



## 2023 Tennessee Pretrial Symposium Series: Memphis

### Memphis Symposium Summary

In May 2023, the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) hosted a series of pretrial events across Tennessee with funding and support from the Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP). Local leaders and pretrial practitioners from county and state agencies came together to hear the latest from the field and share ideas on how to improve system and community outcomes.

This document highlights key takeaways and lessons learned from panelists participating in the Memphis event.

### Panel 1: New Approach to Bail Decisions

Panelists included: **Judge Bill Anderson**, General Sessions Court, Shelby County; and **Michael Joiner**, County Attorney, Shelby County.

#### Key Takeaways:

- The new approach to bail in Shelby County required commitment, buy-in, and hard work from multiple partners in the pretrial system.
  - Not everyone will initially agree on the need for, or responsibilities of, a pretrial services agency and it's important to have the difficult, uncomfortable conversations.
  - Advocacy groups, courts, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and impacted people should be invited to the table so there are no surprises. Getting everyone on the same page at the start will avoid a myriad of post-implementation challenges.
- Judges need to talk to each other when implementing something new to mitigate risk and prevent challenges from arising. Be proactively involved rather than reactive.

*"...what's happening here is an opportunity for Shelby County to be on the cutting edge of the bail hearing process."*

*- Michael Joiner*

### Panel 2: Holistic Resources: Criminal Justice & Behavioral Health Partnerships

Panelists included: **Kim Parker**, Director of Crisis & Family Services, Pathways Behavioral Health, and **Nikki Green**, Regional Coordinator, Lifeline Peer Project

#### Key Takeaways:

- Wraparound services, behavioral health, or substance-use disorder support services are available across TN.
- Collaboration, relationship building and inter-agency communication are key to sustainable success.
- To address the needs of the whole person and create a plan for improvement, agencies need individualized and often creative solutions.
- Available resources must be accessible so criminal justice agencies can respond appropriately when a person is in crisis or is ready to get help.