



Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County

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Adult Probation Department Launches Justice-Involved Women Initiative *Efforts will help support women and encourage behavior change*

PHOENIX (March 29, 2022) – To provide additional support and to positively impact the lives of justice-involved women, the Adult Probation Department, part of the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County, researched and evaluated how to deliver services more effectively to this population, creating the Justice-Involved Women initiative.

In this new approach, adult probation officers are focusing on trauma-informed approaches to better assist justice-involved women and their specific needs. Officers will also develop and maintain communication with treatment providers, stakeholders and other resources within the community with a focus on women-only services tailored to their needs.

According to the Adult Probation Department, women involved in the justice system tend to have higher backgrounds in trauma-related incidents than men under supervision. Currently, more than 20% of the probation population in Maricopa County are women.

“The goal of the Justice-Involved Women initiative is the overall improvement of stability, safety, self-esteem and self-confidence in the women served by the department to also reduce recidivism,” said Adult Probation Officer Emily Styner.

The Adult Probation Department believes that understanding the impact past trauma has had on a person will help officers encourage behavior change and ultimately assist justice-involved women to permanently exit the criminal justice system.

“These caseloads work to serve justice-involved women with unique barriers related to gender-specific issues, health and trauma,” said Adult Probation Officer Emily Styner.

Recently, nearly 20 Adult Probation employees completed a training on trauma-informed care with Colorado Chief Probation Officer Anjali Nandi. Those employees will incorporate what they’ve learned into the department’s training curriculum to help train the entire department. Trauma-informed care will help probation officers become more informed on the impact past trauma has had on a justice-involved individual to better assist them in completing their probation terms.

“We are excited to offer additional resources and training for staff to work with justice-involved women and collaborate with community partners to leverage even more resources for this population,” said Division Director Kristi Ward.

In 2020, a pilot phase was introduced and since then, the Justice-Involved Women initiative has expanded to the Central and Eastern Divisions, the Central Sex-Offender Division and Drug Court.

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The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,200 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public’s trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.