



A Look Inside the Black Box of New York State's Criminal Justice Data Audio Kit

*This kit provides audio files of the following quotes describing personal experiences with criminal justice data in New York State. **The quotes are voiced by actors, not the individuals quoted.***

1. New York State Defenders Association Executive Director, Susan Bryant, discussing the struggle for access to data:

"It's a fight we've been having for decades."

2. Julie Ciccolini, the Director of Law Enforcement Accountability at the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, recalling requesting case-level data from DCJS while at her previous role at the Legal Aid Society:

"It was a really difficult process with such a long waiting time that made it almost impossible to investigate certain patterns. If you wanted to figure something out and had a deadline of say, six months, that wouldn't happen."

3. Researcher working in the prison reform space described an experience in trying to obtain prison and parole information from the DOCCS data systems:

"I'm absolutely certain that there are things they're collecting that they may not share, or we don't know to ask for."

4. Monroe County Public Defender, Tim Donaher:

"If I go to DCJS looking for data from today to six months ago, it's not available...not until months later which is useless when I'm trying to make an argument about bail reform impact right now."



5. Researcher reflecting on their experience seeking data from local law enforcement:

"If people don't want to track it they can throw out this exorbitant cost or estimate of the time it will take to pull the data. They can take as long as they want and charge you as much as they want."

6. Katie Schaffer, Director of Organizing and Advocacy at the Center for Community Alternatives:

"It means we often know anecdotally there are problems, but when we go to find the data necessary to assess it at the systems level, the data are obfuscated."

7. Chris Boyle from New York County Defender Services:

"The other public defenders and myself have repeatedly requested that same data feed but have been unsuccessful so far."

8. DCJS's Leigh Bates outlining the process for receiving case-level data from DCJS:

"It's a pretty resource-intensive process to ensure that information is appropriately reviewed and provided."

9. Karen Kane, Director of Court Research with OCA, explaining how the case management system's purpose is to keep an accurate court record and allow for the efficient processing of cases:

"Therefore, there is a disconnect between what data the clerks need to do their job versus what researchers and policy advocates want or need for data analysis. The case management system was not designed or intended to be a research database."



10. Former New York City prosecutor:

“A prosecutor’s office has to define its data, designate someone to enter the data, and then have someone audit the data. But oftentimes offices don’t do any of those things. Different attorneys have different definitions, different people enter it, and no one checks it.”

11. Local prosecutor discussing their office’s attempts to access court data:

“We’ve tried for several years to get access to the data but we can’t. We can’t even say, ‘Can you show us the available queries?’, ‘Can you just tell us what you’re collecting so we can tell you what we want?’ Honestly, we’re not even sure what OCA [Office of Court Administration] collects.”