



Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia

Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years
2018 - 2022

www.psa.gov

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is my privilege to lead the Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia (PSA), where our talented and dedicated employees work tirelessly to advance our important public safety mission.



In 2017, PSA celebrated 50 years of service to the District of Columbia. Through our strong sense of mission and effective collaborations with justice partners, for half of a century we have ensured that unnecessary pretrial detention is minimized, jail crowding is reduced, public safety is enhanced, and the pretrial release process is administered fairly. Our risk assessment, drug testing, and innovative supervision and treatment programs have become recognized as models for the criminal justice system nationwide. We honor this status by routinely extending technical assistance to domestic and international justice systems interested in initiating or enhancing their own pretrial programs.

Our strategic plan for fiscal years 2018 – 2022 reflects a continued commitment to the fair administration of justice. Our efforts will focus on a creating customer-centric culture that meets the needs of our judges, protects the rights of our defendants and remains cognizant of our responsibility to the community within which we operate.

We will enhance our technological capabilities and leverage our risk assessment data to encourage judicial concurrence with release recommendations; maximize opportunities for defendants to remain on pretrial release until disposition of their cases; minimize rearrest during the pretrial period; and promote defendant appearance at all scheduled court dates.

In addition, we will expand our commitment to continuous evaluation and ongoing improvement of our services to ensure fidelity to best practices and emerging trends. We will also continue to cultivate and nurture collaborations with our justice partners across the District to help advance our interrelated missions.

Reflecting on and building upon our past successes, we are excited to begin our next 50 years of contributing to public safety in the Nation's Capital.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie C. Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leslie C. Cooper
Director

LEADERSHIP

Executive Management

Leslie C. Cooper, Esq.
Director

Catherine Terry-Crusor
Associate Director, Operations

Wendy L. Miller
Director, Office of Finance and
Administration

Hala Maktabi, Ph.D., MPH
Director, Office of Planning, Policy and
Analysis / Performance Improvement
Officer

Rickey J. Eaton
Director, Office of Information Technology

Felix Adatsi, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Forensic Toxicology
Services

Claire J. Fay
Director, Office of Justice and Community
Relations

Executive Committee

**Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby,
Chair**
Chief Judge, District of Columbia Court
of Appeals

Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Chief Judge, United States Court of
Appeals for the District of Columbia
Circuit

Honorable Beryl A. Howell
Chief Judge, United States District Court
for the District of Columbia

Honorable Robert E. Morin
Chief Judge, Superior Court of the
District of Columbia

James D. Berry, Jr.
Acting Director, Court Services and
Offender Supervision Agency for the
District of Columbia

Honorable Jessie K. Liu
United States Attorney for the District of
Columbia

Avis E. Buchanan, Esq.
Director, Public Defender Service for the
District of Columbia

ABOUT THE PRETRIAL SERVICES AGENCY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The mission of the Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia (PSA) is to promote pretrial justice and enhance community safety. In fulfilling our mission, we assist judicial officers in both the Superior Court of the District of Columbia (DC Superior Court) and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (US District Court) by providing information to support the Court's pretrial release or detention decision. We conduct a risk assessment for every person arrested on a criminal offense who is presented in court, identify detention eligibility and formulate release recommendations, as appropriate, based upon the arrestee's demographic information, criminal history, and substance use and/or mental health information. For defendants who are placed on conditional release pending trial, we provide supervision and treatment services that reasonably assure they return to court and do not engage in criminal activity.

PSA was created by an act of Congress (the *District of Columbia Bail Agency Act*) in 1967.¹ Under the *National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997*, PSA was established as an independent entity within the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government.² Since our inception as a Federal agency, we have sharpened our mission and vision and reaffirmed our commitment to being driven by performance and measured by results.

PSA celebrated 50 years of service to the Nation's Capital in 2017. Since our inception in 1967, we have earned a national reputation as a leader in the pretrial justice field. The District operates an "in or out" bail system that promotes open and transparent decisions about release or detention. The foundation of this system is the DC bail statute, which includes a presumption in favor of pretrial release for all non-capital defendants, emphasizes the use of least restrictive release conditions for eligible defendants, provides an option of preventive detention for those who pose an unacceptable risk to the community, and limits the use of money-based detention.

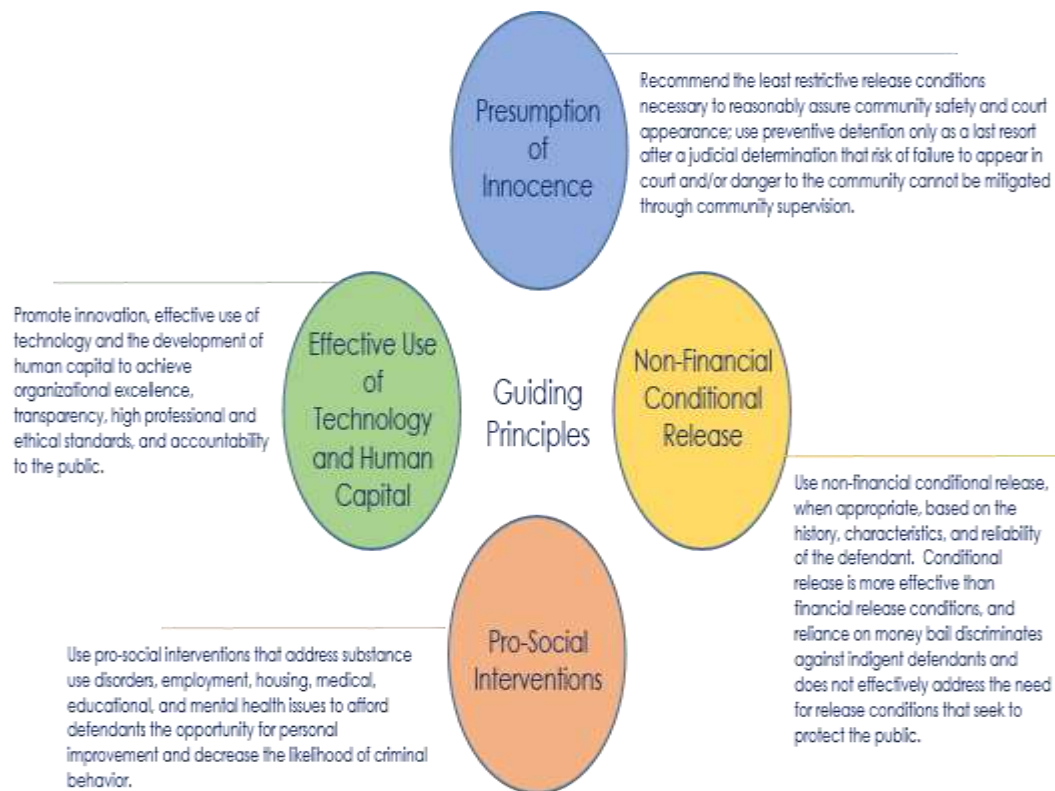
PSA employs evidence-based practices to help judicial officers in the city's local and Federal courts make appropriate and effective bail decisions. The result for the DC community is judicious use of jail resources, enhanced public safety, and a fairer and more effective system of release and detention.

¹ (<https://beta.code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/titles/23/chapters/13/>, n.d.)

² (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/105th-congress/house-bill/1963>, n.d.)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PSA observes the following guiding principles in fulfilling its mission of promoting pretrial justice and enhancing community safety:



ABOUT PSA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

PSA presents this strategic plan for fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to the President, Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and members of the public. This plan outlines our approach for achieving our strategic goals and objectives over the next five years.

The Government Performance and Results Modernization (GPRAMA) Act of 2010 governs the development and implementation of strategic plans.³ These plans must articulate the mission and goals, identify strategies to achieve the goals, and determine the ways in which success is measured.

PSA's strategic plan sets forth a framework of priorities and objectives that cascade throughout all levels of the Agency to guide its work on meeting its mission of promoting pretrial justice and enhancing community safety while striving for efficient Agency administration. Agency leaders and employees will use this plan to drive resource allocations and transform strategies into actions and measurable results. Progress will be routinely measured and collaboratively reviewed at all Agency levels. This review process facilitates thoughtful discussion on the Agency's progress and identifies opportunities for improvements and adjustments.

PSA's strategic plan is comprised of four strategic goals and one management objective that outline the long-term outcomes the Agency plans to achieve. Four strategic goals focus on effectiveness of mission accomplishment, and one management objective focuses on efficiency of Agency administration. The four strategic goals are supported by specific objectives that target Agency progress. Key strategies outline how the Agency will achieve its objectives and the performance indicators measure the impact of progress towards Agency goals. The structure of PSA's strategic plan complies with guidance from the OMB Circular A-11.⁴

PSA'S FY 2018-2019 AGENCY PRIORITY GOAL

Agency Priority Goals (APGs) support improvements in near term outcomes and rely on crosscutting Agency collaboration and execution. For this strategic period, PSA has identified an APG to achieve within a two-year period, which is to develop and implement risk-based supervision protocols to enhance public safety.

APG: Implement Risk-Based Supervision Model to Enhance Public Safety

Defendant supervision is at the core of pretrial justice—ensuring the right of each defendant to pretrial release under the least restrictive conditions, while also ensuring community safety and return to court. PSA's current case management model utilizes court-ordered conditions of release to place defendants in supervision "programs." These programs have uniform core requirements that result in similar approaches being utilized for all defendants who are released with the same release conditions. For example, all defendants within a specific program have the same reporting

³ (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/2142>, n.d.)

⁴ (https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/assets/a11_current_year/a11_2017.pdf, n.d.)

requirements, regardless of their individual risk levels. Best practices recommend utilization of individualized approaches that correspond to each defendant's assess risk(s). To supervise defendants more effectively, PSA is transitioning from a program-based to a risk-based supervision model, where supervision is tailored to each defendant's identified risk designation. When this change is made, using the example above, defendants with the same release conditions will have varying frequency and methods of reporting based on their individual risk designations.

During FYs 2018-19, PSA will develop and implement a new risk-based supervision model that aligns case management strategies to defendant risk designations allowing Pretrial Services Officers (PSO) to tailor supervision strategies to manage individualized defendant risk and needs.

Customizing supervision under PSA's new risk-based supervision model will focus resources on defendants most at risk of violating their release conditions. Under this new model, very low risk defendants (those released on personal recognizance) will receive only notification of future court dates. Low risk defendants with reporting conditions will require limited contact with PSA. Medium risk defendants will be placed under PSA's supervision and maintain regular contact through a combination of in-person and telephone reporting to a PSO. Higher risk defendants will be subject to more frequent and primarily in-person contact with an assigned PSO. PSA's risk-based supervision model will target interventions and supervision strategies to defendant risk designations.

To gauge the success of this new operating model during the early implementation phase, we will evaluate the distribution of resources (frequency of contact and response to defendant conduct by defendant risk level) against defendant continued pretrial release and court appearance rates.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: JUDICIAL CONCURRENCE WITH PSA RECOMMENDATIONS

PSA promotes the fair administration of justice by recommending the least restrictive release conditions consistent with community safety and return to court. To support judicial decisions, PSA provides a Pretrial Services Report (PSR), which contains recommendations regarding pretrial release or detention. In this report, PSA recommends – as appropriate – release conditions that are designed to mitigate the risk of failure to appear and rearrest during the pretrial period. PSA's release recommendations, which are based on a scientifically-validated risk assessment, include pro-social interventions, such as drug testing, behavioral health assessment and treatment, halfway house placement, global positioning system (GPS) electronic monitoring, and regular contact with a PSO. To gauge how often judicial officers concur with PSA's release recommendations, the Agency implemented a measure of judicial concurrence.

Strategic Objective 1.1: Risk Assessment

The PSR provides much of the information judicial officers use to determine a defendant's risk to the community and the level of supervision, if applicable. Risk assessment is a core component of the PSR. PSA uses a scientifically-validated risk assessment to determine each defendant's risk of pretrial misconduct. Use of this instrument, which was

developed specifically for the adult defendant population within Washington, DC, enhances the Agency's ability to accurately assess pretrial risk of failure and make appropriate recommendations to the Court regarding release conditions. To gauge the quality of the information provided to judicial officers for decision making, PSA implemented a measure of PSR completeness. A PSR is deemed "complete" when it contains defendant interview responses (or documented refusal thereof), lock-up drug test results, criminal history, and release recommendations based on risk assessment score, prior to the case being called in court.

Key Strategies

1. Re-validate the existing risk assessment instrument during the first 12 months of the strategic period to ensure that it has maintained its predictive validity and accuracy;
2. Revise the current PSR to more effectively inform judicial officer decisions; and
3. Implement risk-based recommendations matrix to support judicial decision making.

Performance Indicators

Table 1 – Performance Indicators for Strategic Goal 1: Judicial Concurrence with PSA Recommendations		
Performance Indicator Area	Indicator Description	Target
Strategic Goal 1	Rate at which judicial officers impose release conditions consistent with PSA's recommendations at initial appearance.	70%
Strategic Objective 1.1	Percentage of complete PSRs available prior to case being called in court.	73%

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: CONTINUED PRETRIAL RELEASE

Continued pretrial release ensures due process for defendants while minimizing the risk to public safety. During the pretrial period, defendant release may be revoked due to non-compliance with conditions of release. To gauge the effectiveness of defendant case management, PSA implemented a measure of continued pretrial release, which examines the rate at which defendants remain on release without revocation or a pending request for revocation due to non-compliance.

Strategic Objective 2.1: Effective Case Management

Case management is an individualized approach for securing, coordinating, and monitoring the appropriate supervision, treatment, and ancillary services necessary to manage each defendant successfully for optimal outcomes. It comprises all activities performed by PSA that support a defendant's compliance with court-ordered conditions of release, appearance at all scheduled court hearings, and crime-free behavior while on pretrial release. To gauge the effectiveness of its defendant case management, PSA

implemented measures of response to defendant non-compliance and defendant satisfaction with PSA case management.

Key Strategies

1. Implement risk-based case management protocols and supervision plans;
2. Respond in a timely manner to defendant non-compliance with conditions of release to enhance defendants' observance of court requirements; and
3. Upgrade case management system to support new supervision protocols.

Performance Indicators

Table 2 – Performance Indicators for Strategic Goal 2: Continued Pretrial Release		
Performance Indicator Area	Indicator Description	Target
Strategic Goal 2	Percentage of defendants on pretrial release who remain on release for the duration of the pretrial period.	85%
Strategic Objective 2.1	Percentage of defendants whose non-compliance is addressed by PSA within a five-day period.	Drug Infractions: 80% Contact Infractions: 70% Electronic Monitoring Infractions: 92% Group Session Infractions: 80%

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: MINIMIZE REARREST

PSA supervision is designed to minimize risk to the community. PSA uses risk-based supervision to manage defendants most at risk of violating their release conditions. PSA also provides pro-social interventions, such as mental health and substance use disorder treatment, to enable defendants to remain arrest-free. To gauge PSA's effectiveness in minimizing rearrests, PSA implemented a measure of arrest-free rates.

Strategic Objective 3.1: Risk-Based Supervision

PSA focuses supervision resources on defendants most at risk of violating their release conditions and uses graduated levels of supervision consistent with each defendant's identified risk level. As described in our APG, very low risk defendants (those released on personal recognizance) receive only notification of their court dates. Low risk defendants with reporting conditions will require limited contact with PSA. Medium risk defendants will be placed under PSA's supervision and maintain regular contact through a combination of in-person and telephone reporting to PSOs. Higher risk defendants will be subject to more frequent and primarily in-person contact with assigned PSOs.

PSA's supervision strategy includes promoting swift, consistent consequences for violation of release conditions, and promoting incentives for defendants who consistently comply

with release conditions. We use swift, graduated sanctions to modify defendant behaviors considered precursors to a return to criminal activity or failure to appear for court. Examples of such behaviors include loss of contact and absconding from substance use disorder and/or mental health treatment. Responding promptly to non-compliance is directly related to reducing failures to appear and enhancing public safety. When violations of conditions are detected, PSA uses all available administrative sanctions, informs the Court and, when warranted, seeks judicial sanctions, including revocation of release. PSA also harnesses the power of incentives to change defendant behavior. Common incentives recommended by PSA include reduction in the number of contacts required, reduction in the frequency of drug testing, and placement in less intensive treatment or supervision programs.

To gauge the effectiveness of risk-based supervision, PSA implemented a measure of defendant compliance at case disposition.

Key Strategies

1. Prioritize sanctions and court reporting for non-compliant high risk defendants; and
2. Support proper assignment of defendants to high intensity supervision and timely installation of GPS equipment.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Assessment-Driven Treatment

An effective approach to minimizing rearrests is addressing underlying issues, such as substance use disorder and mental health treatment needs during the pretrial period. PSA provides, through either contracted services or referral, appropriate substance use disorder and mental health treatment to enhance supervision compliance. In addition to public safety benefits, the community also benefits from the cost savings of providing supervision with appropriate treatment in lieu of incarceration.

Treatment for either substance use or mental health disorders is provided as a supplement to, and never in lieu of, supervision. Just as defendants are assigned to supervision levels based on risk, they are assigned to supervision units that provide treatment based on both risk and need. In addition to substance use disorder treatment, defendants placed in these programs have drug testing, contact, and other release conditions and are held accountable for compliance with these conditions. To gauge effectiveness of pro-social interventions, PSA measures defendant referral, assessment, and placement in treatment programs.

Key Strategies

1. Ensure timely assessment and connection to behavioral health services; and
2. Assure the use of evidence-based treatment protocols provided by contracted services.

Performance Indicators

Table 3 – Performance Indicators for Strategic Goal 3: Minimize Rearrest		
Performance Indicator Area	Indicator Description	Target
Strategic Goal 3	Percentage of supervised defendants who are not arrested for a new, papered offense* during the pretrial period.	88%
Strategic Objective 3.1.1	Percentage of defendants who are in compliance with release conditions at the end of the pretrial period.	77%
Strategic Objective 3.1.2	Percentage of high-risk defendants who are placed on GPS-monitoring at the courthouse.	TBD
Strategic Objective 3.2.1	Percentage of referred defendants who are assessed for substance use disorder treatment.	95%
Strategic Objective 3.2.2	Percentage of eligible assessed defendants placed in substance use disorder treatment programs.	50%
Strategic Objective 3.2.3	Percentage of defendants who have a reduction in drug usage during 60 days following completion of a sanction-based treatment program.	74%
Strategic Objective 3.2.4	Percentage of referred defendants who are assessed or screened for mental health treatment.	95%
Strategic Objective 3.2.5	Percentage of service-eligible assessed defendants who are connected to mental health services.	80%

* An offense for which the prosecutor has decided to file charges in response to the arrest.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: MAXIMIZE COURT APPEARANCE

The strategic goal of maximizing court appearance is one of the most basic outcome measures for pretrial service programs. National standards on pretrial release identify minimizing failures to appear as a central function for pretrial programs. This strategic goal is measured by the defendant appearance rate, which indicates the percentage of defendants on pretrial release who make all scheduled court appearances.

Strategic Objective 4.1: Court Appearance Notifications

In order to minimize failures to appear, PSA notifies defendants of future court dates. During the last strategic period, PSA expanded its notification process by adding an electronic option to inform, remind, and/or update defendants of upcoming court dates. This new process incorporates the use of text and email notifications in addition to traditional mailed letters.

During the initial contact, PSA asks defendants about their preferred method of notification. An automatic hierarchy is then generated for notifications to the defendant (i.e., email, text messages, and letters) based on the defendant's preference. A preliminary analysis of court appearance notification methods suggests that text messages are the most effective in yielding the highest court appearance rates at 96%,

followed by email at 95%, and letters at 94%. To gauge the effectiveness of defendant court appearance notifications, PSA implemented a measure of court appearance following notifications using preferred notification methods.

Key Strategies

1. Increase the use of alternative notification methods (e.g., text, email); and
2. Update court date notification templates.

Strategic Objective 4.2: Failure-to-Appear Investigations

Defendants often present issues that may contribute to failure to appear in court (e.g., unstable home environments, homelessness, unemployment, substance use disorders, mental illness, and physical problems, among others). To help address these issues, PSA conducts failure-to-appear investigations to determine the reason for a defendant's non-appearance in court. The pertinent information is documented and the Court is informed of the findings. In some cases, these investigations may prevent issuance of a bench warrant.

Key Strategy

1. Respond timely to requests for investigating defendant failure to appear in court.

Performance Indicators

Table 4 – Performance Indicators for Strategic Goal 4: Maximize Court Appearance		
Performance Indicator Area	Indicator Description	Target
Strategic Goal 4	Percentage of defendants on pretrial release who make all scheduled court appearances during the pendency of their cases.	87%
Strategic Objective 4.1.1	Percentage of eligible court notifications automated from mail to text and email.	TBD
Strategic Objective 4.1.2	Percentage of defendants that appear in court following redesigned court notifications.	TBD
Strategic Objective 4.2.1	Number of failure to appear investigations that are conducted.	N/A
Strategic Objective 4.2.2	Ratio of bench warrants issued to failure to appear instances.	TBD

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 1: EFFICIENT AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

PSA strives for excellence in fulfilling its mission. PSA will build greater efficiency in meetings its customers' needs. We will modernize our operations and service delivery by streamlining processes, reducing administrative costs, and strengthening internal controls to drive efficiency in our operations. In doing so, we will foster a customer-centric culture by strengthening our ability to meet the needs and expectations of our internal and external customers.

Management Sub-Objective 1.1: Foster a Customer-Centric Culture

Recognizing that our employees are our greatest asset, we engage our employees in fostering a customer-centric culture that strengthens PSA's ability to meet the needs of our internal and external stakeholders. To gauge our effectiveness in maintaining a customer-centric culture, PSA implemented measures of employee and stakeholder satisfaction.

Key Strategies

1. Foster an environment that values employee contributions and development at all levels, addresses current and future workforce needs and prioritizes a healthy labor-management relationship;
2. Partner with Federal and local agencies and community organizations to share and exchange resources to support accomplishment of strategic and/or management objectives; and
3. Provide timely and accurate drug testing results to PSA and partner agencies.

Management Sub-Objective 1.2: Continuously Improve PSA Internal Services

We recognize our employees are customers of the internal services they use in fulfilling PSA's mission. As such, we strive continuously to improve employee experience with our internal services to more effectively meet our mission. To gauge employee experience with internal services, PSA implemented measures of progress in areas spanning Agency administration covering people, processes, and technology.

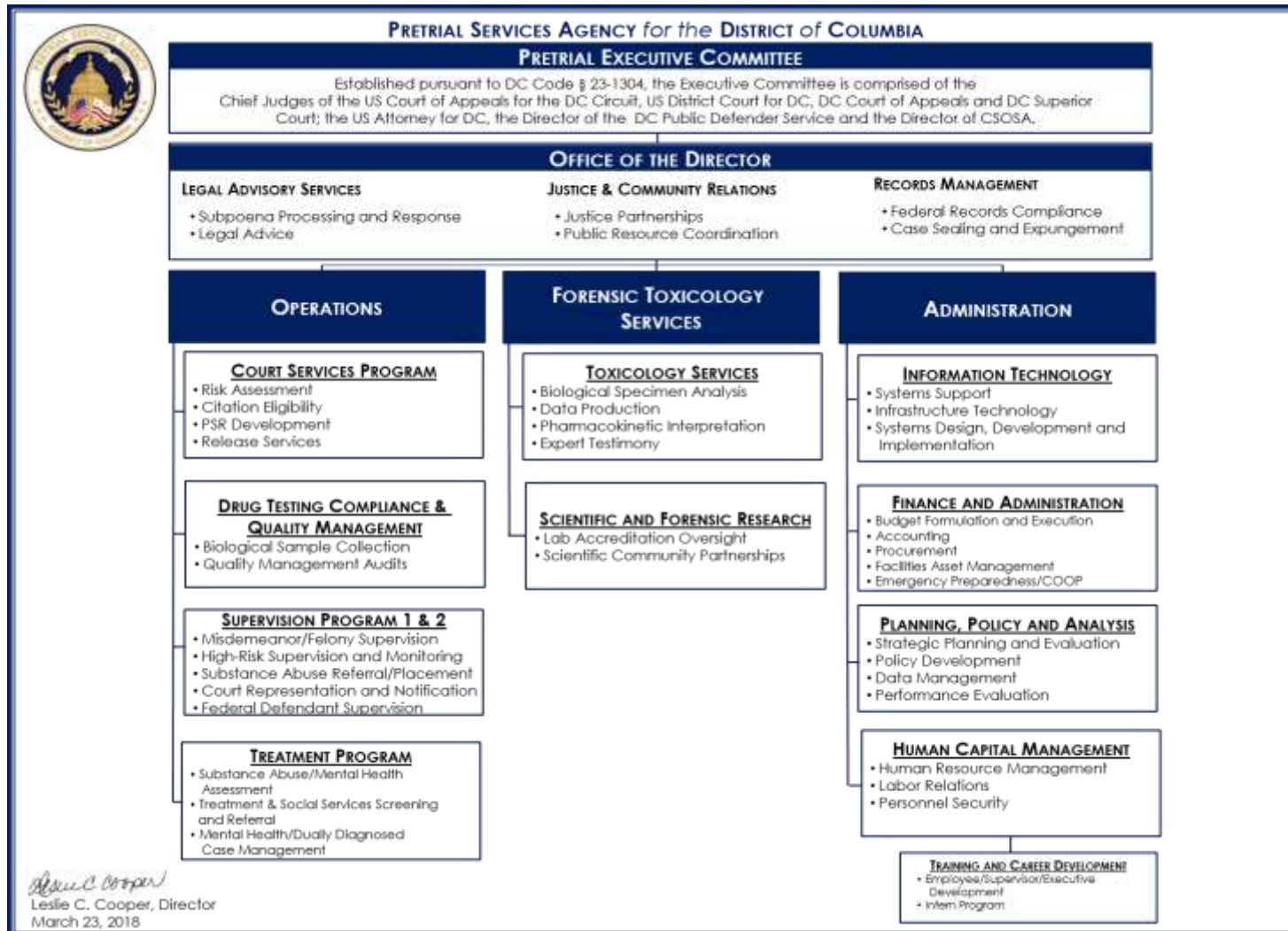
Key Strategies

1. Maintain a data infrastructure that supports accurate performance monitoring and informed decision making;
2. Implement human-centered design processes for collaboratively developing Agency strategic plans and policies with and for stakeholders and employees;
3. Develop and maintain an orderly and Federally-compliant system of records to document business processes;
4. Implement effective budget, procurement and facilities maintenance procedures aligned to strategic goals, and in accordance with Federal and Agency requirements;
5. Continue securing, supporting, and enhancing existing IT services while preparing for modernization.

Performance Indicators

Table 5 – Performance Indicators for Management Objective 1: Efficient Agency Administration		
Performance Indicator Area	Indicator Description	Target
Management Sub-objective 1.1.1	Engagement of PSA employees as measured through U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS).	70%
Management Sub-objective 1.1.2	Employee understanding of key elements of PSA's strategic plan.	80%
Management Sub-objective 1.1.3	Stakeholder satisfaction of 1) judicial officers in the DC Superior Court and US District Court, and 2) PSA defendants in both the supervision and treatment programs.	TBD
Management Sub-objective 1.1.4	Timely responses to all court orders, subpoenas, requests for Agency action, and to sealed and expunged cases.	75%
Management Sub-objective 1.1.5	Instances of PSA local community presence through proactive public engagement and expanded participation in events sponsored by DC justice system partner agencies.	N/A
Management Sub-objective 1.1.6	Memoranda of understanding and letters of agreement that formalize PSA's strategic partnerships.	10
Management Sub-objective 1.1.7	Timely dissemination of drug testing results to PSA, CSOSA, and other partners.	4 business days
Management Sub-objective 1.2.1	Internal client satisfaction with seamless contract support to meet PSA mission.	TBD
Management Sub-objective 1.2.2	Quality and accuracy of drug-testing specimens as measured by external certifications and reviews.	Pass/Fail
Management Sub-objective 1.2.3	Timely disposition of records through transfer to the Federal Records Center (FRC).	Yes/No
Management Sub-objective 1.2.4	An unmodified opinion on financial statements with no noted material weaknesses or significant deficiencies.	Yes/No
Management Sub-objective 1.2.5	Timely completion of annual safety inspections and resolution of facilities helpdesk tickets.	Yes/No TBD
Management Sub-objective 1.2.6	Up-time for critical information technology systems.	95%

APPENDIX A: AGENCY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



APPENDIX B: STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

PSA 2018 – 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN



Mission

To promote pretrial justice and enhance community safety.

Strategic Goals & Management Objective

SG 1

Judicial Concurrence



SG 2

Continued Pretrial Release



SG 3

Minimize Rearrest



SG 4

Maximize Court Appearance



MO

Efficient Agency Administration



Strategic Objectives & Management Sub-Objectives

SO 1.1:

Risk Assessment

SO 2.1:

Effective Case Management

SO 3.1:

Risk-Based Supervision

SO 3.2:

Assessment-Driven Treatment

SO 4.1:

Appearance Notifications

SO 4.2:

FTA Investigations

MSO 1.1:

Customer-Centric Culture

MSO 1.2:

Continuous Improvement

Key Strategies

1. Revalidate risk assessment.
2. Revise PSR.
3. Implement risk-based recommendations

1. Implement risk-based case management and supervision plans.
2. Respond timely to defendant conduct.
3. Upgrade client management system.

1. Prioritize sanctions for high-risk defendants.
2. Support proper assignment to high intensity supervision and timely installation of GPS devices.
3. Ensure timely assessment and connection to behavioral health services.
4. Assure the use of evidence-based treatment protocols.

1. Increase the use of alternative notification methods (e.g., text, email).
2. Update court date notification templates.
3. Respond timely to requests for FTA investigations.

1. Value employee contributions and development.
2. Partner to accomplish mission.
3. Provide timely drug testing results.
4. Maintain adequate data infrastructure.
5. Use human-centered design for strategic plan and policies.
6. Apply effective budget, procurement and facilities procedures.
7. Modernize IT services.

