

Garfield County Criminal Justice Services 2023 Annual Review

Message from the Director

Travis Horton

2023 was a busy year for Garfield County Criminal Justice Services. All 5 of our programs saw an uptick in the number of citizens we served, and the total number of referrals made by the court system. The newest program, Work Release, grew faster than expected and maintained a steady number of participants throughout the year. We averaged approximately 5 clients in the Work Release program every week of 2023.

As will be discussed at more length later in this review, Garfield County Criminal Justice currently has 5 different program types to address the needs of our criminal justice involved citizens. Pre-Trial Services provides pre-conviction support to the clients, and the court system in which they are charged, while Useful Public Service, Workenders, Work Release, and Community Corrections are post-conviction programs. We primarily serve Rio Blanco, Garfield, and Pitkin Counties, but also provide services to additional counties throughout the state when necessary.

While Criminal Justice Services continue to experience staff turnover and the difficulties associated with recruiting and hiring new staff, in 2023 our staff continued to provide the highest quality services possible to the citizens of the 9th Judicial District and the State of Colorado. We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of all Criminal Justice Services personnel.

This annual report highlights the programs, and staff of Garfield County Criminal Justice Services and the impact upon our community over the past year. I hope that you find this informative and helpful in understanding the many opportunities that Criminal Justice Services provides. Thank you to all the individuals and businesses that support our organization, clients, and the unwavering support of our County Commissioners. Thank you to everyone who plays a part in making Garfield County Criminal Justice Services the programs they are today and what they will become in the future.

Message from the Security Supervisor

Mary Gillis

2023 was a year for change as we welcomed two new criminal justice service officers (CJSO) and said farewell to another who transferred to another department within Garfield County. I had the pleasure of taking on a new position in Community Corrections as I transitioned from 6 years in a CJSO position to the new security supervisor. I could not be more proud to work alongside my peers and lead them. I am not only responsible for maintaining high standards of individual work, but also for overseeing the work of my team and organization's goals. Protecting the safety of our local community, securing the Garfield County Community Corrections facility, and maintaining the health and safety of our clients and staff remains at the forefront of my concerns.

My vision moving into 2024 is to continue to find ways to incorporate and display client success into the daily lives of current Garfield County Community Corrections clients. I would like clients to see that their past does not define who they are, and to show them they can succeed if they put in the hard work. It will not be easy by any means, but it can be done.

I plan to build cohesiveness within the community corrections team. I hope to see continued growth from our work release program. Over the course of 2023, I have spoken with work release clients that expressed extreme gratitude to be able to be a productive, tax-paying member of society. The work release clients have been able to maintain their employment, pay their bills, and provide for their family while completing their jail sentence. With the significant success of the work release program in 2023, there is no question that we will continue to expand this program in 2024.

I know our team achieves success when our clients successfully complete the program and continue to grow while out in our community. I look forward to seeing our criminal justice service programs grow in 2024.

2023

Accomplishments:

- ⇒ The Work Release Program has been more effective than originally estimated by providing Garfield and Pitkin Counties with a cost-effective alternative to jail sentences. In 2023, Work Release generated approximately \$113,000 and had just over 1700 participation days.
- ⇒ Pre-Trial services received a grant of over \$100,000 to further develop services and computer systems.
- ⇒ Community Corrections has been steadily increasing their daily occupancy rate throughout the year and it continues to provide quality service to the 9th Judicial District.

2024 Goals:

- ⇒ Garfield County Criminal Justice will pursue improvement in all areas in 2024, we plan to enhance/update our computer system in Pre-Trial Services and work with the Judicial Branch to ensure we are providing the right services to the right people at the right time.
- ⇒ The Community Corrections program will continue to strive for program improvements as directed by the results of the audits completed in 2023, and we will continue working to ensure the average daily occupancy numbers continue to increase.
- ⇒ Workenders, UPS, and the Work Release programs will work with the Judicial Branch to continue to provide quality alternative sentencing options while encouraging increasing use of these services.

Mission Statement: The mission of Garfield County Criminal Justice Services is to enhance public safety by providing quality pre- and post-conviction services that benefit the citizens of Garfield County and the 9th Judicial District. Through the use of innovation and staff initiative, Criminal Justice Services provides a range of programs to support the criminal justice system while providing the highest quality service and programming available.

Vision: To enhance our program, offering to best meet the needs of the 9th Judicial District and its citizens. To ensure the programming we offer provides the best service available and adapts to meet the needs of our clients and stakeholders.

Values: Respect the people we serve – We will deliver our services with the utmost respect and professionalism being presented to each and every citizen regardless of their status in the criminal justice system.

Constant Improvement: Garfield County Criminal Justice Services is committed to continual quality improvement. Improvement in the way we deliver our services, in the equipment we use and in the programming we provide.

Garfield County Criminal Justice Services Programs

Garfield County offers many different sentencing alternatives ranging from pre-conviction to post-conviction.

Pre-Conviction Services

Garfield County Pre-Trial Services

Pre-Trial serves the 9th judicial district by completing risk assessments and defendant supervision for those out on bond. Risk assessments provide defendant background information, criminal history, community ties, employment history, pending cases, and a validated risk assessment score on the likelihood of returning to court or reoffending. Those aspects allow for better consideration for release conditions for bond and allows the court more individualized and least restrictive release options to consider.

In 2023, Pre-Trial completed 1,027 assessments and received a grant which enabled them to hire a part-time associate, allowing them to operate 7-days a week again. An additional grant was received allowing Pre-Trial to secure their computer software which contains 8-years' worth of data. In the coming months, Pre-Trial will implement a revised CPAT assessment which has been revised to better predict risk of failing to appear in court as well as risk to reoffend.

"Success comes from informing defendants of the pre-trial process and their responsibilities while out on pre-trial, while also recognizing defendants that could benefit from additional services or resources." -Elizabeth Stewart, Pre-Trial Services Supervisor

Post-Conviction Services

Garfield County Useful Public Service

Useful Public Service (UPS) is an alternative sentencing option which is used in coordination with court-ordered community service through assigned placement with non-profit organizations.

Garfield County Workenders

Garfield County Workender Program is an alternative sentencing option designed for people to serve their jail sentence in weekly, two-day intervals. Workenders serve non-profit organizations in a multitude of ways, as well as providing services to departments within Garfield County as needed.

Garfield County Work Release

Created in 2022, Garfield County Work Release allows individuals to continue working in the community instead of serving a jail sentence; however, they are required to stay at the community corrections facility. Not only does this program allow these individuals to continue working in the community, but it is also a more cost-effective alternative to a jail sentence.

Garfield County Community Corrections

Community Corrections is a sentencing alternative for individuals with felony convictions. It can either be used in lieu of prison sentences or as a transition option for those who have served prison sentences. Community Corrections offers rehabilitative services such as: life skills training, counseling, financial planning, employment search, and much more.

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the success rate in 2023?

Workenders

In 2023, 51 individuals were sentenced to and successfully completed their Workender sentence.

Useful Public Service

750 individuals who were sentenced to complete community service in 2023 successfully completed their hours.

Work Release

Of the 33 people sentenced to Work Release in 2023, 32 successfully completed their sentence, allowing for over 1700 days to be served in the community instead of in jail.

Residential

Over 90 people were sentenced to Community Corrections in 2023, with over 80% completing their sentence successfully.

Non-Residential

Of the 9 who transitioned to Non-Res, 7 successfully completed their sentence.

What are the benefits of Community Corrections?

Clients in Community Corrections are required to maintain full-time employment, attend treatment sessions, pay state and federal taxes as well as court-ordered child support - if it is mandated.

- In 2023, clients sentenced to community corrections gross income is just over one million dollars.
 - Of that, about \$80,000 was paid to federal taxes.
 - Over \$40,000 was paid to state taxes.
 - About \$16,000 was paid to court-ordered child support.
 - Above \$40,000 was paid to court-related fines and fees.

What is the approval process? What items can I bring for my loved one?

A referral will be sent to the Community Corrections board for review, if accepted, a date will be sent for them to be transferred to the facility. Once they have transferred to the facility and their intake complete, they will be able to contact loved ones.

*For more information as well as allowable property, please visit our website at: <https://www.garfield-county.com/criminal-justice/>

“My time here at ComCorr has been a learning experience every day that I come to work. From learning new signs in body language, to looking at a situation someone has been through with a new set of eyes. This job has taught me that the world is a lot greyer than it is black and white. I have seen our program really help some of the clients that have been in our program, and it’s an amazing thing to see someone find the motivation and courage to want a better life than they’ve had, and to take the necessary steps they need to get there. Changing your mindset and your outlook on life is a very powerful thing. As Albert Camus says, ‘Freedom is nothing but a chance to be better.’”

-Corrine Emerson, Criminal Justice Services Officer I.