

COURT PROBATION SERVICES

Court Probation, a legal status imposed by the District Court of Oklahoma County upon a adjudicated juvenile by a Disposition Order, is a service that provides the community with protection and accountability for the juvenile, and, at the same time promotes competency and rehabilitation, while permitting the juvenile to remain in the community under supervision. Court Probation Services is committed to (1) the victims of juvenile crime by placing public safety first, and (2) preventing and reducing recidivism of juvenile delinquency by providing direct supervision of the youth in the community and arranging for the development and/or utilization of specialized community-based services.

During FY 02-03, the Probation Officers of the Bureau assisted the Court in seeing to it that clients on probation paid \$49,285.39 in restitution to the victims of juvenile crime. Additionally, probation clients paid \$29,012.00 in Probation Fees and \$25,551.00 in Court Fines, which are utilized to minimize the costs for a number of programs and services offered. In addition, the Officers of Court Probation Services verified that 25,235 hours of community service were completed by probationers.

During FY 02-03, the Court Probation Unit a received a total of 696 referrals, which is a 6% decrease from last year's 742 referrals. This is now the third consecutive year of a decrease in referrals overall (839 in FY 00-01) and can be attributed to a number of ongoing efforts being taken by the Juvenile Division of the District Attorney's Office and the Intake and Diversion Unit to forward only the most serious cases and clients into the Court system. These collaborative efforts have assisted Probation Officers in focusing their efforts and conserving resources for clients that require closer supervision while in the community.

587 of this year's clients were new referrals from the Court, which was a decrease of 12% (665) from last year. Additionally, 105 of these clients were re-referrals, which was an increase of 36% (77) from last fiscal year. At the end of FY 02-03 there were 589 cases open, which resulted in an average caseload of 28 youth for 20 Probation Officers.

Of the 696 total referrals for Court Probation Services, 570 (82%) were males and 126 (18%) were females. These numbers reflect a 2% increase in the number of male referrals and a 29% decrease in the number of female referrals.

The racial distribution of referrals for FY 02-03 is as follows: 41% were Caucasian, 36% percent African-American, 16% Hispanic, 5% Native American and 1% Asian or Other. Court Probation Services saw nearly a 45% increase in referrals for Latino/Hispanic youth last year and this can be partially attributed to the increasing number of Latino families living in Oklahoma County. The relative percentages are consistent with past years, however, there was a 16% decrease in referrals for Caucasian juveniles, a 6% increase in referrals for African-American juveniles, and no change in percentages for Native American or Asian/Other.

The age distribution of referrals for FY 02-03 was also relatively consistent from previous years. Seventeen year olds accounted for 28% of the referrals, which is down from last year's 31%. Sixteen year olds were about 22% (21% in FY 01-02) and fifteen year olds 21% (20% in FY 01-02) of our referrals, which varied little from last fiscal year. Fourteen year olds (13%) and thirteen year olds (7%) were slightly down from last year. Twelve (4%), eleven (1%) and ten (1%) year olds were consistent with last year. It should be noted that only 4% of the referrals in FY 02-03 were for 18 year olds that committed crimes as juveniles. This is an area that the Courts, District Attorney's Office, and Court Probation Services worked to minimize over the last year due to the clients being legally considered adults. This year's numbers are a improvement from previous years, which have also included clients over 18 years of age being referred to our Officers. Forty-six (46%) percent of offenders on caseloads committed property crimes, which reflects a decrease of 4% from the previous fiscal year; 24% committed crimes against person, a decrease of 17% from the previous fiscal year; 19% committed drug offenses, a decrease of 5% from the previous fiscal year; and 2% sex offenses, a decrease of 1% from the previous fiscal year.

Revocations of Court Probation Services, which result in clients being placed into state custody at a higher cost to the taxpayer, were down for the second year in a row. In FY 02-03 revocations were down by 5% from the previous fiscal year, from 86 in FY 00-01, 77 in FY 01-02, to 73 in FY 02-03. This is a 15 % decrease in two years. The decrease was and is normally influenced by a number of factors, primarily the Court, increase in the number of "in house" programs and services offered by the Bureau, and decrease in the number of probation referrals. This number has also been influenced by the ongoing emphasis on quality assurance within the department through the concept of the Broken Windows model of probation. This model and its strategies involves supervision of the offender in the community, not from the office; a quick response to violations and strong enforcement of conditions of probation; rational allocation of resources; and development of partners in the community.

This year's notable achievements and initiatives:

Court Probation Services expanded its Broken Windows based "late night" initiative this year from three months to six months and culminates with Probation Officers spending weekend evenings at the Oklahoma State Fair. The emphasis of this initiative involves moving away from traditional hours and days of community supervision to evening and weekend contact with clients in the community. From April 2003 to September 2003, teams of staff members worked on Thursdays in the evening hours to meet with clients and families in the office. This was partially initiated to assist working parents and guardians in staying involved with their son's/daughter's case. In addition, teams of staff were sent to the community on Friday and Saturday evenings to attempt face to face contact with probation clients and their families. The overall totals for this office/field initiative were 464 successful contacts out of 839 attempts, which is 55%. Probation Officers met with 139 clients and families during "late night" office, with a 52% success rate. Additionally, Officers were able to make contact with 325 clients (57%) in the community during "late night" field units.

One of the important achievements this year included beginning to address the long standing problem of 18 year old adults on juvenile probation. Due to the fact that a number of juveniles 17 years of age are referred to and processed in the Juvenile Court system, a number of these clients are close to or over the age of 18 by the time that they are placed on probation by the Court. In order to conserve our resources for the younger juvenile clients, the Court, District Attorney's Office, the Bureau, and Court Probation Services collaborated beginning in September 2002 to minimize the number of these clients actually referred and to expedite the length of time these "adults" were on probation. The emphasis centered mainly around a 90 day probation plan that the client was expected to complete or face jail time. The collaboration also included the development of a restitution clerk position in the Bureau that would allow a means for the Courts and District Attorney's office to keep the case open to collect restitution, fines, and other costs without continuing probation supervision and services. By the end of the fiscal year, the collaboration had made a significant impact on the number of 18 year olds or older on the Probation Officer caseloads.