

Ada County **2017 Safety and Justice Challenge Fact Sheet**

We've got a problem to fix:

- Despite a rising population base and increased felony case filings in Ada County, the jail population has remained relatively level. However, there is still an over-reliance on incarceration for lower-risk, non-violent offenders.
- Pretrial release and length of stay are main drivers of the jail population. The jail pretrial population alone was 57 percent in 2016. In 2016, 32.5 percent of all low- and low-moderate-risk defendants remained detained beyond three days, spending an average of 56 days in jail.
- Jail bookings for Failure to Appear (FTA) offenders have consistently been one of the top five admitted charges in Ada County. Surveys have shown that about 50 percent of inmates charged with failure to appear said they didn't know or forgot about scheduled court dates. Eight percent said they had work or childcare conflicts. The county needs a strategy to address individuals who miss court.
- The misuse of the jail takes a toll on people of color. Despite making up 2.7 percent of the local population, African Americans and Native Americans make up 3.3 percent of the jail population, on average.
- Overuse of detention causes disruption in the stability of arrestees' families and communities, leads to higher re-arrest rates, and produces worse case outcomes with more back-end incarceration.

There are proposed solutions to create a fairer, more effective local justice system:

- Supported with \$1 million from the Safety and Justice Challenge, Ada County will implement forward-looking, smart solutions to address the overuse of the Ada County Jail and further reduce the local jail population by 15-to-19 percent over the next two years.
- To continue reducing the jail population safely, the county plans to implement several new strategies aimed at implementing systemic changes, including meeting the needs of those with behavioral health issues, streamlining case management services, and expanding non-jail options for lower-risk offenders.
- The county will also implement enhanced strategies focused on pretrial intervention — including an assessment that judges can use to measure risk to the community.
- Local law enforcement will work on reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the jail by doing increased community outreach in African American, Native American, and Latino communities.
- The creation of a new text, email and call-based notification system will allow the Ada County Clerk of Courts staff to send alerts to people with upcoming court dates.
- The State of Idaho is opening a new Behavioral Community Crisis Center in Boise which will provide support for people suffering from mental illness or substance abuse issues — a segment of society that has a disproportionately high population in jail. Ada County is working closely with the State of Idaho to ensure that the center will be able to serve as many citizens who need it as possible.

Who is helping to affect change?

- The strategies and initiatives outlined in the Safety and Justice Challenge are being led by the Ada County Sheriff's Office in partnership with the Idaho Department of Correction, Ada County Prosecutor's Office, district judges, defense attorneys, mayors and city council members, county commissioners, Boise State University, school boards, probation and parole departments, United Way, mental health professionals, Boise City/Ada County Housing Authority, Women and Children Alliance, Habitat for Humanity, and local hospitals.