



2025 Forum on Criminal Justice Draft Agenda

Please note: All times listed are ET

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

1:00-2:30 pm Welcome and Opening Plenary

State governments are primarily responsible for reporting the nation's crime data. Recent innovations in data collection and analysis have made it possible to see crime trends nearly in real time, allowing policymakers to improve decision-making. In this session, Jeff Asher, co-founder of AH Datalytics, will discuss these trends and the role states can play in improving data transparency and speed of reporting. Joining him, a panel of state and local experts will discuss what this work means for strategic planning and evaluation.

Speaker:

Jeff Asher, Co-Founder, AH Datalytics

Discussants:

Michelle Beck, Director, Criminal Justice Analysis Center, North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission

Lori Pesci, Director, Summit County, Ohio Department of Public Safety

Moleto Smith, Director, U.S. Virgin Islands Law Enforcement Planning Commission

Moderator:

Connie Kostelac, Assistant Professor, Institute for Health and Equity at the Medical College of Wisconsin

2:30 -3:00 pm Roundtable Networking Opportunities

3:00-3:15 pm BREAK

3:15-4:15 pm Fostering Program Sustainability

Ensuring sustainability for valuable grant-funded programs is crucial for maximizing long-term impact and achieving lasting changes. During this session, you will learn key strategies for fostering financial, programmatic, and organizational sustainability. You will also hear about efforts undertaken by your peers to build community capacity and sustain valuable programs.

Speakers:

Daina Moran, Deputy Director, Office of Criminal Justice Programs, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration

Samantha Koch, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, Pennsylvania Council on Crime and Delinquency

3:15-4:15 pm Trends in Drug Trafficking and the Multijurisdictional Taskforce Model

While overdose from fentanyl dropped for the first time this year, deaths from drug overdose remain stubbornly high, impacting families in urban and rural communities in every state in America. Further, drug trafficking is a primary



driver of crime and violence, and its suppression is a major focus for law enforcement agencies across the country. This panel will consider recent trends in drugs and trafficking and what state and local law enforcement should consider when funding multi-jurisdictional task forces.

Speakers:

Ron Brooks, Partner, Brooks, Bawden, Moore

Van Ingram, Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, Justice and Public Safety Cabinet

4:15-4:30 pm BREAK

4:30-5:30 pm Successful Crime Reduction Strategies

Across the country, jurisdictions are employing innovative ideas to reduce crime and protect public safety. In this session, hear from three graduates of the University of Chicago Crime Lab Leadership Academy about programs they implemented that have not only reduced crime but also sustained those reductions.

The I Love You to Death program in Madison, Wisconsin, educates, engages, and empowers victims of domestic and familial violence by improving access to resources and enhancing police support. Wichita, Kansas, developed a two-part strategy to reduce violent crime by focusing on both place/risk-based and person-based policing. Finally, Buffalo, New York, supported the city's planned housing revitalization through a variety of strategies, including civic engagement and partnerships with a number of city agencies.

Speakers:

Captain Stephanie Drescher, Madison Police Department, Madison, WI

Deputy Chief Paul Duff, Wichita Police Department, Wichita, KS

Chief Thelma Jones, Buffalo Police Service, Buffalo, NY

Moderator:

Kristen Mahoney, Director of Policy, Government and Partner Engagement, University of Chicago Crime Lab

4:30-5:30 pm Navigating State Policy from Behind the Scenes:

When SAAs can't directly influence legislation, how can they still shape policy that supports victims and strengthens the criminal justice system? This session offers practical strategies for working behind the scenes—using data, partnerships, and internal influence—to ensure victim and criminal justice needs remain central in state policy decisions. Learn how to elevate the voices of survivors, service providers, and law enforcement, even without a seat at the policymaking table.

Speakers:

Monika Johnson-Hostler, Executive Director, North Carolina Sexual Assault Coalition

Kim Babine, Interim Executive Director, Office of Justice Programs, Minnesota Department of Public Safety

Sandy Dixon, Lead Crime Victim Services Planner, North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission



Wednesday, August 6, 2025

1:00 -2:30 pm

Welcome Back and Plenary Session: Principles for Advancing Bipartisan Criminal Justice Policy

Bipartisan cooperation on criminal justice policy has marked much of the past 20 years but increasing political polarization and a COVID-era crime spike have severely strained collaborative efforts to cut crime and incarceration.

In fall 2024, leaders of more than a dozen leading national advocacy organizations across the ideological spectrum came together in search of uniting principles that can reignite partnerships. Convened by the Council on Criminal Justice and Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs, the groups crafted a [shared vision](#) that can guide bipartisan work into the future under four guiding principles of safety, fairness, dignity and accountability. Join us as several of these leaders discuss these principles and where they were able to find consensus that unites them.

Speakers:

Khalil Cumberbatch, Director, Engagement and Partnerships, Council on Criminal Justice
Marc Levin, Chief Policy Counsel, Council on Criminal Justice
Amanda Hall, Senior Director of National Campaigns, Dream.org
Heather Rice-Minus, President and CEO, Prison Fellowship

2:30 -3:00 pm

Roundtable Networking Opportunities

3:00-3:15 pm

BREAK

3:15-4:15 pm

Using Data Through the Lifecycle of Grants Administration

From planning for funding distribution, through measuring success, this panel will bring together SAAs and SACs to discuss how data is used throughout the grants lifecycle to better inform funding and policy decisions.

Speakers:

Jeffrey Zuback, Director, Research, Analysis, and Evaluation, Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy
Thomas Strauss, Director and Principal Research Analyst, Idaho Statistical Analysis Center

3:15-4:15 pm

Unveiling the Chain: Human Trafficking and the Criminal Justice Response

Human trafficking is a significant health issue that requires a holistic response and a large commitment of criminal justice resources. Learn about the complexities and strategies that have worked in some jurisdictions to end labor and sex trafficking.



Speaker:

Kelli Cary, State Anti-Trafficking Director, Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services

Moderator:

Chris Asplen, Executive Director, National Criminal Justice Association

4:15-4:30 pm BREAK

4:30-5:30 pm Ensuring Compliance for Grants

There has never been a more important time to ensure that you are in compliance with federal grant rules and regulations. This session will cover the most common OIG and monitoring recommendations and strategies and tools to tighten up your internal controls.

Speakers:

Hugene Fields, Director of Finance, National Criminal Justice Association

Kellie Rabenhorst, Director, NCJA VOCA Center, National Criminal Justice Association

Tammy Woodhams, Director of Programs and Grants Training, National Criminal Justice Association

Moderator:

Natalia Bowser, Executive Director, Montana Board of Crime Control

4:30-5:30 pm Taking Stock of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline went into effect across the country on July 16, 2022. This session will take stock of how the transition has been going. How is the integration with 911 dispatch working? Is the promised funding for building out the 988 system still available and flowing? What are the steps states and localities are taking to realize the promise of the 988 system? Our panelists bring a unique perspective and deep knowledge of both the promise and current status of the 988 system.

Speakers:

April Heinze, VP, Chief of 9-1-1 Operations, National Emergency Number Association

Jessica Shouse, MHS, Director of Teen and Young Adult Advocacy, The Arc – Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin counties (CO)

Cassie Villegas, Chief of Crisis Services, Solari, Inc

Moderator:

Abigail S. Tucker, PSY.D, ABPP, Board Certified in Police and Public Safety Psychology and Owner SHE Consulting



Thursday, August 7, 2025

1:00-2:00 pm Leveraging Analytics and Artificial Intelligence to Optimize Grants Impact

This session will provide an overview of tools and best practices for navigating the growing use of AI in grants management. (from a grant-seeker and grant-maker perspective).

Speakers:

Grant Guttchow, Director of Product, C3.ai

Ashwini Jarral, Director, IJIS Institute

Moderator:

Chris Asplen, Executive Director, National Criminal Justice Association

1:00-2:00 pm The Ecosystem of Youth Safety

Keeping children safe, in school and in the community, requires a coordinated approach that includes violence prevention, mental health support in schools, technology solutions, school resource officers and more. This session will cover both the tried and true and new and innovative practices that are working to support youth and keep them safe from harm. Our speakers have deep expertise in law enforcement, cybercrime, internet crimes against children, de-escalation training, school safety and technology solutions. Together, they will span policy and practice solutions to youth safety.

Speakers:

Lon Bartel, Principal Researcher, VirTra

Chuck Cohen, Vice President, National White Collar Crime Center, and Professor of Practice, Indiana University Bloomington Department of Criminal Justice

Jay Neal, Executive Director, Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Moderator:

Jennifer Brinkman, Director, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Criminal Justice Programs, and NCJA President

2:00-2:15 pm BREAK

2:15-3:15 pm Interagency Collaborations Between CJ and Behavioral Health

This interactive session will feature State Administering Agencies and their behavioral health partner agencies sharing best practices and strategies for ensuring people with behavioral health challenges get the help they need and avoid arrest and incarceration when appropriate.

Speakers:

Julie Wertheimer, Project Director, Mental Health and Justice Partnerships, The Pew Charitable Trusts

Kim Babine, Interim Executive Director, Office of Justice Programs, Minnesota Department of Public Safety



Moderator:

Abigail S. Tucker, PSY.D, ABPP, Board Certified in Police and Public Safety Psychology and Owner SHE Consulting

2:15-3:15 pm The ABCs of AI

This session will cover foundational concepts to real-world applications of AI in public safety. Whether you're new to AI or looking to understand how it impacts public safety, this session will guide you through the basics of machine learning, data processing, and automation. As public safety professionals in today's world, it is critical to learn the core principles of AI, examine the trends in practical usage and understand ethical considerations and data privacy concerns.

3:15-3:45 pm Roundtable Networking Opportunities

3:45 -4:00 pm BREAK

4:00-5:30 pm Closing Plenary Session and Thank You for Coming

NCJA will close out the Forum with a powerful speaker who will tie together the important work done in states and local jurisdictions and remind us of the impact of our work.

Speaker:

Liam Lowney, Executive Director, Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance