

LAB NOTES

A NEWSLETTER FROM
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE INNOVATION LAB

JANUARY 2021



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2019, North Carolina charged 1.8 million crimes, 1.6 million were misdemeanors, including 1 million traffic misdemeanors.

Most common traffic charges:

- Speeding - 295,849 charges
- Expired Registration/Tag - 208,790 charges
- DWLR Non-Impaired - 169,464 charges

Most common non-traffic charges:

- Misdemeanor Larceny - 40,880 charges
- Poss. Drug Paraphernalia - 30,918 charges
- Poss. Marijuana Up to .5 oz - 29,433 charges.

Learn more [here](#).



SPOTLIGHT: ORANGE COUNTY BAIL REFORM PROJECT

What: We helped local stakeholders develop and implement collaborative consensus bail reform strategies:

- A new decision making tool for magistrates
- A new process to inform judicial responses to non-appearances

Learn more in our project report [here](#).

What's next: We've been funded to, among other things, execute an empirical evaluation of these changes - watch for our first quarterly report this spring.

INSIGHTS:

BAIL REFORM IN JUDICIAL DISTRICTS 2 AND 21



Background

In January 2020, Judicial Districts 21 (Forsyth County) and 2 (Washington, Beaufort, Martin, Tyrrell, and Hyde counties) implemented collaborative, consensus bail reforms. JD 21 adopted a new decision making tool for use by judges and magistrates when setting bail. JD 2 adopted a similar tool for magistrates and implemented new first appearance proceedings for all in-custody defendants. We're evaluating the impact of these reforms. Highlights from our first quarterly reports:



Conditions Imposed

- Before reform, both jurisdictions imposed secured bonds in the majority of cases, including the majority of misdemeanor cases.
- In JD 21 post-reform, magistrates imposed conditions **other** than secured bond in the majority of cases (57%). And 76% of highest charge Class 2 or 3 misdemeanors cases received conditions other than a secured bond.
- In JD 2 post-reform, use of secured bonds also decreased. Excluding mandatory bond doubling cases, conditions other than secured bond were imposed in 54% of cases and in 76% of Class 3 misdemeanor cases.



Pretrial Detention

- In both districts, pretrial bookings **decreased**.
- JD 21 also experienced a decrease in longer jail stays.



Pretrial Failures

- In JD 21, there was no statistically significant change in the percent of defendants charged with new pretrial crimes. In JD 2, all counties experienced a decrease in that metric, and that decrease was statistically significant in Martin County.
- In JD 21, the number and percentage of court non-appearances decreased. In JD 2, there was no statistically significant change in court non-appearance rates.

Read the JD 2 report [here](#) and the JD 21 report [here](#).

HAPPENINGS

We're hiring! Apply for our Post-Doctoral Fellowship [here](#).

Congratulations to Lab Director Smith for being honored with the [Dogwood Award](#) from Attorney General Josh Stein.

The Lab's work on bail reform was recently cited as an example in a report to the Kansas Supreme Court.

Information about Lab events is on [our website](#).



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