Maine Pretrial Services, Inc. is a 501(c)3 corporation providing pretrial services, drug court and reentry case management, and alternatives to sentencing in Maine. Currently active in thirteen of Maine’s sixteen counties, Maine Pretrial Services, Inc. (MPS) is interested in convening local meetings throughout the state to assess local criminal justice system functioning. MPS proposes to commit the resources and time of the executive director, deputy director, and experienced line staff to organize, convene, and facilitate the local meetings. The meetings’ goals will be to complete community mapping exercises using a sequential intercept model. MPS proposes to document and organize the findings from these meetings and exercises to produce a statewide scan of available interventions for justice involved Mainers that can support and inform meaningful system reform efforts.

A potential product from these local meetings is the creation of a system of criminal justice coordinating councils. A criminal justice coordinating council (CJCC) is the general term used to describe a body of elected and senior justice system leaders that convene on a regular basis to coordinate systemic responses to justice problems. CJCCs differ widely in the membership and structure. A general goal of an effective CJCC is to make the criminal justice system a better investment toward improving the quality of life in a local, regional, or state jurisdiction. A general mission is to promote and facilitate the implementation of effective criminal justice policies and practices that maximize justice and the safety of the public.

Maine does not currently have any statewide or regional CJCCs . Past Maine examples of CJCCs include the local based Waldo County CJCC, and the statewide Pretrial Justice Reform Task Force. These bodies can examine issues, seeks solutions, promulgate policies, and recommend legislation for criminal justice reform. There is a national network of criminal justice coordinating councils.

Community mapping is a useful task for a CJCC to engage in, to avoid confusion, duplication of efforts, and system gaps. Community mapping provides a scan of existing programs, interventions, practices, opportunities and barriers in a criminal justice system, whether at the local, regional, or state level. Maine would benefit from local (county or regional) mapping exercises, with information transmitted forward to the state level. Once information is compiled at the local level, a statewide CJCC can effectively assess areas of excellence and service gaps for the entire jurisdiction.

An effective tool to organize this information is a sequential intercept map. First named in mental health system improvement process, Sequential Intercept Mapping is a cross-system approach to strengthening local strategies to implement core services that will address behavioral health, criminogenic, and social factors for justice-involved persons. Sequential Intercept Mapping promotes stakeholder collaboration by tying existing efforts together from pre-arrest through re-entry; identifying strengths and gaps; addressing issues relevant across all intercepts (e.g., culture, gender, trauma, and needs of veterans) and identifying solutions, many of which do not add costs.

Below is a basic map of system intercept points, starting with law enforcement, spanning all the way through reentry and probation. Each intercept is an “entry point” for a justice involve individual, and can be assessed for efficiency and efficacy in criminal justice interventions. It would follow that a series of mapping exercises across Maine would yield valuable information about what is working, what is needed, and potentially yield a responsible, intentional starting place for meaningful system reform.

