



COOK COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE
Justice Advisory
Council



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024

MISSION

To promote equitable, human-centered, community-driven justice system innovation and practice through rigorous stakeholder engagement, policy work, service coordination, and grantmaking that increases community safety and reduces reliance on incarceration.



GROWTH & INNOVATION

The JAC has grown to over 25 staff, more than tripling our size over the past three years. Major areas of focus have been restructuring and expanding the grants compliance team and building our capacity for data analysis. With this growth, the JAC is optimizing and expanding its grantmaking and leveraging the latest research to inform Cook County’s community safety and criminal justice policy development.

\$37 Million
of Funding
Distributed

190
Grants in
the JAC
Portfolio

80
Returning
Residents in
Reconnect

2
Bills Passed in
Springfield

1
NACo
Achievement
Award





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Launched a second Cook County Racial Equity Cohort fellowship program for justice system impacted community members that includes co-learning with justice system stakeholders.
- Working with Cook County leadership to develop a community compensation model that will ensure residents who contribute to our work are equitably compensated for their knowledge and time.



POLICY WORK

- Supported the creation and passage of two bills that reduce barriers for justice involved people. HB4500, Truth and Accuracy in Offense Titles, changed "Unlawful Use of Weapon" to "Unlawful Possession of a Weapon" to more accurately reflect the charge. The RESET Act, SB2626, streamlines the expungement process.
- Supporting criminal justice reform efforts focused on reimagining youth detention and improving the administration of electronic monitoring in Cook County. Managing an infrastructure of collaboration for Cook County's criminal justice leaders.



GRANTS & INVESTMENTS

- Won a National Association of Counties Achievement Award for the Cook County Starting Block Grant initiative which supports capacity building projects for small community organizations.
- Awarded an additional \$3 million in Starting Block Grants, bringing the initiative to \$8 million.
- Awarded an additional \$900,000 in Cook County Domestic Violence Intervention and Support Services grants, bringing the initiative to almost \$6 million in investment.
- Provided a 14 month leadership development program called the Community of Care for the 150 organizations with Cook County Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction Grants.



REENTRY SERVICES

- Completed pilot phase for Cook County Reconnect, a reentry initiative that provides rental assistance and wraparound services to returning residents. Over 80 clients were housed or in the housing pipeline at the end of 2024.
- Facilitated overdose prevention training to all housing providers in our No Place to Stay program for people on Pretrial Electronic Monitoring.

