

Sixth Recommendation

Educate stakeholders in Colorado's criminal justice system and the public on the topic of pretrial release.

The Commission recognizes that there is a need to provide education on the topic of pretrial release to stakeholders in the criminal justice system ("stakeholders"), including judicial officers, law enforcement agencies, prosecuting offices, members of the criminal defense bar, pretrial release services, county commissioners, and victim advocacy groups. Therefore, the Commission recommends that all stakeholders receive education in pretrial release. Subject areas of education should include: statutory updates, the proper use of a validated risk assessment instrument and the research and data in support of its use, local pretrial release programs and the services they offer (including monitoring, supervision, and alcohol and drug testing), pretrial release recommendations, and the proper exercise of discretion in making pretrial release decisions (including what is unconscious bias and how to avoid it). Where appropriate, stakeholders should receive training on pretrial best practices.

Further, because the criminal justice system cannot thrive without the trust and confidence of the public, general education related to pretrial release should be offered to the public (including members of the media). Such education is critical to the understanding and improvement of Colorado's pretrial release practices.

The Commission also recommends that the Judicial Branch be responsible for developing and maintaining curricula to educate and train stakeholders and the public. Such education and training should be on an ongoing basis (including refresher courses) and, where appropriate and practical, should include distance-learning technology.