

Cumberland County

Adult Probation Newsletter

WELCOME!!

We all made it through winter, and everyone is looking forward to Spring. Spring always brings many changes with nicer weather, beautiful flowers, and abundant sun light. Like Spring, Adult Probation will be seeing many changes in staff in the coming weeks. Probation would also like to share some other events happening in our office.



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Adult Probation’s Cognitive Behavioral Therapy classes have really expanded in 2023. During February and March of 2023, there were 4 different CBT classes, with 27 participants, being held on different days and times at New Life Community Church. Individuals are referred to CBT by their PO and many of the individuals who are referred to class, start off reluctantly. Fortunately, the participants attitudes change almost immediately after completing the first class. Instructors often hear back from POs that participants really enjoy the group.

What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy? Cognitive Behavior Therapy is an Evidenced Based approach to teach people strategies for identifying and managing risky thoughts. The group process involves linking thoughts and behaviors, teaching people to identify risky thoughts and implement new thinking. During the 9-week course, individuals have the opportunity to learn and practice skills that allow them to better control the events of their lives. Through weekly homework assignments and skill building, participants are able to “unlearn” old, ineffective and/or risky behaviors and “learn” new behaviors that can help them make pro-social choices.

Adult Probation is pleased with the success of this program and will continue to share more information and data on the program as it becomes available.

Reentry

Adult Probation has benefitted since 2016 since our Re-Entry Coordinator, Ashley Rohm, has kept a closet of reentry needs available for our returning citizens. The closet has many basic needs such as hygiene items and food staples for those being released from jail or individuals entering or leaving rehab. Ashley also has bus tickets available to help

individuals with transportation needs. Through Ashley’s partnership with community agencies, she has been able to keep Covid tests available and, food boxes from Project Share. Reentrants have been very grateful for these items for years. POs are also grateful to be able to provide some basic needs to their clients immediately. Through donations, Ashley has always been able to keep a large stock of men’s and women’s clothing available. This includes shoes, coats, and gloves. If anyone has any clothing to donate, please contact Ashley Rohm at (717) 240-6522 or asroh@cumberlandcountypa.gov.



Staff Changes/Accomplishments

- Congratulations to Tiffany Ryan for becoming the newest Supervisor in Adult Probation. Tiffany has been a PO with the department since 1997. Tiffany has held a variety of positions in Probation and has always been very dedicated to the department. We wish Tiffany success as she oversees the new Pre-Trial Program.
- Farewell to PO Brad Stubbs who left the department in March 2023 to be closer to family.

There have been various other changes in the department:

- Kara Stepanchick who was a DUI/Administrative PO, now has a mixed caseload of Sexual Offenders and general supervision cases.
- Becky Coe who previously was a line PO on the West Shore, is now an Administrative/DUI PO.
- Mike Smith went from being a line PO with a Carlisle/Shippensburg caseload to a Report Writer.
- Stevi Miller will be leaving her Treatment Court position to assume the duties of the Multiple Offender DUI caseload.
- Jenna Kurtz will transfer to the Pre-Trial unit, leaving the DUI/Restrictive Probation PO vacant.
- Bri Brantner, who was an Administrative Assistant with Probation since graduating from Shippensburg University in 2021, has been hired to fill the DUI/Restrictive Probation position.
- In order to make caseloads more even, one of the 3 West Shore POs was eliminated to create a new PO for the Carlisle/ Shippensburg area. Mike Mason has stepped up to take this position.

The department had 4 vacancies to fill with the departure of 2 POs and the creation of 2 Pre Trial-Probation Officer Positions. Those positions were recently filled, and the names of our newest POs will be announced in the next Newsletter.

EBP Initiative - Why Stabilization Matters

(Source: Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement)

A primary goal of justice system professionals is to help people successfully fulfill their court-ordered requirements and live law-abiding lives. However, some people may experience unstable situations or environments that could impede their ability to achieve this goal. These factors, called stabilization factors, include an untreated medical or mental health condition, unreliable housing or no housing, dependence on a controlled or illegal substance, lack of access to transportation, and familial or partner violence or conflict. By identifying and addressing stabilization factors, justice system professionals can help people be better positioned to engage more fully in interventions and activities that reduce their risk of returning to the justice system.

Transportation

Lack of transportation makes it challenging for people involved in the justice system to attend appointments, maintain employment, and engage in a host of other activities. Justice system professionals should assess a person's transportation needs and assist the person in brainstorming ways to overcome a lack of access to transportation.

Housing

Studies demonstrate that—above and beyond an array of other risk factors—housing insecurity is associated with an increased risk of recidivism among people on supervision. When people are safely housed, they are more likely to maintain a law-abiding lifestyle. Addressing housing needs is important regardless of the person's assessed risk of recidivism. One study found that housing effects are particularly strong for people at relatively low risk of committing low-severity offenses (i.e., property crimes, minor crimes, and revocations). Similarly, research studies have found that providing housing assistance to people assessed as high risk significantly reduces new admissions to prison for new offenses, while periods of homelessness substantially elevate the likelihood of new convictions, revocations, and readmission to prison.

Untreated Medical and Mental Health Conditions

Left untreated, medical and mental health conditions can make it difficult for even the most well-intended person to fulfill court requirements. The majority of risk/needs assessment tools include questions about physical and mental health, but these tools are not diagnostic. If a justice system professional suspects the person has a condition, referring them for a more thorough and specialized assessment will help determine the best course of action and intervention.

Substance Misuse

Substance misuse is both a criminogenic need and a stabilization factor. It can lead to illegal behavior, and it can serve as a barrier to engaging in risk-reducing interventions. Specialized assessment tools can identify the extent of a person's use and suggest treatment interventions.

Job Fair

Probation, in partnership with Career Link, will be hosting another Job Fair on April 27, 2023, from 10-2 at New Life Community Church. At this point, Career Link has 15 reentry friendly employers coming to the Job Fair and are hoping to have 20 employers signed up by April 27th.

Department Statistics

(January 1 - March 31, 2023)

- 133 ORAS/CST Assessments Completed
- 202 Pre-Sentence Investigations Completed
- 935 Successful Field Visits Made
- 246 Additional Attempted Field Visits
- 91 Pre-Parole Investigations



If you are, or have been, involved in the Criminal Justice System and are looking for employment, this **Job Fair** is for you!

When: April 27, 2023 . Thursday . 10am - 2pm

Where: New Life Community Church
64 East North Street . Carlisle

- Details:**
- Job fair is for individuals involved with **Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, and Domestic Relations** (re-entrants welcome)
 - Food service, warehousing, office work, and retail employers will be represented
 - Bring resume' (if possible) and a form of identification
 - On-site resume' assistance
 - Apply on-site
 - Potential on-site interviews

Questions: Ashley Rohm, Cumberland Re-Entry Coordinator • asrohmcumberlandcountypa.gov • 717.240.6522

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