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# Final Report on the Evaluation of the Judicial Oversight Demonstration

## Chapter 1. Executive Summary

**T**he Judicial Oversight Demonstration (JOD) was designed to test the feasibility and impact of a coordinated response to intimate partner violence (IPV) that involved the courts and justice agencies in a central role. The primary goals were to protect victim safety, hold offenders accountable, and reduce repeat offending. The JOD model called for a strong judicial response combined with coordinated community services and integrated justice system policies in IPV cases. JOD consolidated gains in legal protections for domestic violence victims made in the past two decades within justice agencies and incorporated lessons on effective responses to IPV identified in studies of law enforcement, prosecution, court specialization, victim services, and coordinated community action. To test this model, three sites -- Dorchester, Massachusetts, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Washtenaw County, Michigan --received support for multi-year demonstration projects.

Support for JOD innovations was grounded in recognition of the challenges that domestic violence cases pose to criminal justice agencies and the need to take steps to better protect victims from repeat violence. Key recommendations of the 1984 report of the U.S. Attorney General's Task Force on Family Violence are embodied in JOD: (1) family violence should be recognized and responded to as a criminal activity; (2) law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and judges should develop a coordinated response to family violence; and (3) a wide range of dispositional alternatives should be considered in cases of family violence. In addition, the Task Force recommended that in all cases prior to sentencing, judges should carefully review and consider the consequences of the crime on the victim, and in granting bail or releasing the assailant on his/her own recognizance, the judge should impose conditions that restrict the defendant's access to the victim and strictly enforce the order. However, it is only in the past few years that criminal courts have begun to assume a leadership role in coordinated responses through innovations such as specialized domestic violence courts that have introduced increased judicial supervision supported by case management, victim services, and required treatment for eligible offenders.

National partners in the JOD initiative were the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Justice Program's National Institute of Justice (NIJ). OVW funded and managed the demonstration activities and funded the Vera Institute of Justice to provide the technical assistance required to support implementation of the JOD model. NIJ funded the Urban Institute (UI) to conduct the national evaluation and supported local evaluation activities.

The two primary evaluation objectives were: 1) to test the impact of JOD interventions on victim safety, offender accountability, and recidivism, and 2) to learn from the experiences of well-qualified sites who were given resources and challenged to build a collaboration between the courts and community agencies to respond to intimate partner violence. The

national evaluation of JOD began in 2000 with the start of demonstration activities and continued throughout and beyond the intervention period.

The final reports on the evaluation of JOD<sup>1</sup> include a report on the evaluation of Milwaukee's JOD project<sup>2</sup> and a summary four-volume final report, as follows:

- Volume 1 presents the results of the impact evaluation of JOD as implemented by Dorchester and Washtenaw County.
- Volume 2 presents case studies of the implementation of JOD at all three sites and draws lessons from their experiences for jurisdictions interested in replication.
- Volume 3 combines and analyzes the results of focus groups with victims and offenders in all three JOD sites and gives voice to the participants in the demonstration.
- Volume 4 provides a detailed description of the methods used to conduct the surveys of victims and offenders; it is designed to assist domestic violence researchers in efforts to overcome the multiple challenges of conducting interviews on this sensitive issue. UI reports on JOD are available electronically at [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org).<sup>3</sup>

This chapter is an executive summary of the entire evaluation and presents findings from all three sites.

## The JOD Initiative

In 1999, following an extensive search for jurisdictions with the resources, infrastructure and commitment needed to implement the envisioned demonstration, the Office on Violence Against Women selected three sites for the implementation of JOD -- Dorchester, MA, Milwaukee County, WI, and Washtenaw County, MI.

In each of these communities, criminal justice agencies and community-based agencies serving victims and offenders formed partnerships to work collaboratively to support an effective response to IPV incidents. The partnerships differed from earlier coordinated

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<sup>1</sup> Interim findings are available in Harrell, Adele, Newmark, Lisa, Visher, Christy, and DeStefano, Christine. (December 2002). *Evaluation of the Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative: Implementation Strategies and Lessons*. Report to the National Institute of Justice. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. DeStefano, Christine Depies, Harrell, Adele, Newmark, Lisa, and Visher, Christy. (August 2001). *Evaluation of the Judicial Oversight Demonstration: Initial Process Evaluation Report*. Report to the National Institute of Justice. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

<sup>2</sup> Harrell, Adele, Schaffer, Megan, DeStefano, Christine, and Castro, Jennifer. (April 2006). *Final Report on the Evaluation of Milwaukee's Judicial Oversight Demonstration*. Report to the National Institute of Justice. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

<sup>3</sup> *Volume 2: Findings and Lessons on Implementation*, Visher, Christy, Newmark, Lisa, and Harrell, Adele with Emily Turner. *Volume 3: Findings from JOD Victim and Offender Focus Groups.*, Newmark, Lisa, Harrell, Adele, Zweig, Janine with Depies, Christine DeStefano, Brooks, Lisa, and Schaffer, Megan. *Volume 4: Survey Methodology*, Harrell, Adele and Castro, Jennifer with Atlantic Research and Consulting and The Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University. Volumes submitted June 2007 to the National Institute of Justice.

community responses to domestic violence by placing special focus on the role of the court, and specifically the judge, facilitating offender accountability in collaboration with both non-profit service providers and other criminal justice agencies. Figure 1 illustrates the network of agencies that collaborated to improve the responses to IPV. Their roles and activities are described in the case studies in Volume 2 of this final report.

The JOD core elements included:

*Uniform and consistent initial responses to domestic violence offenses*, including: a) pro-arrest policies, b) arrest of primary aggressor, and c) a coordinated response by law enforcement and victim advocates.

*Coordinated victim advocacy and services*, including: a) contact by victim's advocates as soon as possible after a domestic violence incident, b) an individualized "safety plan" for the victim, and c) provision of needed services.

*Strong offender accountability and oversight*, including: a) intensive court-based supervision, b) referral to appropriate batterer intervention programs (BIP), and c) administrative and judicial sanctions and incentives to influence offender behavior.

Each site implemented the core JOD elements within the context of their local resources, needs, and priorities, expanding their existing coordinated community response to include criminal justice agencies, and established regular meetings to develop and implement strategies for interagency coordination. Guided by technical assistance teams and the needs of their jurisdictions, each site reviewed and developed model policies and programs based on experiences in other jurisdictions, recent research, and other best practices for intimate partner violence cases. Highlights of the JOD intervention strategies in each site are described below.

### ***Proactive Law Enforcement***

The law enforcement components of the JOD initiatives included training, arrest, and protection order enforcement innovations, as well as innovations in interagency communications.

In Dorchester, the Boston Police Department (BPD) had a strong pro-arrest policy in responding to domestic violence incidents, and trained officers to determine primary aggressors and avoid dual arrest situations. For JOD, BPD developed a database of high-risk cases and shared access to the database with the District Attorney's Office and Probation department to coordinate enforcement in cases involving offenders with previous histories of domestic violence or incidents involving serious injury. Staffing of domestic violence detective and peace liaison<sup>4</sup> positions was increased, and strategies for collecting evidence for use in prosecution were improved.

In Milwaukee, the Police Department opened a Family Violence Unit (FVU) in the Sensitive Crimes Division to support enhanced investigation of serious domestic violence cases and provide immediate services to victims. JOD funds supported a full-time Domestic Violence Liaison to make follow-up contacts with victims to assist in safety planning and referrals to victim service providers.

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<sup>4</sup> Peace liaisons were civilian employees who assisted victims in incidents reported to the police.

In Washtenaw County, eleven county law enforcement agencies, all of which had preferred or mandatory arrest policies in domestic violence cases, responded to incidents of intimate partner violence. Four of the agencies were provided with JOD funds to hire specialized domestic violence staff, nearly all agencies received intensive training in domestic violence cases, and all adopted a supplemental domestic violence report form to enhance evidence collection in these cases.

### ***Enhanced Domestic Violence Prosecution***

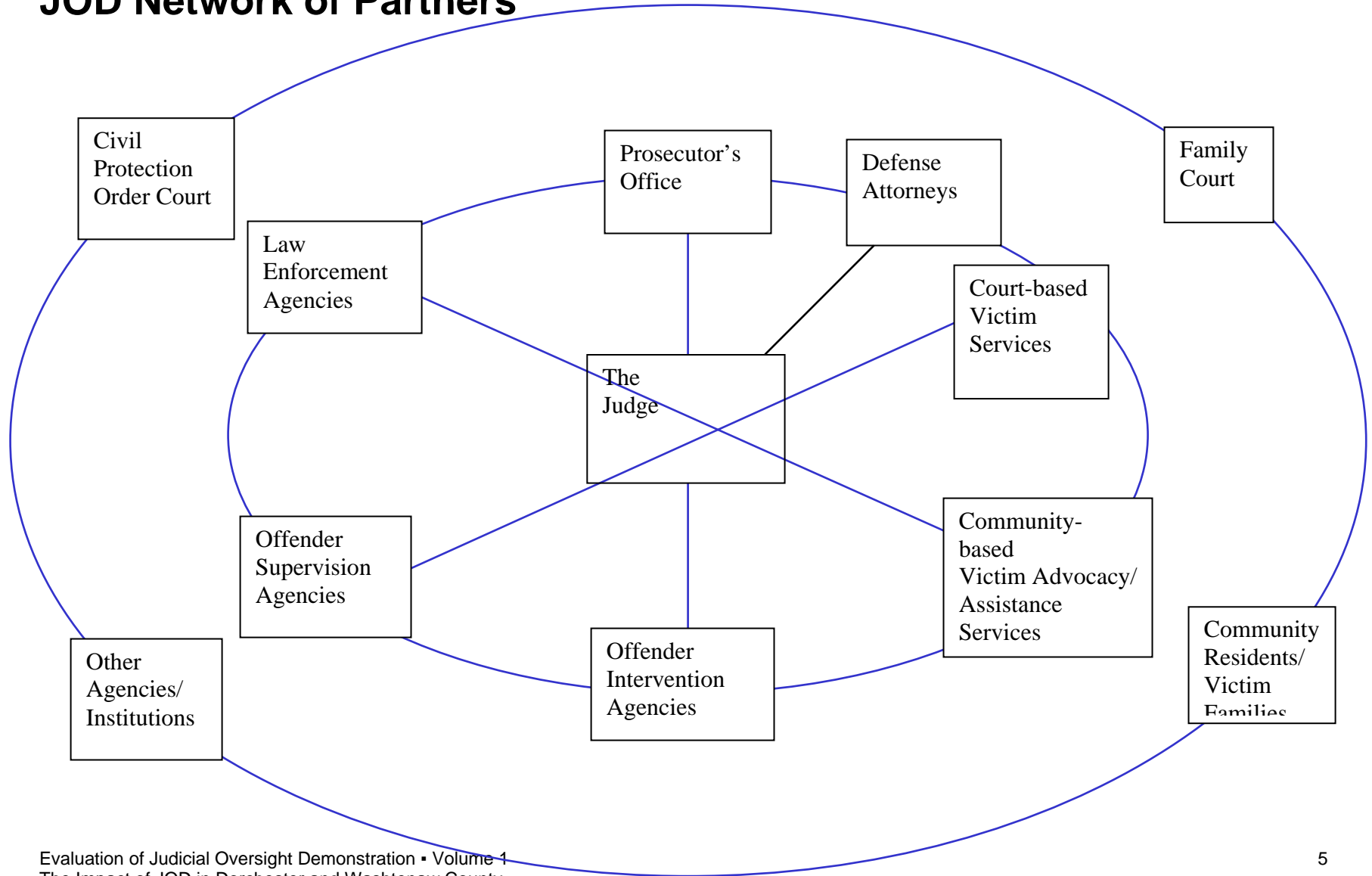
Effective prosecution is key to holding offenders accountable. Efforts to enhance prosecution included specialized prosecution units and policies directed at enhanced evidence collection and prosecution without victim testimony.

Dorchester created a new dedicated domestic violence unit comprising five assistant district attorneys (three supported by JOD funds), and an investigator. The unit adopted vertical prosecution as a standard policy, allowing a single attorney to prosecute the case from arraignment to disposition.

Milwaukee's existing domestic violence prosecution unit developed a manual for prosecuting cases without requiring victim testimony and assumed responsibility for felony prosecutions. Prosecutors expanded collection and use of photographs of injury and damage; use of victim statements made at the time of the incident, including tapes of 911 calls; charging defendants with bail jumping for their failure to appear (FTA) for court appearances; and tape recordings of threatening phone calls to victims from jailed defendants.

The Washtenaw County Prosecuting Attorney's Office formed a domestic violence prosecution unit made up of five assistant prosecuting attorneys, two victim/witness staff, and an investigator, and instituted vertical prosecution in both misdemeanor and felony domestic violence cases. Protocols for building a case that could be prosecuted independently of, or in combination with, victim testimony were greatly expanded under JOD. The unit began initiating criminal contempt hearings against defendants who violated personal protection orders (but who were not arrested at the scene of the violation), removing the burden on victims of initiating a show cause hearing.

**Figure 1.**  
**JOD Network of Partners**



## ***Specialized Domestic Violence Courts***

Dedicated domestic violence courts formed the focal point for JOD operations. The JOD domestic violence courts had specialized staff in the courtroom, engaged domestic violence training for judges, developed procedures for expediting hearings of violations or protection order petitions, and regularly scheduled judicial review of probation compliance.

Dorchester established a specialized court dedicated to IPV cases and civil restraining order matters (except trial cases which were heard in other courts). Four judges, all trained in IPV, had a specific day(s) of the week to hear IPV matters. When possible, the same judge heard a given case from arraignment to disposition and continued for post-disposition probation review hearings. All IPV probationers were required to appear in court periodically during the period of probation to assess compliance and whether more restrictive or less restrictive probation conditions were warranted. These appearances were required at least four times during the period of probation (at 30, 90, 120, and 240 days post-sentencing), with additional hearings scheduled as necessary.

Milwaukee located three specialized domestic violence courts on a single floor of their large courthouse and created a new Domestic Violence Commissioner's Intake Court to handle pretrial appearances and preliminary matters in misdemeanor cases. IPV offenders on probation were ordered to return to court for a compliance review hearing before the sentencing judge 60 to 90 days after sentencing.

Each of the four Washtenaw County District Courts that adjudicated domestic violence cases<sup>5</sup> established a dedicated docket day for these cases. The dockets were scheduled throughout the week so that prosecutors, victim/witness staff, victim advocates, and probation agents could all be present in the courtroom for case actions. The courts collaborated on new domestic violence protocols that included an arraignment script, a bond release form, bond review groups, and regular review hearings for probationers. Judicial review of compliance was scheduled at least once during IPV probation with additional hearings scheduled as necessary (the review hearing schedule varied across the four courts).

## ***Specialized Probation***

The JOD sites included specialized probation officers, enhanced staffing to reduce officer caseloads, referrals to certified batterer intervention programs (BIPs), and enhanced communication among probation officers and BIPs to provide information for judicial review hearings.

The Dorchester Domestic Violence Probation Unit, located in the courthouse, was doubled in size to allow intensive supervision of IPV cases. All new IPV probationers were placed at the maximum level of supervision at the start of probation. This involved a number of requirements, including regular meetings with probation officers, field visits by officers, BIP participation, and probation status review

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<sup>5</sup> District Court 15 adjudicated offenses committed in the City of Ann Arbor; District Court 14B adjudicated cases in Ypsilanti Township; and District Courts 14A-2 and 14A-3 adjudicated cases in the rest of Washtenaw County.

hearings in court, as well as participation in additional programs, such as the Fatherhood Program, substance abuse treatment, and mental health treatment, as needed. Agents received regular monthly reports from BIP service providers on probationers' compliance with requirements, increased their contact with victims, and attended judicial review hearings.

Milwaukee did not establish a specialized unit, but trained the over 400 state probation agents in Milwaukee County in domestic violence supervision. The agents expanded efforts to contact victims, collected information on attendance and progress from batterer treatment programs, and attended review hearings of their clients. In focus groups, Milwaukee victims singled out the probation officers for praise, commenting that they made themselves available 24 hours per day and helped monitor the abusers' behavior.

Each of the four district courts in Washtenaw County had a dedicated domestic violence probation agent. Two of the busier courts also had compliance officers to assist probation agents with their caseloads. Probation officers met with defendants to review pretrial release bond conditions, and with probationers to review supervision requirements and compliance. To enhance accountability, the Domestic Violence Probation Unit received regular reports from BIP service providers on probationers' compliance with requirements.

### ***Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP)***

JOD sites ordered most offenders to BIP and developed strategies for monitoring compliance with the order. All of the sites found it difficult to provide BIP services for the range of offenders seen by the courts (e.g., Spanish speaking offenders, immigrant offenders, and female perpetrators).

Dorchester offenders convicted of IPV were typically required to complete a state - certified 40-week BIP. To enhance accountability, the Probation Department received regular monthly reports from BIP service providers on probationers' compliance with requirements.

In Milwaukee, all BIP providers added groups, two worked to expand BIP services for Spanish-speaking offenders, and one added a maintenance group for graduates, more facilitators, and participation enhancements (e.g., help with transportation costs and a partner outreach program). However, the increase in court referrals during JOD resulted in long waiting lists.

In Washtenaw County, most IPV probationers were required to complete a state-certified BIP. To enhance accountability, the Probation Department received regular reports from BIP service providers on probationers' compliance with requirements. JOD funds were used to create a short BIP within the county jail for incarcerated offenders to prepare offenders to participate upon release.

### ***Enhancement of Victim Services***

Victim services are central to the community response to IPV. The JOD sites examined the range of services available to victims and funded nongovernmental victim service agencies to fill unmet needs.



In Dorchester, IPV victims were met at the courthouse by a triager, a victim aide who completed initial restraining order paperwork, assessed service needs, and made referrals to other providers located in the courthouse. Specialized domestic violence victim/witness staff in the District Attorney's Office assisted victims with matters relating to criminal cases. JOD expanded cultural and linguistic diversity of assistance for victims by establishing a Civil Legal Services Office (CLSO) in the courthouse, staffed by nongovernmental advocates from four different community agencies.

In Milwaukee, one victim service agency added a full-time case manager and one evening support group to serve older abused women, another hired staff to reach out to domestic violence victims identified by calls to the hotline as in need of service, while another expanded the scope of legal advocacy services to include taking digital photographs of injuries and distributing bus tickets, phone cards, and gift certificates to victims in emergency situations.

In Washtenaw, victims were served by new specialized domestic violence victim/witness staff in the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and by advocates from a large non-profit community-based service provider. The community agencies used JOD funds to create an autonomy program (providing advocacy and direct financial assistance to help victims reclaim their autonomy), enhance legal and protection order advocacy, and provide training to its own and other agencies' staff.

## The Evaluation of JOD

Two JOD sites -- Dorchester, MA, and Washtenaw County, MI -- participated in a quasi-experimental evaluation of the impact of the program. Intimate partner violence cases reaching disposition during JOD were compared to similar cases reaching disposition in Lowell, MA, and Ingham County, MI.<sup>6</sup> All IPV cases reaching disposition during the sampling periods were reviewed and included in the sample if appropriate.<sup>7</sup> To be eligible for the sample, cases had to involve: 1) criminal IPV charges; 2) victims and offenders age 18 or older; and 3) victims and offenders who lived in the target jurisdiction at the time of case disposition. Cases that reached disposition more than a year after the incident were excluded to limit loss of data due to poor recall of the facts of the incident and police response.

Data for this impact evaluation included: in-person interviews conducted two months after case disposition or sentencing and again nine months later,<sup>8</sup> criminal history records from state and local law enforcement records on arrests before and after the sampled IPV case,<sup>9</sup> and data on JOD victim services and probation supervision.

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<sup>6</sup> The selection of comparison sites is discussed in Chapter 3, Methodology. Chapter 4 presents a detailed comparison of responses to IPV in each participating site.

<sup>7</sup> The sampling periods were: Dorchester January 29, 2003 to November 11, 2004; Washtenaw County February 14, 2003 to April 4, 2003 and then from November 21, 2003 to October 29, 2004, Ingham County: March 12, 2003 to March 12, 2004; and Lowell January 29, 2003 to August 27, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Atlantic Research and Consulting (now Guidelines) conducted the in-person interviews in MA. The Center for Urban Studies (CUS) at Wayne State University conducted the in-person interviews in MI.

<sup>9</sup> In Michigan, the Michigan State Police Department of Information Technology provided the criminal history records. In Massachusetts, criminal offender record information records from Massachusetts Criminal

Interviews were completed with 1034 victims (526 from JOD sites, 508 from comparison sites) two months after case disposition and 914 victims (90% of initial interview sample) 11 months after case disposition. Further, interviews were completed with 454 offenders (229 from JOD sites, 225 from comparison sites) two months after case disposition and 366 offenders (84% of initial interview sample) 11 months after case disposition. (See Tables 1.1 and 1.2 for victim and offender sample characteristics.)

	Dorchester (N=307)	Lowell (N=286)	Washtenaw (N=219)	Ingham (N=222)
Female	89%	88%	92%	91%
Average age	33.6	34.2	32.1	31.8
Race/ethnicity				
White	10%	67%	50%	49%
Black	64%	4%	39%	32%
Asian	1%	9%	1%	1%
Hispanic	7%	13%	1%	6%
Other/multiracial	18%	6%	10%	13%
Has children	86%	83%	76%	80%
High school graduate	78%	75%	88%	77%
U.S.-born	79%	78%	93%	96%
Employed	47%	58%	74%	61%

Offender Characteristics	Dorchester (N=97)	Lowell (N=82)	Washtenaw (N=83)	Ingham (N=103)
Average age	33.9	35.6	32.7	35.1
Male	79%	84%	84%	90%
Race				
White	8%	57%	49%	52%
Black	65%	1%	45%	36%
Other/multiracial	27%	41%	6%	12%
High school graduate	74%	66%	84%	76%
Not employed at initial interview	60%	46%	30%	38%
Number of prior arrests	8.3	3.7	1.9	2.9
Lived with victim at time of incident	61%	77%	66%	79%

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History Systems Board were supplemented by checks of warrants that resulted in arraignments after case disposition to verify that the new incidents occurred during the year after case disposition.

The evaluation design of JOD in Milwaukee differed from that of the other two sites. The evaluation in Milwaukee was based on a quasi-experimental comparison of offenders convicted of IPV and ordered to probation during JOD and before JOD. This design was selected when early plans for an experimental design had to be abandoned and no comparable contemporaneous comparison group could be identified. Data for this evaluation were collected from court and prosecutors' records of case and defendant characteristics, probation files on offender supervision practices, and official records of rearrest, but do not include interviews with victims or offenders. Findings from Milwaukee are presented in a separate report, but are summarized below with the findings from the evaluation of JOD in the other two sites.

Offender Characteristics	Pre-JOD (N=289 )	JOD (N= 333)
Age in years	35	34
Male	96%	93%
Race		
White	32%	32%
Black	56%	49%
Other/ multiracial	13%	19%
Number of prior arrests	5.1	5.2

## Study Limitations

The study was designed to measure the overall impact of the JOD intervention and was not designed to assess the impact of individual strategies or component services. The primary reason for this design is that individuals received various JOD interventions based on need and their particular circumstances, making comparisons to those who did not receive that particular intervention inappropriate. In addition, there was considerable variation within intervention components provided to sample members. For example, in each site offenders could be referred to one of several BIPs which varied in content and duration. Moreover, victims received services based on their need and interest in participation. Finally, the samples were too small to isolate similar samples who did and did not receive specific interventions.

Another caution is that the samples were carefully selected to create similar JOD and comparison groups, but group members were not randomly assigned to JOD as in a true experiment. With random assignment, sample groups can be assumed to vary only by chance. With the quasi-experimental design in this study, the validity of the results depends on the extent to which differences in sample characteristics can be adequately controlled in the statistical analysis. In the outcome analyses, weights and multivariate modeling techniques were used to control for observed group differences and minimize any bias due to selection effects, but cannot control for unobserved differences.

Another potential threat to the internal validity of the quasi-experimental comparisons in Massachusetts and Michigan is that pre-existing differences between JOD and comparison sites, not the JOD intervention, might account for differences in outcome. However, in this study the process evaluation (see Volume 2) documents differences in the response to IPV in each site, providing supporting evidence for differences in policies and practices hypothesized to impact the outcomes. The threat that external features of the setting affect the outcomes is minimized in the Milwaukee evaluation by comparing outcomes within a single site before and during JOD. However, this design opens the possibility that changes other than JOD during the demonstration period could account for differences in outcomes. Monitoring of the court and other agency response to IPV during the Milwaukee demonstration period did not identify events other than JOD that were likely to affect the measured outcomes.

To avoid the risk that measurement error could distort or attenuate the observed effects of JOD, the study used multiple outcome measures and diverse data sources. This strategy was chosen to avoid relying on any single measure, given the imperfections in measurement associated with any single measure. The most robust findings are those based on the best data sources and confirmed by multiple outcome measures.

Another potential limitation involves the external generalizability of the findings. These evaluations were based on experiences at three carefully selected sites. The extent to which results from these locations can be generalized to other communities cannot be determined. The detailed site descriptions in Chapter 4 in this volume may provide a basis for judgments about the context in which the intervention was implemented.

## **Key Findings on the Impact of JOD**

Highlights of findings on the impact of JOD on three primary outcomes -- victim well-being, offender accountability and perceptions, and revictimization – are presented in this section. The following sections present findings on JOD implementation and focus groups. The concluding section discusses implications of the findings for policy and practice.

### ***VICTIM SERVICES AND WELL-BEING<sup>10</sup>***

#### ***JOD increased community-based victim services, particularly in Michigan.***

In Michigan, but not in Massachusetts, JOD victims were significantly more likely than comparison victims to report contact with nongovernmental (NGO) victim services.

NGO advocates had contact with 68% of the JOD victims in Washtenaw County, compared to 22% of the JOD victims in Dorchester. This difference resulted in part from the focus in Massachusetts on serving victims in civil cases.

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<sup>10</sup> The results in this section are based on the evaluation of JOD in Dorchester and Washtenaw County because interviews were not conducted as part of the evaluation of JOD in Milwaukee.

In both JOD sites, victims contacted by NGO service providers received more services and were more likely to receive needs assessments and safety planning than comparison victims contacted by NGO service providers.

In both Dorchester and Washtenaw County, victim/witness staff in JOD prosecutors' offices or the court<sup>11</sup> contacted at least 80 percent of victims in criminal cases and provided an average of four or more different types of services to those they contacted.

***Victims who received NGO victim services were pleased with the service quality.***

Victim ratings of service quality and satisfaction were generally positive. There was no difference in ratings between JOD and comparison victims who received services.

***Victims in all sites were generally satisfied with the response of police, prosecutors, and the court and rated their fairness and impact on future violence positively.***

JOD and comparison victims did not differ in ratings despite some differences in patterns of police, prosecution, and court practice across sites.

***Victims identified some problems in interactions with justice agencies.***

Victims from all sites reported barriers to participation with prosecution, with fear of defendant retaliation being the most common. Barriers to court attendance included scheduling conflicts as the most common barrier, and comparison victims were more likely to cite fear as a participation barrier than JOD victims.

***JOD increased victim contacts with probation agents.***

Two-thirds to three-quarters of JOD victims in both states reported contact with probation officers, which was about two to three times the number of comparison victims reporting such contact. In Michigan, JOD victims with probation officer contact also had more contacts and rated these contacts more favorably than did comparison victims with contact. JOD victims in Michigan, but not in Massachusetts, also reported more contact with BIPs than comparison victims.

***Victims in all sites reported moderately high levels of safety and well-being eleven months after the incident.***

Factors that influenced these victim outcomes included the victims' reports of defendants' psychological or emotional problems; victims' social support resources; and direct consequences of the incident and the subsequent court case, both positive and negative. No significant differences between JOD and comparison victims in perceptions of safety or well-being were found.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on agency records in JOD sites (not available in comparison sites).

## **OFFENDER ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERCEPTIONS**

### ***JOD increased offender accountability, especially in Dorchester and Milwaukee.***

In all sites, JOD introduced post-disposition review hearings for IPV offenders placed on probation. Probationers were required to appear before the sentencing judge for review of their compliance with court orders and progress in BIP and were aware that their behavior would be scrutinized and violations subject to penalties.

JOD offenders had more probation requirements than comparison offenders, although specific requirements varied by site. In Massachusetts and Michigan, they were more likely to be ordered to attend a BIP, abstain from drug and alcohol use, and undergo substance abuse testing and were placed in BIP programs that lasted longer and cost more per session than comparison offenders. In all three sites, they were more likely to have court orders specifying no contact with the victim without consent. In Massachusetts, they were more likely to be ordered to substance abuse evaluation or to attend a fatherhood program or (for female offenders) women's group. In Michigan, they were more likely to be ordered to mental health evaluation and have restrictions on weapons. In Wisconsin, JOD offenders were much more likely to be required to remain sober, stay employed, and comply with other specific probation conditions.

In Massachusetts, JOD offenders were significantly more likely than comparison offenders to be convicted and sentenced, and more likely to be sent to jail or probation. They were also more likely to have the case Continued Without a Finding (CWOFF), and less likely to be granted deferred prosecution.<sup>12</sup>

In Massachusetts, greater offender accountability was not accomplished at the cost of defendant rights: JOD offenders were more likely to have a public defender and had, on average, more defense attorneys than comparison offenders.

### ***In Massachusetts, JOD increased offender understanding of the legal process.***<sup>13</sup>

In Massachusetts, Dorchester offenders were significantly more likely than Lowell offenders to report that the legal process was clearly explained by the judge and scored higher on their understanding of the legal process. In Michigan, the only significant difference in understanding of the legal process was that Washtenaw County offenders were significantly more likely than Ingham County offenders to report that the defense attorney clearly explained the charges against them.

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<sup>12</sup> Similar differences were not found in Michigan because all offenders in both sites were convicted (only Massachusetts allowed deferred prosecution and cases continued without a finding, although some Michigan convictions were later expunged from the record).

<sup>13</sup> Results for Milwaukee are limited to factors that were captured in the review of probation and court files and do not include offender perceptions measured on surveys in Massachusetts and Michigan.

***JOD did not decrease perceptions of the fairness of judges and the probation departments.***

There were no significant differences between JOD and comparison offenders in Massachusetts and Michigan in ratings of the fairness of the judges, fairness of the probation agents, or in offender satisfaction with the way these officials responded to the IPV incident.

***In Massachusetts, JOD offenders rated the police and defense attorneys lower than comparison offenders on fairness and satisfaction. No significant differences between JOD and comparison offenders on these measures were found in Michigan.***

The lower ratings resulted in lower overall scores by JOD offenders in Massachusetts on ratings of justice system fairness and satisfaction. Reasons for the differences between Dorchester and Lowell offenders are not clear, but may be related to more aggressive enforcement and prosecution under JOD. It is also possible that mistrust of the police and defense attorneys is generally more prevalent among minority and immigrant populations, influencing the responses of police and defense attorneys in Dorchester where a greater portion of the sample was from these populations.

***JOD increased offender compliance with court orders to report to probation and BIP.***

Increased offender compliance under JOD was observed in several ways. In both states and overall, JOD offenders were significantly more likely than comparison offenders to report to batter intervention programs (BIP) in the first two months after case disposition. Similarly, JOD offenders were less likely to miss a BIP session by the time of the follow up interview if ordered to attend. In Michigan, but not Massachusetts, JOD offenders were significantly more likely to report to probation in the first two months than comparison offenders. JOD offenders had reported to probation by the time of the follow up interview at slightly higher rates than comparison offenders in both Massachusetts and Michigan, resulting in a significantly higher reporting rate in the overall sample.

***JOD increased the perceived certainty or severity of penalties for violations of some court-ordered requirements.***

Sanctions for missing BIP sessions were significantly more certain in Dorchester than in Lowell, and slightly more likely in Washtenaw than Ingham, producing an overall significantly higher sanction certainty in JOD than comparison areas. Sanctions for missing probation appointments were significantly more severe in Dorchester than in Lowell, and slightly more severe in Washtenaw than Ingham, producing an overall significantly higher sanction severity in JOD than comparison areas. These findings must be viewed with some caution, however, because relatively few offenders reported these violations and sanctions, reducing the power of the analysis to detect differences in sanctioning practices.

In Milwaukee, review of the records showed that during JOD probation agents were more likely to penalize problems that came to their attention and imposed more severe penalties for probation violations.

Probation revocation, the most severe sanction, was much more frequent during JOD than before in Milwaukee and more widely used in Dorchester than Washtenaw County. Probation records showed revocations in the first year after case disposition for 27% of the Milwaukee IPV probationers, 12% of Dorchester IPV probationers, compared to 1% of the Washtenaw IPV probationers. In Milwaukee, probation agents initiated more revocations for technical violations, failure to comply with BIP requirements, unauthorized victim contacts, and new criminal activities under JOD than previously.

***JOD did not create heightened belief among offenders that IPV would result in negative legal consequences.***

Criminal justice theory predicts that perceptions of the certainty of negative consequences for illegal behavior will deter illegal behavior. In both sites, offenders rated the certainty and severity of legal penalties for future IPV as high; there was no significant difference in ratings between JOD and comparison offenders. However, in Massachusetts but not in Michigan, JOD significantly increased the perception that future IPV would have negative social consequences for offenders in the form of loss of employment or negative responses from family, friends, children, or the victim.

## ***REVICTIMIZATION***

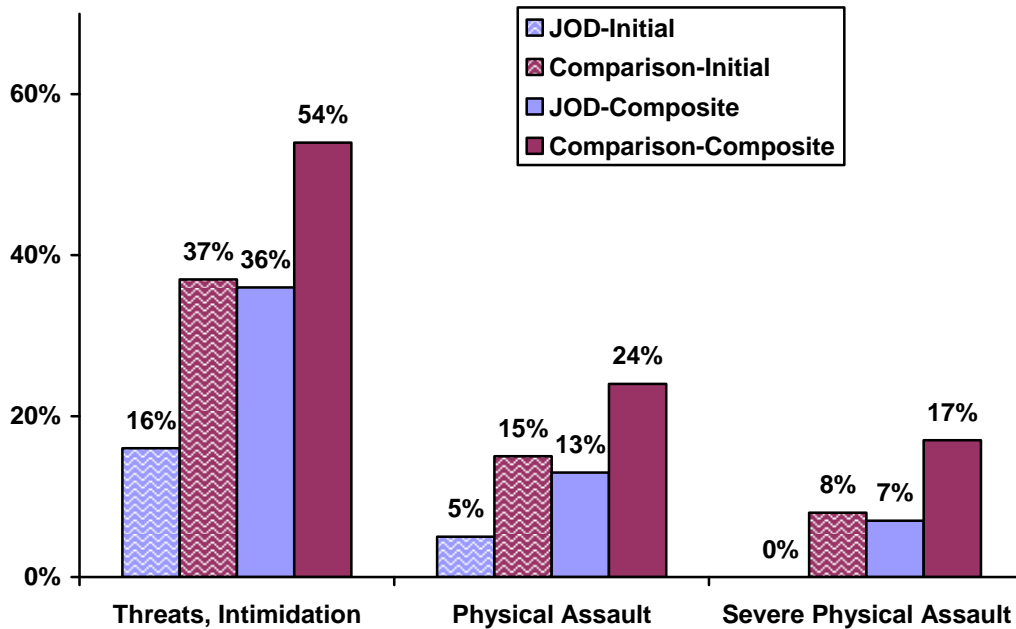
***JOD victims in Massachusetts reported significantly lower rates of new IPV.***

In Massachusetts, JOD victims reported significantly less repeat IPV by the offender than comparison victims in the first two (initial report) and then eleven months (composite report) since the incident, using multiple measures of revictimization: any threat or intimidation, physical assault, or severe physical assault (see Figure 1.2). In addition, JOD victims in Massachusetts reported lower frequency of physical assault at both time points and lower frequency of severe physical assault at the initial time point.

In Michigan, there was no significant difference between JOD and comparison victims in their reports of repeat IPV on any measure at either interview. As a result, no general effects of the JOD model on repeat IPV can be inferred.



**Figure 1. 2 Estimated Massachusetts' JOD Effects Based on Multivariate Modeling Results with Control Variables Held Constant at their Means.**



***JOD reductions in victim reports of repeat IPV were stronger for some types of victims and offenders.***

In multivariate models predicting repeat IPV, significant interactions showed that, collectively, JOD had its strongest effect in reducing victim reports of repeat IPV when:

- Offenders were young (age 18 to 29);
- Offenders had a high number of prior arrests (7 or more);
- Victims had moderate to high social support;
- Victims did not have children in common with the offender; and
- The relationship between victim and offender was less than 3 years in duration.

***Offender self-reports of repeat IPV were very low and showed no significant variation between JOD and comparison samples.***

Overall, very few offenders admitted to repeat IPV at 2 months post-disposition, and reports at 11 months after disposition were one-third to one-half the rates reported by victims. Earlier research has consistently reported that offenders report significantly lower rates of repeat violence than victims. Based on offender self-reports, there

were no significant differences in the prevalence or frequency of physical or severe physical assaults measured at 2 months and 11 months after case disposition.

***Offenders' perceptions of legal deterrence predicted lower frequency of offender reports of repeat IPV.***

Offenders who reported medium to high ratings of legal deterrence reported lower frequencies of physical assault against their victim, although no such differences were observed for other measures of repeat IPV (e.g., prevalence of physical assault, prevalence and frequency of severe physical assault). However, as noted earlier, JOD and comparison offenders did not differ in perceptions of legal deterrence.

***Offender procedural justice ratings predicted lower risk of repeat physical assault reported by comparison offenders, but higher risk of repeat physical assault reported by JOD offenders.***

In comparison sites, procedural justice affected offenders' likelihood of repeat IPV: those with high ratings were less likely to reoffend than those with low ratings as predicted by prior research. But in JOD sites, the reverse was found: those with high ratings were *more* likely to reoffend than those with low ratings. This result appears contrary to the research on procedural justice and offender behavior, and we can only speculate that JOD offenders' interactions with criminal justice system actors (police, prosecutor, judge) may have affected JOD offenders' thoughts in unknown ways.

***JOD did not reduce the likelihood of offender re-arrest in Massachusetts or Michigan when characteristics of the victim, offender, and IPV case were controlled.***

Estimated official re-arrest rates from the multivariate models for the JOD and comparison samples ranged from 18% of JOD offenders in Michigan to 31% of JOD offenders in Massachusetts. These rates are comparable to several studies that have reported about a 25 percent offender recidivism rate in the year following an IPV incident. Unfortunately, we were unable to distinguish IPV arrests from other arrests in the data made available to us from Michigan and Massachusetts.

Possibly because of the general arrest measure, JOD had no significant effect on offender re-arrest rates in the year after case disposition. The likelihood of offender re-arrest, using a multivariate model that controlled for characteristics of the victim, offender, and IPV cases, was 22% for JOD offenders and 28% for comparison offenders. While this result is in the expected direction, it is not statistically significant at conventional levels of hypothesis testing.

***In Milwaukee, JOD decreased the likelihood of arrest for domestic violence during the first year of probation,***

IPV probationers were significantly less likely to be arrested in the year after case disposition for domestic violence during JOD (14%) than before JOD (23%) in Milwaukee, when only re-arrests for IPV and other kinds of domestic violence were

counted. As in Massachusetts and Michigan, there was no significant difference between JOD and comparison offenders on the total number of all rearrests. The increase in revocation and the resulting incarceration suggests that the lower domestic violence arrest rates may have been attained primarily through early detection and incarceration of probationers who continued their pattern of domestic violence or otherwise failed to comply with conditions of probation.

## Lessons on JOD Implementation

Lessons on JOD implementation were drawn from the experiences of all three demonstration sites documented through process evaluation across the entire study period. The process evaluation included regular visits to JOD and comparison sites, semi-structured interviews with JOD partners, observations of court proceedings and other activities, quantitative data on site operations, conference calls, group meetings with sites and national partners, and focus group interviews with offenders and victims in each site. The lessons are intended to assist other jurisdictions that are considering innovative, comprehensive responses to IPV in their communities.

The process evaluation identified three principal impacts of JOD on criminal justice and community responses to IPV cases: (1) increased coordination between the judiciary and other justice and community agencies; (2) increased consistency in the justice system response to IPV cases; and (3) lasting changes in the system response to IPV including judicial review hearings for IPV probationers, improved practices for investigating and prosecuting IPV cases, and increased contact of probation agents with BIPs and IPV victims.

Strategies identified as particularly helpful in implementing JOD included:

- *Involving all partners in formal strategic planning process.* For all sites, these sessions were the first time that such a diverse group of justice and community agencies had come together to discuss a coordinated response to domestic violence in their community. These planning sessions highlighted components of the initiative that required more attention, allowed agency partners to discuss their views on their role in the initiative, and led to the development of subcommittees and further technical assistance on specific topics.
- *Actively managing the collaboration through regularly scheduled meetings and a full time project director.* In each site, the management of JOD required regular team meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and meetings of subcommittees around specific issues. Ongoing meetings increased case-level collaboration and increased understanding among the agencies and confidence among social service providers and probation that their efforts to change offender behavior would be supported.
- *Building an inclusive set of partners beyond the core criminal justice agencies and giving them a voice in shaping policies and procedures.* The sites also found it important to continue adding partners as the partnership grew, developing plans for outreach to specific cultural groups, and adding other

types of victim assistance and offender intervention programs available for court referrals.

- *Using technical assistance by “outsiders” with acknowledged expertise to help promote change.* In all demonstration sites, training of personnel in JOD partner agencies and technical assistance in developing new policies and procedures was extensive and ongoing.
- *Dedicating specialized staff to intimate partner violence cases.* To act effectively, the police, prosecutors, courts, and probation agencies need staff trained in the challenges of these cases, strategies for responding effectively, and personal ties to specialized staff in partner agencies to foster a team approach to managing cases.

JOD partnerships began with a vision of collaborative operations in which agencies would work together seamlessly to protect victims and hold offenders accountable for their violence. Agreements were forged and commitments made. However, the process of actualizing this collaborative vision encountered barriers and challenges that can serve as a lesson and guide to agencies embarking on similar coordinated responses to IPV. Key challenges included:

- Gaps in knowledge about the operations of other partner agencies.
- Understanding the implications of changes on the workload of partner agencies.
- County and state rules governing recruiting and funding of new positions that slowed the start of the project and limited hiring options.
- Inadequate systems for sharing of data across justice agencies and with community service providers. Even data systems routinely kept by the courts and other justice agencies were often not adequate or in a form that can be used to provide timely information to other partner agencies.
- Differences in goals, roles, and expectations of justice agencies and community-based victim service providers. Issues arose around client confidentiality, encouraging victims to testify in court, and weight to be given to victim preferences during prosecution. The sites had varying levels of success in meeting this challenge, and other communities are likely to face similar challenges.

## **Lessons from JOD Focus Groups**

Eight focus groups were conducted in the JOD demonstration sites: four victim focus groups (two in Milwaukee and one each in Dorchester and Washtenaw) and four offender focus groups (two in Milwaukee and one each in Dorchester and Washtenaw). Victim focus group participants were recruited from lists of victims named in criminal cases filed in JOD courts (Dorchester and Washtenaw) or from lists provided by participating JOD agencies (Milwaukee). Offender focus group participants were recruited from lists of probationers who were convicted of IPV offenses before focus group recruitment began.

<b>Table 1.4 Characteristics of JOD Focus Groups</b>				
<b>Site</b>	<b>Type of Participant</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity of Participants</b>	<b>Date of Focus Group</b>
<b>Dorchester</b>	Victims	13	10 African American 3 White	November 2004
<b>Milwaukee</b>	Victims	8	4 African American 3 White 1 Asian American	July 2003
<b>Milwaukee</b>	Victims	10	6 African American 1 White	July 2003
<b>Washtenaw</b>	Victims	10	4 African American 5 White 1 Hispanic	September 2004
<b>Total Victims</b>		<b>41<sup>1</sup></b>		
<b>Site</b>	<b>Type of Participant</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity of Participants</b>	<b>Date of Focus Group</b>
<b>Dorchester</b>	Offenders	10	9 African American 1 White	December 2003
<b>Milwaukee</b>	Offenders	9	5 African American 3 White 1 Unknown	September 2003
<b>Milwaukee</b>	Offenders	8	4 African American 4 White	September 2003
<b>Washtenaw</b>	Offenders	6	6 White	September 2004
<b>Total Offenders</b>		<b>33<sup>2</sup></b>		
<sup>1</sup> 40 women, 1 man				
<sup>2</sup> 32 men, 1 woman				

The focus groups were conducted to supplement the quantitative survey findings by allowing an open discussion on a variety of topics without restricting the type or form of feedback received. This type of information complements quantitative findings and provides important narrative details on the lives of program participants. By design, the focus groups were limited to a small number of participants to permit in-depth discussion. Although potential participants were selected without regard to individual or case characteristics from lists of victims and offenders in JOD cases by researchers, many of those invited did not attend the groups. Thus, there is no way to know if the views of

those who did attend are representative of victims and offenders in criminal IPV cases in the JOD jurisdictions.

The discussion focused on victim and offender perceptions of procedural justice with respect to their interactions with police, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation, the court, the judge, victim service agencies, and batterer intervention programs. Understanding procedural justice issues and reflecting such themes in service practices may lead to improved offender compliance with case outcomes, and improved satisfaction and safety for victims.

Findings across the sites, for both victims and offenders, indicate the importance of procedural justice concepts when individuals reflect on their IPV cases, services received, and related outcomes. Individuals involved in IPV cases, whether victim or offender, want to feel as though they have been heard and treated with respect and consideration. They want those in the justice system to act impartially and neutrally when responding to IPV incidents. The evaluation produced some recommendations based on the opinions of victims and offenders.

Victims generally endorsed the following police practices, which can be strengthened further through on-going training:

- Victims want the police to show concern for victims by responding quickly and taking appropriate legal steps based on the evidence at the scene, regardless of the abuser's criminal profile (i.e., whether he/she was wanted on other charges).
- Victims want police to avoid engaging in conversations that would put them on the spot, such as asking in the offender's presence whether the victim wanted the offender arrested, since this could trigger retaliation against the victim in the future. Victims felt that officers should only ask for the victim's input on the arrest decision if there was no clear evidence that a physical assault had occurred.
- Victims want the police to abstain from remarks that appear to trivialize the incident or appear to blame the victim. Such remarks were reported by more than a few victims.
- Victims want more consistent enforcement of protection orders, including those issued by courts outside the local jurisdiction.
- Victims noted that police have difficulty in responding to IPV calls that, according to victims, involved alcohol and sometimes cocaine.

Offenders in all focus groups complained about the police making quick judgments about the incident and not considering their sides of the story. A frequent complaint was that officers were quick to judge the male as the primary or only aggressor in the situation, even when physical evidence pointed otherwise. Offenders generally endorsed the following police practices and identified them as areas that should be strengthened.

- Offenders want the police to give them an opportunity to present their side of the story before an arrest decision is made. Several participants remarked that the police officer took the women's statement but did not take their statement. This may require an extension of training in determining probable cause and the primary aggressor.
- Offenders want to be treated with respect, despite their apparent responsibility for the crime. Some of the offenders felt that their treatment during arrest and pretrial detention violated the legal assumption of innocent until proven guilty, in that officers' behavior and jail conditions were inappropriately punitive or deliberately and unnecessarily humiliating.

Victim focus group produced several recommendations for courts.

- Victims, particularly those with children and those with ongoing, long-term relationships with the offender, want the court to consider their individual needs and wishes in setting a no-contact order and its duration and conditions. This would help police enforce them more consistently, help ensure respect for court orders, and offer greater protection to victims.
- Victims indicated a need for emotional support during the case and greater security during the court process—especially at in-court appearances.
- Victims implicitly supported the concept of evidence-based prosecution that would allow victims to choose whether to testify in court or not, and those who had this choice were grateful.
- Victims varied in whether they wanted the offender penalized or treated. This led to consensus on wanting greater input into sentencing decisions and more variation in sentences so they could be tailored to the situation.

Offenders in the focus groups were generally less satisfied with their court experience. These perceptions reflect areas in which courts could expand efforts to explain the legal process to the offender.

- Some offenders wanted more opportunity for a strong defense in which their side of the case was explained in court.
- Some offenders did not believe that all IPV offenders were treated equally under the law by participants who cited similar sentences for cases of varying severity and that sentences were not tailored to the severity of the incident and criminal history.
- Some offenders thought the financial consequences were more severe (too severe) for low-income working men than for upper-income men (who could afford to pay the fees) and the unemployed (who, by virtue of the sliding scales, paid almost nothing).

Offenders identified two areas of concern about status review hearings. First, the frequency of the hearings put a strain on their employment (particularly for those who were not fully compliant, thereby requiring additional hearings). Second, offenders wanted more opportunity to address the court during their review hearings.

## **Implications for Research, Policy and Practice**

### ***Feasibility and Impact of the JOD Model***

The implementation study indicates that JOD is feasible and provided many benefits to the justice agencies. The JOD initiatives targeted at court improvement and leadership -- greater court specialization, initiation of pre-trial monitoring and post-trial compliance reviews, coordination with victim service agencies -- and probation improvement and leadership -- dedicated DV agents, increased supervision, compliance review preparations, outreach to victims -- resulted in significant advances in holding offenders accountable. Improvements were made in monitoring, consistent sanctioning and sentencing decisions, and compliance review (court and probation functions) that were not previously achieved by communities relying on police leadership or coordinated community responses that did not engage these agencies.

The JOD model implementation was tailored to site needs and resources, and specific strategies and arrangements varied from site to site. However, data from multiple sources confirm that significant changes in justice system collaboration and offender accountability occurred in JOD sites. All JOD sites achieved substantial gains in collaboration among justice agencies responding to IPV, expanding participation by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges and probation agents.

Criminal justice partner agencies in the JOD sites were very enthusiastic about improvements in interagency communication and coordination of efforts, which emerged from the joint planning and development of arrangements for sharing information on IPV offender status. They also embraced new JOD innovations. Courts in all three JOD sites hope to continue specialized domestic violence dockets and judicial review hearings. The Milwaukee probation agency has trained all agents working in the county in domestic violence supervision practices including victim contact. In all JOD sites, the prosecutors and police are pleased with improvements in evidence collection and investigations to support prosecution. In addition, the increased coordination between the judiciary and other justice and community agencies led to improved consistency and significant changes in the justice system response to IPV. The lessons from the implementation study summarized above and discussed in Volume 2 provide guidance on building and sustaining coordination across justice and community agencies.

These substantial changes in the collaborative response to IPV produced mixed results in terms of project goals. The project did not achieve gains in victim perceptions of their safety or well-being using survey measures. Gains in offender accountability were significant, but did not translate into perceptions likely to deter future offending.



Reductions in victim reports of repeat IPV were found in Massachusetts, but not in Michigan. Reductions in domestic violence arrests were found in Milwaukee, but not in the two states which had only measures of rearrest on all charges. This mixed pattern of results points to the need for further efforts in several areas.

The reductions in repeat IPV occurred in the jurisdictions that revoked probationers for non-compliance. The implication is that the reduction resulted from incapacitating abusers who fail to comply to probation conditions rather than by deterring offenders. Despite implementation of strategies for holding offenders accountable, through judicial review hearings, specialized prosecution and probation, police training, and increased BIP requirements, there was no significant difference in the perception of risk of legal sanctions for future IPV between JOD and comparison offenders. However, Dorchester offenders scored much higher on a measure of perceived certainty of legal sanctions for repeat IPV than did Washtenaw offenders. To some extent, these perceptions may be related to the higher rate of actual revocation in Dorchester (12%) compared to Washtenaw (1%). In Milwaukee, much higher revocation rates (27% in the first year of probation) were accompanied by a dramatic drop in rearrest rates for IPV, probably due to incarceration of offenders most likely to be arrested. These findings suggest that research is needed on the effectiveness of selective incarceration through probation revocation or other strategies for increasing the perceived threat of legal sanctions in this population.

Like many other studies, JOD found efforts to change offender perceptions and reduce IPV reoffending challenging. The results do suggest, like those of other studies, that referral to batterer intervention programs does not have a powerful effect in reducing IPV. Until progress is made in changing offender beliefs and behavior, the implication is that the justice system must continue to focus on protecting victims and using the authority of its agencies to closely monitor offenders and respond rapidly with penalties when violations of court-ordered conditions are detected.

The success of JOD in reducing IPV in selected subgroups may be a fruitful way to begin designing new intervention strategies. There were indications that JOD strategies are particularly effective for some subgroups including younger offenders with fewer ties to the victim as well as offenders with extensive arrest histories. Further research to confirm these findings may well lead to guidance for the courts on the appropriateness of alternative sentences and supervision conditions.

The lessons on whether a coordinated system response to IPV is beneficial for victims are less obvious. Even in Michigan, where the large majority of JOD victims received a wide range of quality services, victims did not report higher levels of well-being or safety than comparison victims. Survey results indicate that interventions intended to improve victims' safety and overall well-being need to go beyond services centered on cases in the court system, to include services that address issues in the victims' lives outside the realm of the court case. Victim service providers' efforts may be most fruitful when they focus on helping victims strengthen their social support networks and augment the positive consequences while attenuating the negative impacts of abuse and its aftermath, such as financial impacts (finding a job), practical issues such as moving, and helping the victims

and their children cope with emotional trauma. However, despite the efforts of victim service agencies to provide support and encouragement, victims may be unwilling to take actions that would increase their safety. In all sites (JOD and comparison sites), victims who reported that they had lived with their offender or had frequent contact with their offender after the case was disposed were more likely to report repeat victimization, including intimidation, threats, and assaults.

### ***Implications for Service Delivery***

Survey and focus group results indicate that victims who received victim services were very satisfied with them. However, there were substantial differences in victim services provided across the sites. Most criminal case victims in the focus groups in the two sites with multiple non-governmental agencies affiliated with JOD said they were not referred to victim services by anyone at the court. These victims were generally unfamiliar with basic safety planning strategies. In some cases, the non-governmental advocates in these sites focused on providing services in civil matters such as protection orders; in other cases, the advocates targeted special populations or were located off-site, making communication with the court more difficult. Most of these victims expressed an interest in services, particularly in receiving emotional support and services for their children. In Washtenaw County, a single victim service agency worked very closely with staff in the prosecutor's office and had contact with the large majority of the victims in criminal cases. This level of close collaboration may be necessary to reach IPV victims. Service gaps in that site seemed to be limited to preferences for more services for children, and housing options other than shelter such as independent, family-style housing, possibly through private arrangements with landlords.

Efforts to improve victim services need to continue. Feedback from victims in the focus groups suggests the existence of unmet needs for better housing options and greater counseling and other service options for their children. Also notable, at least some, if not most, victims across all three sites were particularly critical of their treatment by the police and prosecutors. Victims described examples in which they felt that these agents failed to treat victims with due respect and dignity. The focus groups thus highlight a need for improved training among stakeholders who interact with victims. Concerning the police in particular, most victims indicated that they did not want the police to ask them directly whether to make an arrest (i.e., in front of the offender), but to evaluate the situation thoughtfully and considerately and then attempt to use sound judgment about how to proceed. Concerning prosecution, most victims indicated that they wanted to retain a voice in the prosecution, but most believed that they were not actually granted such a voice. Some expressed a feeling that prosecutors essentially used them for their own purposes but were not concerned for the victim's individual situation.

Similarly, organizational differences may account for variation in offender experiences with probation. Offenders in areas with specialized probation units or officers praised probation officers for their helpfulness. However, offenders in Milwaukee supervised by a large, non-specialized agency wanted probation officers to be more service-oriented and less enforcement-oriented. Probationers there discussed incidents where agents enforce rules and court orders differently leading to feelings of unfair and unequal treatment.

Probationers described incidents where their agents required them to obtain employment but did not offer any assistance in finding and securing a job. Others were dismayed when their agents refused to schedule appointments around the offender's work schedule and did not understand why keeping the offender employed was not a top priority of the agent. This suggests that specialized probation supervision may be more effective in motivating offenders to engage in required services.

Overall, the evaluation points to the need for research in a several critical areas: building stronger linkages between courts and NGO victim service providers given the high levels of satisfaction with services when they are received, motivating offender compliance and desistance from violence using both sanctions and treatment in combination, and changing offender perceptions of the risks of future violence, and identifying and addressing victim needs to ensure their safety and well-being.

## Project Reports (by date)

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