Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Measuring for Results in Pretrial Services

Performance and Outcome Measures

PROJECT STAFF

Tara L. Kunkel, MSW Michelle T. White, MPA

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Pretrial Quality Assurance Committee

Steve Austin Kristina Bryant Ross Carew Bettina Coghill Douglas Coppin Jennifer Dennis Desha Hall-Winstead Angela Hamilton Nicole Loving Jen MacArthur Jeffrey McGarry Cynthia Plummer Robin Poore John Sinclair Pat Smith Tomaudrie Thomas Debbie Walker Andy Warriner Amanda Wimberley

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

Laurel Marks Paula Harpster Rebecca McNees Kenneth Rose

National Subject Matter Experts

Spurgeon Kennedy, Director, Office of Strategic Development Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia

Michael Jones, Senior Project Associate *Pretrial Justice Institute*

Barbara Hankey, Manager Oakland County, Michigan Community Corrections

Katie Green, Correctional Program Specialist *National Institute of Corrections*

Lori Eville, Correctional Program Specialist National Institute of Corrections

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Introduction

Pretrial Services programs in Virginia were initially created at the local level and formally recognized in 1989, pursuant to authorizing language in the Appropriations Act. In 1995, Pretrial Services were authorized by statute with the passage of the Pretrial Services Act (PSA, §19.2-152.2 COV). The Pretrial Services Act was enacted with the purpose of providing more effective protection of society by establishing pretrial services agencies to assist judicial officers in discharging their duties related to determining pretrial release and detention. The Act states that "such agencies are intended to provide better information and services for use by judicial officers in determining the risk to public safety and the assurance of appearance of persons ... [for those charged with an offense] other than an offense punishable by death, who are pending trial or hearing."

The duties and responsibilities of pretrial services agencies are detailed in *Virginia Code* § 19.2-152.4:3 - Duties and responsibilities of local pretrial services officers. In order to assist judicial officers in discharging their duties related to determining release or detention for pretrial defendants, pretrial services officers are required to provide the following primary services:

- 1. Investigate and interview defendants arrested on state and local warrants and who are detained in jails located in jurisdictions served by the agency while awaiting a hearing before any court that is considering or reconsidering pretrial release, at initial appearance, advisement or arraignment, or at other subsequent hearings;
- 2. Present a pretrial investigation report with recommendations to assist courts in discharging their duties related to granting or reconsidering pretrial release; and
- 3. Supervise and assist all defendants residing within the jurisdictions served and placed on pretrial supervision by any judicial officer within the jurisdictions to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of pretrial release.

There are currently 31 pretrial services agencies serving 97 of Virginia's 133 cities and counties. All Virginia pretrial services agencies operate under the authority of the Pretrial Services Act and are funded in whole or part with appropriated State General Funds administered by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement has come to be considered an essential activity in many government and non-profit agencies because it "...has a common sense logic that is irrefutable, namely that agencies have a greater probability of achieving their goals and objectives if they use performance measures to monitor their progress along these lines and then take follow-up actions as necessary to ensure success" (Poister, 2003). Effectively designed and implemented performance measurement systems provide tools for managers to exercise and maintain control over their organizations, as well as a mechanism for governing bodies and funding agencies to hold organizations accountable for producing the intended results. The argument for measuring the performance of pretrial agencies is compelling because they must compete with other priorities of the criminal justice system for a finite amount of resources. This makes it incumbent upon pretrial agencies to demonstrate that the limited resources provided to them are used efficiently and that this expenditure of resources produces the desired outcomes in defendants and the system as a whole. Performance measurement is distinct from program evaluation. Performance measures provide timely information about key aspects of the performance of pretrial agencies to program directors and staff, enabling them to identify effective practices and, if warranted, to take corrective actions.

Development of Pretrial Performance Measures in Virginia

In August 2011, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) released a publication entitled *Measuring What Matters: Outcome and Performance Measures for the Pretrial Services Field.* The document contains recommended outcome and performance measures as well as mission-critical data that pretrial services programs can use to more accurately gauge their program's effectiveness. The document broadly defines each measure and identifies the data needed to track the measure. It was hoped that programs throughout the nation would use the document to develop state-specific or locality-specific measures that address the needs of their local pretrial agencies and criminal justice system.

The *Measuring What Matters* document, as well as the national standards for pretrial promulgated by the American Bar Association (ABA)¹ and the National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies (NAPSA)², serve as the foundation for Virginia's pretrial performance measures. The national standards support:

- Policies and procedures that support the presumption of release under the least restrictive conditions needed to address appearance and public safety concerns;
- Interviews of all detainees eligible for release consideration that are structured to obtain the information needed to determine risk of nonappearance and re-arrest and to exercise effective supervision;
- Risk assessment tools that are based on locally researched content and applied equally and fairly;
- Recommendations for supervision conditions that match the defendant's individual risk level and specific risks of pretrial misconduct;
- Monitoring of defendants' compliance with release conditions and court appearance requirements;
- Graduated responses to defendants' compliance and noncompliance;
- Tracking of new arrests occurring during supervision;
- Court notification of program condition violations and new arrests;
- Timely notice to court of infractions and responses; and
- Monitoring of the pretrial detainee population and revisiting release recommendations if defendants remain detained or if circumstances change.

¹ American Bar Association, Criminal Justice Standards on Pretrial Release: Third Edition (Washington, D.C.: American Bar Association, 2002).

² National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, Standards on Pretrial Release: Third Edition (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, 2004).

Mission Statement

Concurrently with the development of the Virginia Pretrial Performance Measures, the Pretrial Quality Assurance Group updated the mission of Virginia Pretrial Services which is as follows:

Virginia Pretrial Services promotes public safety and court appearance and reduces the incidence of unnecessary detention by assisting judicial officers in making objective, risk-informed decisions regarding the release of defendants pending trial and supervising conditions of bail while honoring the Constitutional, legal and equal rights of defendants.

On April 23rd and 24th, 2013, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) hosted a two day planning event to begin examining how the *Measuring What Matters* publication could serve as a springboard for developing pretrial performance measures in Virginia. A group of selected pretrial directors were in attendance as were representatives from the DCJS and the NIC. National subject matter experts facilitated the discussion. This work continued on December 6, 2013 and February 28, 2014, when a select group of pretrial professionals and National Center for State Courts staff worked together to produce a set of statewide performance measures for pretrial in Virginia. The stakeholder group (henceforth referred to as the *Pretrial Quality Assurance Group*) was diverse but representative of a variety of critical viewpoints, including line staff, supervisors and agency directors from pretrial agencies throughout Virginia as well as DCJS staff.

Eight pretrial performance measures were developed by the Pretrial Quality Assurance Group. These measures are outlined in *Table 1* below by performance category. *Outcome Measures* are an indicator of an agency's effectiveness in achieving its stated mission or intended purpose. *Process Measures* focus on key steps and components of pretrial processing. They include measures of timeliness (length-of-stay) and compliance with legal and evidence-based practices such as risk based decision-making by the staff and the court. The Pretrial Quality Assurance Group also identified two measures that cannot presently be measured without additional foundational work or significant infrastructure development. These measures are recommended for future adoption.

Outcome Measures

- 1. Pretrial Court Appearance Rate
- 2. Public Safety Rate
- 3. Success Rate

Process Measures

- 4. Investigation Rate
- 5. Recommendation Rate
- 6. Release Decision Concurrence Rate
- 7. Supervision Level Concurrence Rate
- 8. Length of Stay for Pretrial Supervision

Future Measures

Swiftness of Response to Defendant Conduct Pretrial Detention Rate

Measurement Considerations

In this section, several important considerations that determine how the performance measures are operationalized are discussed. These include:

- Supporting data infrastructure
- Use of admission and exit cohorts to organize the reporting of performance measures
- Measurement of performance measures over time

The performance measurement system described in this report requires that additional supporting infrastructure be built into the automated statewide Pretrial and Community Corrections (PTCC) case management system. *Appendix A* documents each data element needed to track the performance measures and where the data element is currently contained in PTCC.

Important decisions must be made regarding the time frames for reporting the performance measures. The NCSC recommends organizing pretrial detainees and/or pretrial defendants into admissions or exit cohorts for reporting purposes. Longitudinal and retrospective cohorts, corresponding to admissions and exit cohorts, respectively, have long been a staple of bio-medical research and more recently of sociological and criminological research. Admissions cohorts consist of a group of defendants placed on pretrial supervision or detained awaiting trial within a specific time frame. Because all members of the cohort are admitted during the same timeframe, they will be equally subject to the same set of historical influences. For example, pretrial supervision policies may change which may impact the outcomes for defendants. By using

admissions cohorts, agencies are able to link changes in the performance of different admissions cohorts to particular events.

Exit cohorts consist of all defendants on pretrial supervision whose pretrial case is closed during the same period of time. They do not provide the same level of protection against historical influence as do admissions cohorts. However, they do avoid the delays in reporting information that are associated with admissions cohorts (which must be tracked until every member of the admissions cohort exits to provide complete information). Because performance measures need to be tracked regularly and cannot wait for the entire admission cohort to exit, the use of exit cohorts is recommended for most performance measures, except where noted.

Throughout this report, reference is made to *quarterly* admissions or exit cohorts. A quarterly timeframe is proposed to adjust for pretrial agencies that are relatively small with few defendants admitted or exiting during a given period of time. Programs in this category will require a quarter to accumulate sufficient numbers of admissions and exits to be able to draw any valid inferences about their performance. Because most performance measures are reported in percentages, smaller agencies will not be penalized for a small reporting sample. While the performance measures will primarily be reported out quarterly, the performance measures must be examined over time to increase their utility and track trends.

The remainder of this document details the eight pretrial performance measures developed by the Pretrial Quality Assurance Group.

Performance Measures

1. PRETRIAL COURT APPEARANCE RATE

Definition: The percentage of defendants on pretrial supervision who attend all pretrial court appearances.

Sub-Measure 1.1

The percentage of case closures where the closure type is "failure to appear."

Sub-Measure 1.2

The percentage of scheduled court appearances attended.

Purpose: A fundamental mission of pretrial is to maximize court appearance rates for defendants under pretrial supervision. Minimizing failure to appear rates promotes the efficient administration of justice and maintains public trust in the pretrial supervision process.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial placement
- Date of pretrial closure
- Number of scheduled court appearances
- Number of court appearances attended
- Case closure type equals "FTA"
- Number of capiases issued (for failure to appear in court)

CALCULATION	NS:
Pretrial Court	= Number Pretrial Defendants Without Failure to Appear
Appearance Rate	Number of Pretrial Defendants with Scheduled Court Appearances × 100
Sub – measure	= <u>Number of Case Closure Type of Failure to Appear</u>
1.1	Number of Pretrial Case Closures × 100
Sub – measure	= <u>Total Number of Scheduled Court Appearances Attended</u>
1.2	Total Number of Scheduled Pretrial Court Appearances × 100

2. PUBLIC SAFETY RATE

Definition: The percentage of supervised defendants who are not charged with a new offense while under pretrial supervision.

In order to be considered a "new offense," the following criteria must be met: (a) the offense date occurred during the defendant's period of pretrial supervision; (b) the defendant must be taken into custody by authority of law or to be issued a ticket, summons, or warrant for a violation of criminal municipal, state or federal misdemeanor or felony crime (those coded within statute as criminal offenses).

Arrests for probation or parole violations are excluded from the public safety rate.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial placement
- Date of pretrial closure
- Incident date(s) of any charge(s) that occurred in between pretrial entry and exit dates
- Pretrial placement offense type
- Case closure type
- Offense types and severity level of new arrests that occurred in between pretrial entry and exit dates

Sub-Measure 2.1

The percentage of defendants under pretrial

supervision whose case is not closed unsuccessfully due to a new arrest while under pretrial supervision.

Sub-Measure 2.2

The percentage of defendants on pretrial supervision for domestic violence who are not arrested for a new domestic violence offense while on pretrial supervision.

Sub-Measure 2.3

The third sub-measure is the percentage of defendants on pretrial supervision who are not arrested for a violent misdemeanor or felony offense³, as defined by Virginia code, while on pretrial supervision.

Purpose: Protecting public safety is a goal of pretrial supervision and a concern for the justice system. Understanding the types of offenses committed by defendants under pretrial supervision helps an agency strengthen supervision practices and improve release decisions.

³ Violent offenses include: Murder, Manslaughter, Mob-related felonies, Kidnapping, Abduction, Malicious Wounding, Robbery, Carjacking, Arson, Assault (simple assault or assault & battery/misdemeanor or felony), Strangulation and Sex Offenses (Rape, Sexual Assault/Battery, Carnal Knowledge of a Child, Forcible Sodomy) or attempts of any offenses listed herein.

CALCULATIONS:

Рı	ıblic Safety Rate	=	Number of Pretrial Supervision Defendants without a New Offense Arrest Number of Pretrial Case Closures × 100
Su	b – measure 2.1	=	Number of Cases Closed without a New Offense Arrest Number of Pretrial Case Closures × 100
Su	b – measure 2.2	=	Number of DV Pretrial Defendants without New DV Arrest Number of DV Pretrial Case Closures × 100
Su	b – measure 2.3	=	Number of Cases Closed without New Violent Offense Arrest Number of Pretrial Case Closures × 100

3. SUCCESS RATE

Definition: The percentage of defendants under pretrial supervision who (1) are not revoked for technical violations of the conditions of their release, and (2) appear for all scheduled court appearances, and (3) are not charged with a new offense during pretrial supervision.

Sub-Measure 3.1

The percentage of cases with the closure type "successful."

Purpose: While aspects of each of the three components that comprise the Success Rate are reflected in separate performance measures, the Success Rate measure puts all three independent components together into a comprehensive measure of the overall success of pretrial supervision.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial placement
- Date of pretrial closure
- Incident date(s) of any charge(s) that occurred in between pretrial entry and exit dates
- Case closure type
- Number of scheduled court appearances
- Number of court appearances attended

CALCULATIONS	S:	
Success Rate	=	Number of Successful Defendants on Pretrial Supervision Number of Defendants on Pretrial Supervision × 100
Sub – measure 3.1	=	Number of Cases Closed Successfully Number of Pretrial Case Closures × 100

4. INVESTIGATION RATE

Definition: The percentage of pretrial defendants statutorily eligible for release⁴ that the pretrial services agency assesses for release by completing a pretrial investigation.⁵

Sub-Measure 4.1

The percentage of pretrial defendants statutorily eligible for release that the pretrial services agency does not complete an investigation on by reason it is not completed.

Purpose: Conducting a pretrial investigation on all release-eligible defendants is a critical function of pretrial services.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial detainee admission cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial screening
- Date of pretrial investigation
- Pretrial screened in equals "yes"
- Pretrial investigation equals "yes"
- Reason investigation was not completed

CALCULATION:	
Investigation =	Number of Investigations Completed
Rate	Number of Pretrial Defendants Statutorily Eligible for Release × 100
Sub – measure	= <u>Number of Investigations Not Completed by Each Reason</u>
4.1	Total Number of Pretrial Investigations Not Completed × 100

⁴ Pretrial officers consider cases that fall under §19.2-120 (b) to be potentially eligible for release and screen those cases to determine if there is information to rebut the presumption that are no conditions or combination of conditions that will reasonably assure the appearance of the person or the safety of the public. The *number of pretrial defendants statutorily eligible for release* can be calculated by determining the total number on inmates booked into the jail during the quarter and subtracting the number of defendants whose offenses make them statutorily ineligible for pretrial release.

⁵ A pretrial investigation is a formal procedure which includes the preparation of a court report summarizing the verified results of an interview, the defendant's family and community ties, financial resources, residence, history of employment, history of or current abuse of alcohol or controlled substances, and criminal history including the record of convictions from VCIN/NCIC, DMV AND CMS and the completion of a Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (VPRAI).

5. RECOMMENDATION RATE (PRAXIS SITES ONLY)

Definition: The percentage of release recommendations made by the pretrial services agency to the court that are consistent with the risk-based release recommendations from the Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (VPRAI).

Purpose: Relying upon an objective risk assessment tool as the basis for sound release recommendations has become a key pretrial practice. This measure allows programs to assess their reliance on the risk assessment tool as the basis for their release recommendations to the court.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial detainee admission cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial recommendation
- Date of VPRAI instrument completion
- VPRAI release recommendation
- Staff release recommendation made to the court

CALCULATION:

Recommendation = Rate

Number of Staff Recommendations Consistent with VPRAI Number of VPRAIs Completed × 100

6. COURT DECISION CONCURRENCE RATE

Definition: The percentage of defendants for whom the release decision made by the court is consistent with the recommendation made by staff to the court.

Purpose: Judicial support for the use of objective pretrial decision-making tools is key in institutionalizing these tools. This measure allows programs to assess the extent to which the judiciary is aligned with staff recommendations.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial detainee admission cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial recommendation
- Staff release recommendations
- Release decision made by the court.

CALCULATION:

Court Decision Concurrence Rate Number of Court Decisions Consistent with Staff Recommendations Number of Court Decisions × 100

7. SUPERVISION LEVEL CONCURRENCE RATE (PRAXIS SITES ONLY)

Definition: The percentage of defendants on pretrial supervision whose assigned supervision level corresponds to their assessed risk level per the VPRAI.

Sub-Measure 7.1

The percentage of defendants on pretrial supervision who are supervised in accordance with the minimum supervision requirements outlined by their assigned supervision level.

Purpose: Using objective risk assessments to determine supervision levels allows programs to maximize their limited resources. Understanding

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial closure
- Assessed supervision level per the VPRAI
- Assigned supervision level
- Defendant supervision contact history (by contact type)

the extent to which staff overrides are used to adjust supervision levels and measuring supervision levels in relation to risk allows programs to better assess outcomes.

CALCULATION	IS:	
Supervision Level Concurrence Rate	=	Number of Defendants with Supervision Level Consistent with VPRAI Number of Defendants placed on Pretrial Supervision × 100
Sub – measure 7.1	=	Number of Defendants with Actual Supervision Consistent with Level Number of Defendants Placed on Pretrial Supervision × 100

8. AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY FOR PRETRIAL SUPERVISION

Definition: The average period of time between placement on pretrial supervision and completion of pretrial supervision.

Purpose: The length of time a defendant is on pretrial supervision directly impacts the cost of pretrial supervision. Monitoring the length of stay of pretrial defendants can help a criminal justice system track costs as well as identify

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial placement
- Date of pretrial closure

system level issues such as court continuances that directly impact the length of stay.

CALCULATIONS:	
Length of Stay =	Defendant Pretrial Closure Date – Defendant Pretrial Placement Date
Average Length = of Stay	Total Pretrial Defendants' Lengths of Stay Number of Pretrial Defendants Completed Supervision

Future Measures

Swiftness of Response to Defendant Conduct

Definition: The average number of days it takes pretrial officers to respond appropriately (by agency policy and procedure) to (1) compliance and (2) non-compliance with court-ordered release conditions.

This measure requires pretrial programs to establish clear definitions of compliance and non-compliance with conditions of pretrial supervision and procedures outlining appropriate officer responses. This foundational work must be complete before this performance measure can be adopted.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial supervision exit cohort

Data Required:

- Date of pretrial placement
- Date of pretrial closure
- Date of compliance
- Date of incentive
- Date of non-compliance
- Date of response to behavior

Purpose: This measure conforms to national

standards for pretrial supervision and evidence-based practices in criminal justice for swift, certain and meaningful responses to defendant conduct.

CALCULATIONS:	
Average Number of Days to	= Total Number of Days to Respond to Compliance
Respond to Compliance	Number of Pretrial Defendants With Compliant Event
Average Number of Days to	= Total Number of Days to Respond to NonCompliance
Respond to NonCompliance	Number of Pretrial Defendants With NonCompliant Event

Pretrial Detention Rate

Definition: The percentage of pretrial defendants who are detained throughout pretrial case processing.

Sub-Measure B.1

The average period of time between jail booking and pre-trial discharge from jail custody.

Sub-Measure B.2

The average period of time between jail booking and disposition date.

Cohort:

• Quarterly pretrial detainee admission cohort

Data Required:

- Date of arrest
- Date of jail booking
- Statutory eligibility for release
- Release type
- Date of disposition
- Date of jail release

Sub-Measure B.3

The percentage of pretrial defendants released by type (personal recognizance, pretrial supervision, or unsecured bond).

Purpose: These measures allows communities to understand the release and detention decisions made in their community and assess the system-level impact, including costs, of these decisions.

CALCULATIONS:

Pretrial = Detention Rate Number	er of P	Number of Pretrial Detainees retrial Detainees + Number of Pretrial Defendants Released × 100
Sub – measure B.1	=	Total Number of Pretrial Jail Days for Released Defendants Number of Pretrial Defendants Released
Pretrial Jail Days per Pretrial Release	=	Pretrial Release Date – Jail Booking Date
Sub – measure B.2	=	Total Number of Pretrial Jail Days for Detainees Number of Pretrial Detainees
Pretrial Jail Days per Pretrial Detainee	=	Conviction Date – Jail Booking Date

CALCULATIONS:

Sub – measure B.3.1	=	Number of Pretrial Defendants Released on Personal Recognizance Number of Pretrial Defendants Released × 100
Sub – measure B.3.2	=	Number of Pretrial Defendants Released on Pretrial Supervision Number of Pretrial Defendants Released
Sub – measure B.3.3	=	Number of Pretrial Defendants Released on Secured Bond Number of Pretrial Defendants Released

Appendix A

Table 2: Required Data and PTCC Data Element Cross-Walk

Data Required	PTCC Data Element	PTCC Module
Date of pretrial screening	Screened date	Screening module: Screening sub-module
Statutory eligibility for	Statute	Screening module: Screening
pretrial release	Screened out reason	sub-module
Date of VPRAI instrument completion	Instrument completion date	VPRAI Sub-module: VPRAI (Step 1)
Praxis release	Staff recommendation	VPRAI Sub-module: VPRAI
recommendation & staff	consistent with Praxis	(Step 4)
release recommendation made to court		
Release decision made by the	Court recommendation	VPRAI Sub-module: VPRAI
court	consistent with staff recommendation	(Step 5)
Date of pretrial placement	Referral date	Pretrial Placement Sub-
		Module: Placement tab
Date of pretrial closure	Status date	Pretrial Placement Sub-
L L		Module: Closure tab
Assigned supervision level	Supervision level	Pretrial Placement Sub-
	1	Module: Placement tab
Date of each pretrial	Appointment Type	Pretrial Supervision Module:
supervision event (by type)	Date	Case Notes
Number of scheduled court	Court Date	Court Dates Sub-Module:
appearances		Court Dates
Case closure type	Successful completion	Pretrial Placement: Sub-
	Other	Module: Closure tab
Offense date(s) of any arrests	Incident date	Charges Sub-Module: New
that occurred in between		charges
pretrial entry and exit dates		
Pretrial placement offense	Statute	Pending charges
	Charge Category	VPRAI Sub-Module - VPRAI
		(Step 1)
Offense type for new arrests	Statute	Charges Sub-Module: New
	Category	charges
Offense severity level	Charge class	Charges Sub-Module: New
		charges
Date of non-compliance	Date of non-compliance	Pretrial Supervision Sub-
		Module: Non-Compliance

Table 3: Required Data and Missing PTCC Data Elements

Data Required	Performance Measure
Number of capiases issued (for failure to appear in court)	Measure 1
Number of court appearances attended	Measure 1
Date of compliance	Future Measure
Date of incentive (action taken as a result of compliant	Future Measure
behavior)	
Date of sanction (action taken as a result of non-compliance)	Future Measure

Future Measures requires integration with the local jail management system to track.