



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County Kicks Off Yearlong Program to Implement Pretrial Justice Improvements

It's a fundamental pillar of the American justice system that those accused of crimes are innocent until proven guilty.

But, in practice, those presumed innocent may end up spending weeks, or even months in jail because they lack the financial resources to post bail while awaiting their day in court.

Today, Wake County is kicking off a partnership with [Advancing Pretrial Policy and Research](#) to work toward improving the county's pretrial justice system, including implementing the [Public Safety Assessment](#) – a nationally-validated model that uses nine research-based factors to predict the likelihood a certain person will appear in court and stay out of trouble if released before trial.

When in place, and when combined with other pretrial improvements, the Public Safety Assessment has been associated with a reduced dependence on requiring money to secure a person's release, and a decrease in the number of people who spend their days awaiting trial

in jail. Crucially, these outcomes do not increase crime or undercut court appearance rates.

“We know that our current criminal justice system should be examined to ensure there is consistent, equitable, and fair treatment for everyone involved” Wake County District Attorney Lorrin Freeman, Project Chair, said. “The Public Safety Assessment, in particular, will help judicial officials in Wake County achieve these results.”

Over the next year, [Advancing Pretrial Policy and Research](#) will work with a policy team of key leaders and stakeholders to implement the Public Safety Assessment and recommend other pretrial reforms in Wake County.

The Steering Committee comprises:

- Judge Vince Rozier, Superior Court Judge;
- Judge Ned Mangum, District Court Judge;
- Lorrin Freeman, District Attorney – Project Chair
- Blair Williams, Clerk of Superior Court;
- Gerald Baker, Wake County Sheriff
- Chris Graves, Chief Magistrate;
- Deonte Thomas, Chief Public Defender;
- Daniel Bowes, NC Justice Center;
- Ryan Kelly, InterAct;
- Niya Fonville, Campbell Law School/Wake County Bar Association;
- Chris Dillon, Wake County Manager’s Office;
- Kelli Braunbach, Wake County General Services Administration Director;
- Ryan Davidson, Wake County General Services Administration Business Administration Director – Team Lead; and
- Jennifer Gibbs, Criminal Justice Alternatives, Acting Executive Director – Team Lead.

Advancing Pretrial Policy and Research is an initiative dedicated to achieving fair, just, effective pretrial practices, every day, throughout the nation. APPR is a consortium of organizations and consultants

led by the Center for Effective Public Policy with support from Arnold Ventures, and is a project of the National Partnership for Pretrial Justice.

For more information, visit AdvancingPretrial.org.

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