



ORANGE COUNTY, NC PRETRIAL SERVICES

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Information gathered during in-person interviews allows Pretrial Services to gain understanding of an individual's risks and needs. This information can be used to develop targeted interventions for those in need of supportive services for both substance use concerns and mental health disorders. A comprehensive background investigation informs the Court of specific details related to an individual's past and present legal situation and orients defense attorneys to circumstances requiring special attention.



Pretrial Services is guided by the presumption that gathering and presenting information impartially ensure release decisions that are fair and informed.

"In our society liberty is the norm, and detention prior to trial or without trial is the carefully limited exception." United States v. Salerno, 481 U.S. 739 (1987)

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PRETRIAL SERVICES



The goals of the Orange County Pretrial Services program are to prevent the unnecessary detention of the accused, increase court appearances, increase access to services, and enhance public safety. This is accomplished by providing the Court timely and accurate information through personal interviews and comprehensive background investigations.

This information is used in the production of needs and risk assessments that focus on community safety, existing support systems, likelihood of future court appearance, and an individual's need for services from a mental health and/or substance use provider.

Risk and needs assessments are submitted to the Court at First Appearances, which take place at the Orange County Courthouse in Hillsborough every weekday at 2 p.m.

INTAKE

Each weekday the Pretrial Services staff completes in-person interviews with every newly incarcerated individual at the Orange County Detention Center. Information gathered will aid in assessing an individual's risk level and in developing an understanding of their needs.

INVESTIGATION

Post-interview, criminal background checks are conducted to identify areas of concern for community safety as well as to determine the likelihood of attendance at future court dates. Detailed information about community supports and employment history are also explored.

RISK ASSESSMENT

An evidence-based, objective pretrial risk assessment instrument provides an indication of an individual's likelihood of failing to appear and reoffending. The goal when implementing such an instrument is to minimize bias and maximize successful pretrial outcomes.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Individuals released to Pretrial Services are subject to varying degrees of supervision commensurate with their risk level as determined by the risk assessment. Regular court reminders are standard to maximize court appearance and referrals to mental health and substance use service providers are completed as needed.

STRIKE ORDERS

Orange County Pretrial Services, in conjunction with the Clerk of Superior Court, administers a Strike Order docket each Thursday at 9 a.m. In addition to having their cases re-calendared, individuals receive information about pending court dates and unpaid fines/fees in all 100 North Carolina counties. During this process, referral to the Orange County Restoration Legal Counsel is available.



MENTAL HEALTH/SUBSTANCE USE

Individuals remaining in custody who are in need of behavioral health services are referred to a licensed clinician who has the ability to complete assessments, make treatment referrals, provide information about community resources, and offer supportive counseling and advocacy throughout the period of incarceration. Support is also provided during the transition back into the community. An in-house psychiatrist is available to address any medication needs.

Medications for Opioid Use Disorder is available to qualifying individuals with Opioid Use Disorder.