

BALTIMORE CITY JAIL OVERCROWDING

— A One Year Perspective —

William Donald Schaefer, Mayor

MAYOR'S COORDINATING COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Richard W. Friedman, Director



MAY, 1976

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CITY OF BALTIMORE

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Mayor



MAYOR'S COORDINATING COUNCIL
ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

RICHARD W. FRIEDMAN, Director
26 South Calvert Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202

July 12, 1976

NCJRS

JUL 19 1976

ACQUISITIONS

United States Department of Justice
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
National Criminal Justice Reference Services
Washington, D. C. 20530

Gentlemen:

In response to your request for information for the NCJRS
Evaluation Clearinghouse, appropriate information is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Lipstein
Associate Director for Evaluation
Mayor's Coordinating Council
on Criminal Justice

DJL/jw

Enclosure

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In March 1975, the population of Baltimore City Jail had risen to 1843, with 71% in pre-trial status. The Mayor, Jail Administration, and representatives of the criminal justice community were alarmed at this severe overcrowding of an institution originally designed in 1807 for approximately 1200 prisoners. Security, custody, food and health care, counseling efforts, and routine Jail processing activities were hampered by overcrowding. In response to this serious problem, Mayor Schaefer authorized a temporary staff increase of the Supreme Bench Pre-Trial Release Services Division in order to screen all persons arrested throughout the City for potential release prior to trial. In addition, he instructed his Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice to assist City Jail Warden Gordon C. Kamka in examining and reacting to the problem, and develop appropriate action programs with State agencies to reduce the Jail's population.

During the next year, the Coordinating Council became involved with many facets in the Jail overcrowding problem. The responsibilities of all involved criminal justice agencies became clearly defined. Communication was increased among these services and the majority of City and State agencies responded with complete cooperation.

Although the efforts of the criminal justice system have not resulted in a significant decrease in the total City Jail population, the sources of the overcrowding are now well known. By March, 1976, the Baltimore City criminal justice agencies had significantly reduced the pre-trial prisoners to 53% of the total Jail population. The prisoners being held for the Maryland Division of Correction now constitute over 30% of the total Jail population. The Mayor's Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice is continuing to work closely with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to resolve this complex phase of the population problem.

The status of the City Jail population and the efforts made to resolve this problem are shown in the following chart. The coordinated efforts that have been made to reduce the Jail population have resulted in a clear understanding of the causes of overcrowding. In the future, continued positive activity will result in increased interagency cooperation, gradual permanent solutions to these issues, and benefit to the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and citizens of Baltimore City.

AGENCY	STATUS—MARCH, 1975	RESULTS OF STATUS	CONTRIBUTING PROBLEMS	RESOLUTION EFFORTS	STATUS—MARCH, 1976
Baltimore City Jail Board	Administrative	Continued Administrative Review	N/A	Resolution limiting Jail population to 1800, December, 1975; Encourage Mayor to apprise Governor of Jail-overcrowding problem.	Continued Administrative Review
Baltimore City Jail	Total population—1847 inmates—1383, or 75%, in pre-trial status.	Reduction of security effectiveness; Food Service concerns; Health and Sanitation concerns; Recreation concerns; Guard overtime; Increased administrative costs; Treatment efforts severely restricted.	Increased arrests; Inconsistent trial scheduling; Lack of criminal justice system prioritization of Jail cases; Increased volume of work for all administrative and operational activities.	Coordinate communications with Division of Correction Reception Center; Utilize reception and classification process for orderly prisoner control and differentiated services; Inmate Council and Social Work efforts to minimize crisis and stress; Improve transportation system.	Total population—1593 inmates—837, or 53%, in pre-trial status; Development of Jail Training Program to improve correctional management skills.
Maryland District Court	552 defendants awaiting trial; 30% of total Jail population.	Prolonged incarceration and lack of speedy trial.	Need for closer coordination with Pre-Trial Release Services Division and a more flexible recognizance release policy; Excessive postponements.	Special release programs; Increased approval of recognizance releases; Prioritization of Jail cases; Administrative Postponement Policy, Fall, 1975.	329 defendants awaiting trial; 21% of total Jail population; Monitoring adherence to postponement policy.
Supreme Bench of Baltimore City A. Administrative and Criminal Assignment Office	750 defendants awaiting trial; 41% of total Jail population.	Largest population category in Jail; Prolonged incarceration and lack of speedy trial.	Lack of prioritization of Jail cases; Delays in trial scheduling; Excessive postponements.	Automatic sub-curia scheduling, Fall, 1974; Review and updating of Jail lists including computerized file, Spring, 1975; Initial attempts to prioritize Jail cases, Spring, 1975; Administrative Postponement Policy, Fall, 1975; Extensive Jail prioritization program with Public Defender's Office, January, 1976.	508 defendants awaiting trial; 32% of total Jail population; Expeditious processing of Jail cases; Monitoring adherence to postponement policy.
B. Pre-Trial Release Services Division	595 defendants interviewed and 230 released on recognizance weekly; 70% of all ROR releases in Police Districts.	60-65% of District Court defendants incarcerated; Jail overcrowding; Inappropriate pre-trial detention.	Insufficient staff; Lack of complete district staff deployment.	Increase of staff (60% through Ninety Day Program, March, 1975 and Public Service Employment, July, 1975); Operation in Traffic Court; Majority of field staff in all Police Districts—24 hours daily.	750 defendants interviewed and 375 released on recognizance weekly; 95% of all ROR releases in Police Districts; Examination of new selection criteria for release.
State's Attorney's Office	1383 defendants in Jail to be prosecuted at District Court and Supreme Bench.	Prolonged incarceration and lack of speedy trial; Increased government expenditure for families and dependents.	Lack of prioritization of Jail cases; Delays in returning indictments and criminal informations; Excessive postponements.	Movement of Felony Complaint unit to Police Districts, Summer, 1975; Jail prioritization program with Public Defender's Office, Fall, 1975; Accelerated charging program.	837 defendants in Jail to be prosecuted at District Court and Supreme Bench; Expeditious processing of all felony cases.
Public Defender's Office	900 defendants in Jail to be represented at District Court and Supreme Bench.	Prolonged incarceration and lack of speedy trial; Increased government expenditure for families and dependents; Time delays in obtaining counsel and preparing defense.	Lack of prioritization of Jail cases; Forced to panel cases; Insufficient staff.	Jail prioritization program with State's Attorney's Office, Fall, 1975; Jail prioritization program with Supreme Bench, January, 1976.	600 defendants in Jail to be represented at District Court and Supreme Bench.
Maryland Division of Parole and Probation	57 convicted defendants awaiting pre-sentence investigation; Average length of time to completion of investigation—30 days.	Delay in sentencing of convicted defendants; Contributing factor to Jail overcrowding.	Reduction of investigation staff; Lack of coordination with other agencies collecting similar information; Lack of prompt notification of investigation request.	Replacement of investigation staff; Attempt to improve coordination with Supreme Bench in delivery of investigation requests.	94 convicted defendants awaiting pre-sentence investigation; Average length of time to completion of investigation—21 days.
Maryland Division of Correction	200 sentenced prisoners awaiting transfer to State Institutions; 11% of total Jail population.	Increased custodial and administrative responsibilities to Jail; Low priority for transfer.	Overcrowding in Maryland correctional institutions; Lack of continuity between Jail and State reception centers.	Intensive screening for early release; Christmas Commutation by Governor; City-wide public relations for Community Corrections; Requested funding from General Assembly for Division of Correction prisoners housed at the Jail and for new State facilities.	450 sentenced prisoners awaiting transfer to State Institutions; 28% of total population.
Maryland Board of Parole	Prisoners sentenced to the Division of Correction "held" at Jail becoming eligible for parole but not processed for parole hearing	Prisoners sentenced to the Division of Correction not receiving routine parole privileges.	Overcrowding in Maryland correctional institutions; Lack of State utilization of Jail information.	Placement of Parole Agents at Jail for parole eligibility processing.	Minimal flexibility in parole policies; Legislative efforts to increase paroling capability, e.g., hearing examiners.
Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice	Administrative	Lack of centralized coordination of State Criminal Justice Agencies.	Limited flexibility for utilization of LEAA funds.	Meeting with members of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to determine most prudent method of involvement.	Meeting with Public Safety and Correctional Services, City Jail, and MCCCJ to expedite flow of State prisoners from City Jail.
Mayor's Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice	Administrative	Lack of centralized coordination of involved City, State and Federal Criminal Justice Agencies.	Limited influence toward a coordinated criminal justice system.	Coordination of activities of agencies involved in Jail overcrowding problem (see High Impact Courts Evaluation, January, 1976); Weekly mailing of Jail population status; Assisting Jail in developing administratively useful computer reports; Expeditious processing of grant requests and modifications; Analysis and development of inmate population categories to assign appropriate agency responsibilities; Continue communication with State correctional authorities to delineate their appropriate responsibilities for Jail overcrowding.	Identifying and coordinating Jail population responsibilities; Maintain coordinating function with all Federal, State, and City resources.

END

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