

Measures for Justice Launches Groundbreaking Data Portal that Brings New Transparency to Local Criminal Justice Systems in North Carolina

ROCHESTER, NY – May 23, 2017 – Measures for Justice (MFJ) released a Data Portal that tracks how criminal cases are being handled at the county level from arrest to post-conviction. The Data Portal includes all 100 counties in North Carolina.

The Data Portal increases the transparency of North Carolina local justice systems by collecting and analyzing criminal justice data and presenting them at the county level.

“Measures for Justice recognizes that justice happens on the county level. This is why data on the county level is essential if we want to be able to talk to the legislature about policy changes,” said Thomas Maher, Executive Director, State of North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services. “MFJ is giving us what we need to start talking about what works and what doesn’t.”

The Portal allows users to review and compare performance data within and across states, and to break them down by race/ethnicity; sex; indigent status; age; offense type; offense severity; and attorney type.

“The data are a treasure trove for communities that will now have access to reliable, informative, and comprehensive data about their criminal justice systems,” said Amy Bach, President and Executive Director, Measures for Justice. “Our Portal is intended to be a starting point for conversations about how to address the multiple issues facing the criminal justice system.”

Depending on the county where the case was processed, findings in North Carolina include:

- defendants who pleaded guilty received a charge reduction between 20% and 77% of the time;
- felony cases were resolved at trial between 0.4% and 5% of the time;
- violent felony cases were dismissed between 16% and 73% of the time.

The Data Portal comprises data that has been passed through a set of performance measures developed by some of the country’s most renowned criminologists and scholars. The measures address three primary objectives of criminal justice systems: Public Safety; Fair Process; Fiscal Responsibility.

The Portal also includes data from Pennsylvania, Florida, Washington, Utah, and Wisconsin. Additionally, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative is joining other funders to help support Measures for Justice’s goal of measuring 20 states by 2020.

MFJ has worked to develop the tool since its founding in 2011. The Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Google.org, Pershing Square Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge, the Open Society Foundations, and the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation provide funding and support, in addition to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative.

For more information, please visit www.measuresforjustice.org.

About Measures for Justice

Measures for Justice (MFJ) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is to bring transparency to the criminal justice system from arrest to post-conviction at the county level. MFJ collects and analyzes criminal justice data from counties and displays them on a Data Portal that is free to the public.