



# ALLEGHENY COUNTY

ALWAYS INSPIRING

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Allegheny County Joins Safety & Justice Challenge Initiative**

**PITTSBURGH** – Allegheny County was announced as one of 20 jurisdictions joining the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#), a national \$100 million initiative supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The effort is focused on reducing over-incarceration by changing the way America thinks about and uses jails. Allegheny County will be one of 21 communities that will design and test innovative local justice reforms designed to safely drive down jail usage and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in their local justice systems.

“We have been fortunate to have organizations such as the Criminal Justice Advisory Board, and our local foundations that have supported and driven our local reform efforts,” said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. “We are thrilled to be selected for participation in the Safety and Justice Challenge, and look forward to putting these resources to work to further improve our criminal justice system.”

Allegheny County was chosen following a highly competitive selection process that drew applications from across the country. Through the Challenge’s Innovation Fund, the county will receive support and expert technical assistance in designing and implementing local reforms. Specifically, the county will build dashboards using a CompStat (computer statistics) model that will integrate data that affects both admissions to the jail and length of stay, such as arrests and bookings, use of bail and probation, alternative housing availability, mental health and drug and alcohol treatment availability, pretrial detention periods, and use of detainers for parole violations. Key stakeholders will convene to review real-time data and use it as a basis for decision-making and problem solving. Through this effort, the county will more clearly understand the main drivers of the jail population and take data-driven action to safely reduce the population.

“Local jurisdictions are leading the way on justice reform,” said MacArthur President Julia Stasch. “Demand for reform at the local level is considerable and growing, as evidenced by the number, diversity and creativity of the applications we received. This momentum is encouraging, particularly as the federal justice reform landscape evolves and shifts.”

Allegheny County will receive short-term support of \$50,000, is eligible for future funding opportunities, and have access to the resources, peer learning opportunities, and expertise of the Safety and Justice Challenge Network. The Urban Institute, which is managing the Innovation Fund in partnership with the Foundation, will provide expert technical assistance to the jurisdictions as they implement their plans. Key learnings and resources emerging from the Innovation Fund will be shared with and beyond the justice reform field.

The Innovation Fund jurisdictions expand the Challenge’s reach into new states and deepen its work across the country. In addition to Allegheny County, participants in the Challenge include Adams County, CO; City of Atlanta, GA; Broward County, FL; Buncombe County, NC; Campbell County, TN; Clark County, NV; Dane County, WI; State of Delaware; Deschutes County, OR; Durham County, NC; East Baton Rouge Parish, LA; Lake County, IL; Minnehaha County, SD; Missoula County, MT; Polk County, IA; City and County of San Francisco, CA; Santa Clara County, CA; Summit County, OH; and Yakima County, WA.

Information about the selected jurisdictions, as well as news, research, and events related to the Safety and Justice Challenge, will be published on [www.SafetyandJusticeChallenge.org](http://www.SafetyandJusticeChallenge.org).

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### **About the MacArthur Foundation**

*The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. MacArthur is placing a few big bets that truly significant process is possible on some of the world's most pressing social challenges, including over-incarceration, global climate change, nuclear risk, and significantly increasing financial capital for the social sector. In addition to the MacArthur Fellows Program, the Foundation continues its historic commitments to the role of journalism in a responsible and responsive democracy, as well as the strength and vitality of our headquarters city, Chicago. More information about the Foundation's criminal justice reform work can be found at [www.macfound.org/criminaljustice](http://www.macfound.org/criminaljustice).*

### **About the Urban Institute**

*The nonprofit Urban Institute is dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. For nearly five decades, Urban scholars have conducted research and offered evidence-based solutions that improve lives and strengthen communities across a rapidly urbanizing world. Their objective research helps expand opportunities for all, reduce hardship among the most vulnerable, and strengthen the effectiveness of the public sector.*

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