Beya Thayer**, Behavioral Health (Sheriff's Office)
- Vacant, Tribal Community Representative

4. PLANNING PROCESS

Yavapai County partnered with the Justice Management Institute (JMI) to facilitate the development of a strategic plan designed to be both practical and results driven. This process aimed to establish a clear direction for the CJCC’s work while aligning with its broader mission and vision. The key objectives included:

- Identifying priority areas that would guide the CJCC’s focus over the next several years.
- Developing strategic initiatives with short-, medium-, and long-term goals tailored for each priority area.
- Creating a structured action plan to ensure effective implementation of these strategies.



The process unfolded over several months and was structured to gather diverse perspectives from criminal justice stakeholders. It included stakeholder interviews, a web-based survey, focus groups, and a half-day strategic retreat for CJCC members. Additionally, workgroups of local subject matter experts were established to refine and develop strategies for each priority area.

Through this collaborative approach, the CJCC identified five priority areas that will shape its efforts moving forward. For each priority area, the council defined a goal, measurable objectives, and actionable steps (or tactics) to serve as benchmarks for progress.

The following section outlines the CJCC’s priority areas, goals, objectives, and tactics for the next several years.

5. PRIORITY AREAS & GOALS

CJCC Operations

To establish a structured and collaborative CJCC framework that drives systemic improvements, ensures stakeholder engagement, and enhances justice system outcomes in Yavapai County.

Data and Information Technology

To modernize and integrate data systems to improve transparency, enhance cross-agency collaboration, and support evidence-based decision-making in the justice system.

Limited Jurisdiction Courts

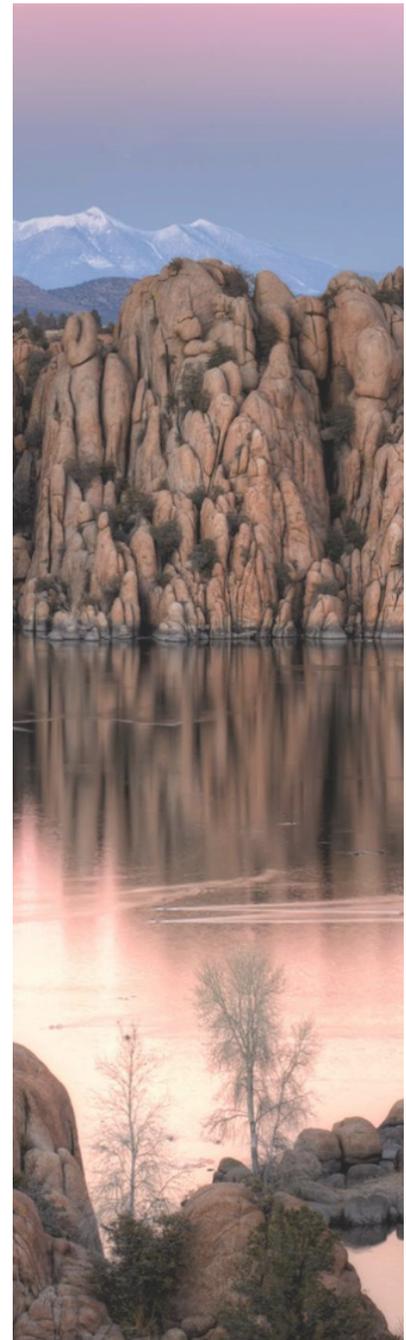
To optimize the performance of Limited Jurisdiction Courts by implementing coordinated, evidence-based initiatives and standardized procedures that streamline case management and improve resource utilization.

Criminal Case Processing

To reduce case backlog and improve case resolution times by implementing standardized court procedures, strengthening pretrial services, and enhancing judicial efficiency.

Recidivism Reduction

To reduce repeat offenses and improve public safety by expanding diversion programs, increasing access to supportive services, and strengthening pretrial and reentry initiatives.



Priority #1: CJCC Operations

Goal: To establish a structured and collaborative CJCC framework that drives systemic improvements, ensures stakeholder engagement, and enhances justice system outcomes in Yavapai County.

Objectives and Tactics:

1. Establish and maintain a dedicate CJCC staff structure

- Hire a full-time CJCC Director with clear responsibilities and performance benchmarks
- Develop a detailed work plan outlining the Director’s priorities for the first year
- Conduct annual performance evaluations tied to strategic plan progress

2. Form CJCC Steering Committee and other committees

- Form a CJCC Steering Committee with defined roles and oversight responsibilities
- Establish subcommittees with charters detailing objectives and responsibilities
- Define specific initiatives for each committee and set clear deliverables

3. Enhance engagement and participation in CJCC activities

- Hold structured, outcome-driven meetings at least every two months
- Implement an onboarding process for new members to ensure continuity and engagement
- Integrate data-driven decision-making into all CJCC discussions and initiatives

4. Advance strategic planning efforts and performance tracking

- Develop and track key performance indicators for CJCC initiatives
- Publish an annual progress report detailing accomplishments and challenges
- Conduct an annual review and revision of the strategic plan to reflect progress and new priorities

5. Conduct community outreach

- Develop and implement a CJCC communications plan, including public information strategies
- Hold at least two community engagement forums annually to present data and gather feedback
- Maintain an up-to-date CJCC website with key documents, meeting minutes, and performance updates

Priority #2: Data and Information Technology

Goal: To modernize and integrate data systems to improve transparency, enhance cross-agency collaboration, and support evidence-based decision-making in the justice system.

Objectives & Tactics:

1. Enhance Justice system data collection and analysis

- Identify and define key performance indicators, data sources, and collection methods
- Implement a systematic process for gathering, analyzing, and validating key data
- Publish biannual reports on key justice system metrics for CJCC and the public

2. Improve digital evidence management through AI-powered redaction

- Research AI redaction software options and vendors
- Conduct cost-benefit analysis and identify potential case processing impacts
- Secure funding and finalize vendor selection
- Develop comprehensive policies, cybersecurity measures, and implementation guidelines

3. Expand and integrate justice agency data dashboards

- Conduct an inventory of existing dashboards and assess usability gaps
- Create a centralized online hub for accessing public-facing justice data
- Determine opportunities to expand use of data dashboards to manage justice system operations
- Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a dedicated data science position for justice agencies

4. Explore the creation of Real Time Operations Center (RTOC)

- Establish a multi-agency workgroup to study feasibility and benefits
- Conduct research and prepare a cost-impact analysis of RTOC components
- Develop a detailed RTOC proposal, including stakeholder agreements and funding strategies

Priority #3: Limited Jurisdiction Courts

Goal: To optimize the performance of Limited Jurisdiction Courts by implementing coordinated, evidence-based initiatives and standardized procedures that streamline case management and improve resource utilization.

Objectives and Tactics:

1. Produce and disseminate active inmate list for LJs and public defenders

- Create inmate list template and establish reporting and dissemination schedule to various courts
- Ensure weekly distribution of pretrial inmate lists to relevant courts and public defenders

2. Conduct warrant resolution and social services engagement event

- Create parameters for warrant resolutions and identify community social services partners for event
- Conduct targeted outreach and media engagement to encourage participation
- Host warrant resolution and social services event(s) and track impact on warrant-related detentions

3. Implement centralized in-custody initial appearance and bond review hearings

- Form a workgroup to study the creation of a centralized in-custody initial appearance court
- Produce a report that outlines the advantages and disadvantages of centralized in-custody initial appearance court, including best practices from other jurisdictions
- Propose a model for a centralized initial appearance court for the CJCC and key stakeholders to consider for implementation

4. Improve remote court access and technology integration

- Determine opportunities to expand and enhance remote hearings and review current practices by LJs
- Identify potential barriers to expanding remote hearings and determine technology needs

- Create a uniform LJC docket calendar that specifies days for video or telephonic hearings to reduce overlap of remote dockets and attorney conflicts

5. Develop local operational guidelines and standardized forms for LJC operations

- Form a workgroup of LJC judges, staff, and justice stakeholders to develop local guidelines
- Draft local guidelines and expectations for conducting court business, including when judicial discretion should be prioritized
- Establish calendar guidelines for law and motion hearings in the LJCs
- Compile inventory of current LJC forms and standardize when appropriate
- Create and implement training/onboarding curriculum for judicial officers and attorneys
- Establish quality assurance data metrics for tracking effectiveness of implemented guidelines

Priority #4: Criminal Case Processing

Goal: To reduce case backlog and improve case resolution times by implementing standardized court procedures, strengthening pretrial services, and enhancing judicial efficiency.

Objectives & Tactics:

1. Improve Early Disposition Court (EDC) process

- Form workgroup under the Criminal Case Processing Committee to review EDC operations
- Collect and analyze data on current EDC processes to determine strengths and opportunities
- Review EDC eligibility criteria and establish policies to improve court operations, including limiting continuances and utilizing space better at the Yavapai County Criminal Justice Center (CJC)
- Create EDC manual and disseminate to judges, court attorneys, and jail officials; provide training
- Conduct follow-up review of data regularly to analyze impact of policy changes and overall performance of EDC

2. Strengthen criminal case management and time standards compliance

- Adopt criminal case processing time standards in alignment with the Administrative Office of the Courts
- Develop and provide training on time standards for judges, attorneys, court staff, clerk's office, and other stakeholders
- Produce data on compliance with case processing time standards and a list of cases exceeding standards; establish review team to monitor backlog cases
- Create and/or revise local court rules for criminal case processing to ensure compliance with time standards

3. Establish a Legal Defender's Office

- Conduct cost benefit analysis on forming a Legal Defender's Office
- Identify funding opportunities for Legal Defender's Office and produce projected three-year budget
- Formalize plan and gather local support for implementation

4. Conduct a thorough review of the Rule 11 process to improve resolution of cases that involve questions of competency

- Form a workgroup to analyze the processing of Rule 11 cases using quantitative and qualitative data
- Examine processes used by other jurisdictions around the state to address Rule 11 cases
- Assess the extent of community-based resource engagement in supporting Rule 11 cases and identify gaps for improvement
- Develop recommendations for improving the Rule 11 process and present to CJCC for consideration

5. Enhance pretrial services and risk-based release decisions

- Establish a dedicated pretrial services program
- Create a meaningful pretrial investigation report for initial appearance hearings that includes a validated risk assessment
- Implement a pretrial supervision model that reduces failures to appear and new criminal activity
- Provide training on pretrial release to justice system stakeholders

Priority #5: Recidivism Reduction

Goal: To reduce repeat offenses and improve public safety by expanding diversion programs, increasing access to supportive services, and strengthening pretrial and reentry initiatives.

Objectives and Tactics:

1. Establish a domestic violence fatality review team

- Create a leadership team, identify individuals to serve on review team, and form review team
- Gather information for a case study and hold review team meeting to perform in-depth analysis
- Produce written summary of review team findings and recommendations

2. Enhance pre-arrest deflection options

- Reestablish Pre-Arrest Deflection Database and provide training to law enforcement agencies
- Gather and analyze data to identify service needs and deflection opportunities
- Develop a comprehensive deflection action plan, including eligibility criteria and service provider partnerships
- Identify and secure funding for deflection action plan

3. Strengthen and expand post-arrest diversion and alternative programs, including specialty courts

- Create inventory of post-arrest diversion and alternative programs
- Review and assess inventory to identify gaps and opportunities, including ways to make programs more accessible
- Develop a countywide diversion action plan that enhances existing programs and introduces new models
- Seek funding for implementation of the diversion action plan

4. Explore innovative solutions for defendants or clients who frequently recidivate

- Form a multi-agency workgroup consisting of local government and service providers
- Identify top [20-30] recidivists and analyze data trends to understand their risks and needs
- Conduct focus groups with target population, their families, community members, and service providers to gather qualitative insights
- Develop a strategic report that outlines best practices and recommendations for targeted interventions

APPENDIX: STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

2025-2027 CJCC Strategies

Priority Area	CJCC Operations	Data & Information Technology	Limited Jurisdiction Court (LJC) Operations	Case Processing	Recidivism Reduction
Goal	To establish a structured and collaborative CJCC framework that drives systemic improvements, ensures stakeholder engagement, and enhances justice system outcomes in Yavapai County	To modernize and integrate data systems to improve transparency, enhance cross-agency collaboration, and support evidence-based decision-making in the justice system	To optimize the performance of Limited Jurisdiction Courts by implementing coordinated, evidence-based initiatives and standardized procedures that streamline case management and improve resource utilization	To reduce case backlog and improve case resolution times by implementing standardized court procedures, strengthening pretrial services, and enhancing judicial efficiency	To reduce repeat offenses and improve public safety by expanding diversion programs, increasing access to supportive services, and strengthening pretrial and reentry initiatives
Objective #1	Establish and maintain a dedicated CJCC staff structure	Enhance justice system data collection and analysis	Produce and disseminate active inmate list for LJs and public defenders	Improve Early Disposition Court (EDC) processes	Establish a domestic violence fatality review team
Objective #2	Form CJCC steering committee and other committees	Improve digital evidence management through AI-powered redaction	Conduct warrant resolution and social services engagement event	Strengthen criminal case management and time standards compliance	Enhance pre-arrest deflection options
Objective #3	Enhance engagement and participation in CJCC activities	Expand and integrate justice agency data dashboards	Implement centralized in-custody initial appearance and bond review hearings	Establish a Legal Defender's Office	Strengthen and expand post-arrest diversion and alternative programs, including specialty courts
Objective #4	Advance strategic planning efforts and performance tracking	Explore the creation of a Real-Time Operations Center (RTOC)	Improve remote court access and technology integration	Conduct a thorough review of the Rule 11 process to improve resolution of cases that involve questions of competency	Explore innovative solutions for defendants or clients who frequently recidivate
Objective #5	Conduct community outreach		Develop local operational guidelines and standardized forms for LJC operations	Enhance pretrial services and risk-based release decisions	