

**NORTH CAROLINA  
TASK FORCE FOR  
RACIAL EQUITY IN  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

---

**2022**

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# DEAR GOVERNOR COOPER,

In its second full year of operation, the Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice (TREC) has forged ahead with its work to improve our criminal justice system, to free it of the inequities and racial disparities that have plagued it for too long. Our work has been guided by the 125 recommendations we submitted to you in December 2020. This year, we have focused much of our work on continued implementation through partnerships and collaboration.

First, we have supported local governments and community groups as they have taken the lead in turning many of the Task Force's solutions into reality. In New Hanover County, officials created Port City United to use violence interruption programs to break cycles of violence, recognizing that the work of public safety is a collective responsibility. Across our state, local communities are focused on emergency response reform, to allow our local systems to collaborate on the best response to crisis situations. For example, the city of Durham piloted a co-responder program. Likewise, co-responder programs have also been started in Pitt County, Greensboro, and Charlotte. Each of these programs is organized differently, but in all, local stakeholders are looking to respond

more appropriately to people experiencing mental health crises, reduce strain on law enforcement resources, and reduce the risk of safety to officers and the community.

Importantly, the programs build off models that have demonstrated the efficacy of this approach in North Carolina, such as the long-standing co-responder program of the Chapel Hill Police Department. TREC has served as a valuable forum to facilitate collaboration, support, and peer-learning for these local efforts. Included later in this report is a statewide map that outlines the tremendous work happening at the local level on these and other programs.

Second, we have focused on developing sample policies and informational guides for local law enforcement and prosecutor consideration to advance TREC recommendations. We have sought to combine an understanding of best practices for law enforcement and court officials with these officials' real-world daily work experiences. We have benefited immensely from the insights of many people with experience in the criminal justice system. We created advisory groups of prosecutors, law enforcement, and victims and survivors to

inform our work. Our advisory group members are representative of our state’s diversity, and the feedback and ideas they provided were invaluable, even when they may have disagreed with the underlying policy. We are deeply grateful for the time and integrity our advisory groups brought to our work.

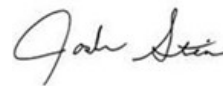
Third, legislative and administrative policy interventions that ameliorate racially disparate outcomes in the criminal justice system are equally important. We continue to engage with statewide actors to identify opportunities for change, and we are monitoring the start of the implementation of the criminal justice reform legislation signed into law last year. The resulting improvements to law enforcement recruitment, training, and accountability, as well as better treatment of those incarcerated and more appropriate charging decisions, are all testaments to the importance of TREC’s work.

Finally, we have continued to promote greater understanding of the many complexities and varied impacts of the criminal justice system, all with a view to the vital importance of furthering public safety. Over the past year, the Task Force has heard from and collaborated with people who work in the criminal justice system as well as those whose lives have been impacted by the system. We held learning sessions to dig deeper into many of these issues – the ramifications of fines and fees on justice-involved people, how data about policing and race affects our ability to address these issues, and the specific experiences of victims of color within the criminal justice system, among others.

The progress we’ve made since the Task Force was formed in June 2020 is evidence of North Carolinians’ dedication to moving us closer to the ideal of “Equal Justice Under Law.” By pursuing equality in our criminal justice system, we seek to have all North Carolinians treated with the dignity they deserve at the same time as we make the system more effective. The goals of racial equity and public safety are not in conflict; indeed, we can’t have one without the other. We know that this work must continue and that the success of our efforts depends on continued collaboration and commitment from people in every part of the criminal justice system and the public. The foundation we’ve laid over the past two and a half years is solid. We are hopeful that in the years to come, the state will build on these efforts so that every person, regardless of their background, knows that they will be treated fairly in North Carolina’s justice system. We are grateful for your visionary and committed leadership on these efforts, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to create a North Carolina that is safer and more equitable.



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# PROGRESS



# INTRODUCTION

The Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice (TREC) was established in June 2020 by Gov. Roy Cooper to develop strategies and solutions for racially disparate outcomes in the criminal justice system. From its inception, TREC has been focused on making our criminal justice system better and fairer. Promoting reform and reducing violence are achievable by bringing people together and relying on data, evidence, and people’s personal experiences to guide criminal justice policy.

This report highlights progress made on promoting racial equity in criminal justice in North Carolina and includes a status update on each of the 125 recommendations. Highlights include many local jurisdictions adopting various policies and programs, new training requirements and opportunities for law enforcement, and other changes by statewide and judicial actors based on changes in the law or policy.





# FULL TASK FORCE WORK

The Task Force met regularly throughout the year to report on and discuss implementation efforts as well as hear from criminal justice experts and the public. Sustained and engaged participation by Task Force members and members of the public remains critical to the success of TREC.

## 1. MEETING #1

FEBRUARY 4, 2022

TREC held a full day strategic planning session to prioritize its work for the year and decide on specific strategies and projects to meet those goals.

## 2. MEETING #2

APRIL 1, 2022

Recent TREC successes were highlighted including the administrative rule change by the North Carolina Supreme Court to allow for assessment of a defendant's ability to pay prior to levying any fines and fees and Gov. Cooper's commutation of the sentences of three people who were convicted for crimes committed when they were teenagers at the recommendation of the Juvenile Sentence Review Board (JSRB).

## 3. MEETING #3

JULY 15, 2022

TREC heard from national and in-state experts hard at work reducing violence and implementing new strategies for creating safe communities: Greg Jackson (Community Justice Action Fund), Cedric Harrison (Port City United), and Judge Jay Corpening (5th Judicial District).

## 4. MEETING #4

OCTOBER 7, 2022

The Task Force heard from Gov. Cooper on the accomplishments of TREC to date and the work left to be done. All five TREC implementation committees offered progress updates on their assigned recommendations and topics or projects underway that should be prioritized moving forward.



## UPDATES FROM STATEWIDE ACTORS

In April 2021, Gov. Cooper formed the JSRB based on TREC's recommendation. The four-person advisory board, established by Executive Order 208, is tasked with reviewing certain sentences imposed in North Carolina on individuals who were tried and sentenced in adult criminal court for acts committed before turning 18. The review board makes recommendations to the Governor concerning clemency and commutation of such sentences when appropriate.



# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Over the past year, the Department of Public Safety has proactively addressed a variety of TREC recommendations in support of strengthening public safety while also eliminating disparate outcomes in the criminal justice system. The progress from 2021, including changes to DPS law enforcement practices, is reflected in the 2021 interim report. An update on each of the recommendations assigned to prisons is available [here](#).

# B

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was identified as an implementing agency in five main areas of TREC work:

1. Reduce racial disparities in delinquency referrals to juvenile court by encouraging School Justice Partnerships (recommendation #24),
2. Reduce racial disparities in the imposition of cash bail and adopt practices shown to prevent failures to appear (recommendations #79-83),
3. Require racial equity training for court system personnel (recommendation #84),
4. Improve fair trials by providing implicit bias training to all jury system actors (recommendations #92-94), and
5. Reduce the racial disparities in the impact of criminal justice system debt by assessing a defendant's ability to pay before levying fines and fees and providing relief from fines and fees (recommendation #101).

In 2022, there were three new School Justice Partnerships established in Durham, McDowell, and Rutherford Counties, and planning was initiated for a partnership in Judicial District 19(B), Randolph County.

TREC Co-Chair Attorney General Stein and the North Carolina Department of Justice, in partnership with the University of North Carolina School of Government Criminal Justice Innovation Lab, have worked to educate stakeholders about best practices in pretrial systems since 2019, including hosting a series of regional pretrial roundtables where local stakeholders have an opportunity to collaborate on local reforms. In 2022, NCDOJ concluded this roundtable series in Asheville. After each roundtable, local judicial districts have made changes in their bond policies consistent with TREC recommendations. As a result, we believe there is significant opportunity for local innovation in the pretrial space and TREC will continue to look for opportunities to support this work.

In 2022, the AOC issued instructions that training provided by the University of North Carolina School of Government at Superior Court and District Court Judges conferences is limited to a list of topics that does not include racial equity, implicit bias or diversity training. Alternative training opportunities for court system personnel, including potential jurors, need to be explored.

Anecdotal reports suggest that AOC's form AOC-CR-415 increasingly has been used by District and Superior Court judges when imposing a sentence and that further training for public defenders, defense attorneys, and judges on the process for seeking a reduction or elimination of past fines and fees would be beneficial.



## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuous learning is central to TREC's approach. We can always find new ways to solve for racial inequity in the criminal justice system. This focus on learning took two forms over the past year: (1) listening sessions in which TREC convened experts on a single policy issue to better educate its members and the public and (2) advisory groups that TREC created to learn important lessons about implementation from system practitioners.



# LISTENING SESSIONS



## 1. RACE, DATA, AND POLICING

JUNE 24, 2021 ([LINK](#))

Private companies use big data and predictive analytics to predict what people buy, watch, and even how people vote. Algorithmic predictions are certainly useful in many contexts, but TREC's recommendations acknowledged that we must take caution in some of its applications. While the use of data on the surface may seem unbiased and objective, the use of predictive analytics in the criminal justice space can exacerbate the racial discrimination and disparities already present in the system. This session explored how to harness data in ways that improve our community safety without reinforcing disparate outcomes. We identified some areas of potential concern when big data is used in making life-altering decisions by law enforcement agencies and the courts.

## 2. VICTIMS OF COLOR

AUGUST 27, 2021 ([LINK](#))

The Executive Order creating this task force was based on the fundamental premise that racial equity in criminal justice should be a focus for all people involved in the criminal justice system – including for victims of crime. People interact with the system in different ways and the categories of people who've been harmed and do harm sometimes overlap. This session discussed the nuances of victim advocacy, race, and justice.

## 3. LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE

OCTOBER 20, 2021 ([LINK](#))

This session focused on the ways local governments can help address the crisis of drug and substance use while promoting racial equity. The speakers focused on alternatives to arrests including treatment programs, community support initiatives, and training for law enforcement.

## 4. EMBRACING INCLUSIVE JURIES

DECEMBER 2, 2021 ([LINK](#))

This session focused on the TREC recommendation pertaining to jury selection reform. Speakers highlighted the history of racial exclusion from North Carolina juries, the negative impact that jury discrimination has on the justice system, and strategies for reform.

## 5. THE IMPACT OF FINES AND FEES

JULY 22, 2022 ([LINK](#))

This session educated the public, public officials, and advocates on the financial inequities in the criminal justice system and on TREC's work to reform the system. To do so effectively, the session discussed the impact of unpayable fines and fees on North Carolina residents, local government reliance on fines and fees, and strategies for reform.

## 6. ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM: A "RESILIENCE" SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION

JUNE 29, 2022 ([LINK](#))

This session, which was co-sponsored with the Chief Justice's Task Force on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)-Informed Courts, was centered around the film, "Resilience" and highlighted how ACEs and the justice system are inextricably linked. This learning session explored some ways we can improve the lives of children with ACEs and those adults trying to resolve past negative childhood experiences. Speakers provided insight into trauma-informed practices and resources to address the cycle of justice involved people.

# B

## ADVISORY GROUPS

In 2022, TREC continued its commitment to engaging with system stakeholders, including law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim survivors and advocates, maintaining or starting groups among all three. These groups were diverse and bipartisan. For each, we did not ask that the participants agree with every TREC recommendation but simply be committed to the broad goal of racial equity in criminal justice.

### 1. LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

As mentioned in last year's [report](#), TREC established a law enforcement advisory group. This group has continued to meet monthly throughout the year. Topics covered included selection and use of school resource officers, school justice partnerships, drug arrests and enforcement, acknowledgement of law enforcement mistakes, use of force, treatment of pregnant women in jail and prison, gun violence, early warning systems, and crisis response programs. This group, along with others, provided valuable feedback on sample policies and information sheets that TREC published, even though some members may not have agreed with every aspect of the underlying policy.

### 2. PROSECUTOR ADVISORY GROUP

The goal of this group has been to obtain the advice of elected district attorneys on implementation of TREC recommendations pertaining to their work. They advised TREC on the creation of information sheets on drivers' license restoration/expunction efforts, marijuana prosecution, and advanced supervised release. We also discussed restorative justice and pretrial system reform, among other issues. The conversations have been forthright

and robust. Our hope is that the participants and other district attorneys will consider new policies and practices in their offices as result of our efforts. Although the focus of the group was on local implementation, representatives from the Conference of District Attorneys participated in this group and there have also been discussions about opportunities for legislative change to promote fairness in North Carolina's criminal justice system. We also explored with this group how TREC can support initiatives the Conference promotes where they are consistent with TREC recommendations.

### 3. VICTIM/SURVIVOR ADVISORY GROUP

In 2022, TREC established a victim survivor advisory group to provide insight in criminal justice reform efforts and advise staff on the implementation of Task Force recommendations. Topics discussed within the group included violence prevention, restorative justice, victim compensation, sentencing, and how victims experience the criminal justice system. Because the creation of this group was a recommendation of the Task Force (Recommendation 62), we have included a separate summary with some of the insights derived from this group, available at [Appendix A](#).



# CANNABIS POLICY WEBINAR SERIES

In the spring of 2022, the North Carolina Department of Justice hosted a series of webinars on policy issues related to cannabis and responsive to TREC's recommendations regarding marijuana arrests and prosecutions. Attendees included industry stakeholders, legislators, and policymakers in North Carolina and covered the following topics over four sessions:

## **SESSION 1:**

Health and Law Enforcement Implications of Cannabis

## **SESSION 2:**

Regulatory, Sales, and Taxation Issues with Cannabis

## **SESSION 3:**

Growing and Processing Cannabis

## **SESSION 4:**

Racial Equity Issues

You may view all the sessions [here](#).



## SAMPLE POLICIES AND INFORMATION SHEETS

To advance local reform, TREC created or collected relevant sample policies and information sheets. TREC also created one-pagers to distill recommendations into immediate, actionable steps to be taken by a specific system actor. These can help guide North Carolina’s law enforcement agencies, court system actors, and local governments when implementing policies and programs that advance racial equity and uphold public safety.

### SAMPLE POLICIES

- [Traffic Stops](#)
- [Consent Searches](#)
- [Early Intervention Systems](#)
- [Suggested Jury Practices to Judges\\*](#)
- [Citation in Lieu of Arrest](#)
- [Ability to Pay Rule](#)
- [Bail/Pretrial](#)
- [School Justice Partnership](#)

### INFORMATION SHEETS

- [Pre-Arrest Diversion](#)
- [Post-Arrest Diversion](#)
- [Reimaging 911](#)
- [Use of Force\\*](#)
- [Violence Prevention\\*](#)
- [Restorative Justice\\*](#)
- [Expunction and Driver’s License Restoration](#)

### ONE PAGERS

- [Judges and Judicial Officers](#)
- [Local Government Officials](#)
- [Juvenile Justice System Actors](#)
- [Local Law Enforcement](#)

\* New documents published in 2022



# LOCAL PROGRAM AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Local implementation of TREC recommendations is critical to promoting racial equity in the criminal justice system in all areas of North Carolina. Across our state, communities are working to implement racial equity reforms, including those TREC recommended. Some examples of new local programs and policies include the following:

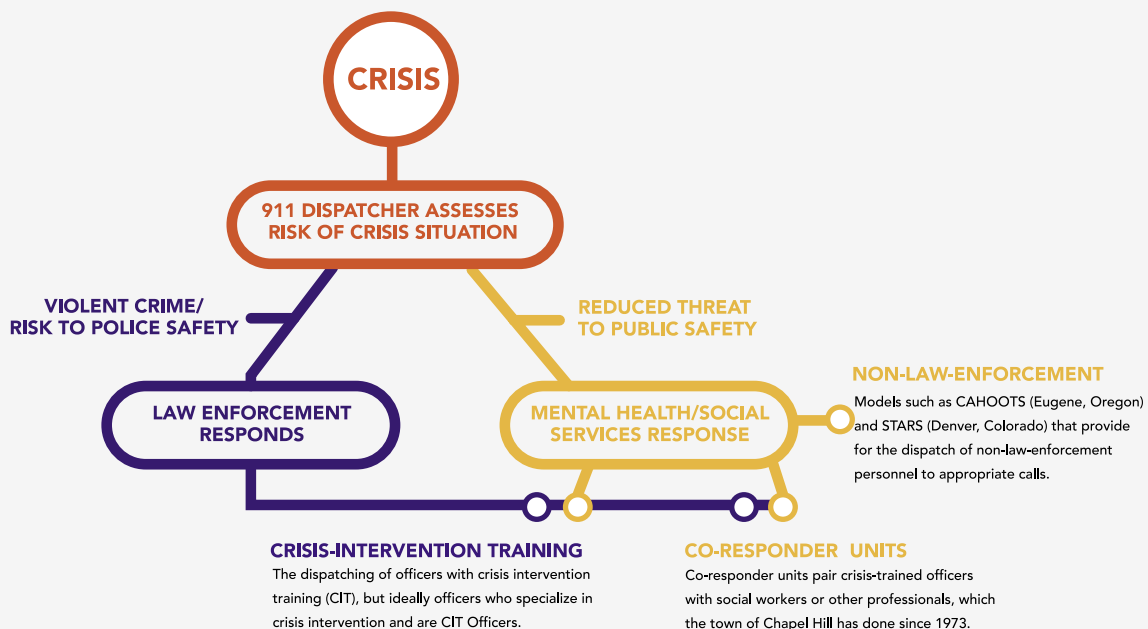
- Port City United, a new violence prevention initiative in Wilmington
- Duke University’s hospital-based violence interruption program
- Durham’s unarmed responder pilot
- Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) pilot programs in Greensboro, Charlotte, and Greenville
- Increased number of School Justice Partnerships
- Increased funding for diversion programs

- Increased law enforcement bans and/or restrictions on no-knock warrants
- Racial equity training for victim’s compensation staff, and
- Increased use of restorative practices.

TREC promoted adoption of these recommendations to local governments through the publication of sample policies and information sheets, meetings and advisory group panels of local policy makers, and presentations to local council meetings and to statewide associations of local government. In particular, we presented twice to the statewide meetings of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, as well as to the Justice & Public Safety Committee of that group. The Association’s continued engagement with TREC has highlighted opportunities for local innovation to promote racial equity in criminal justice.

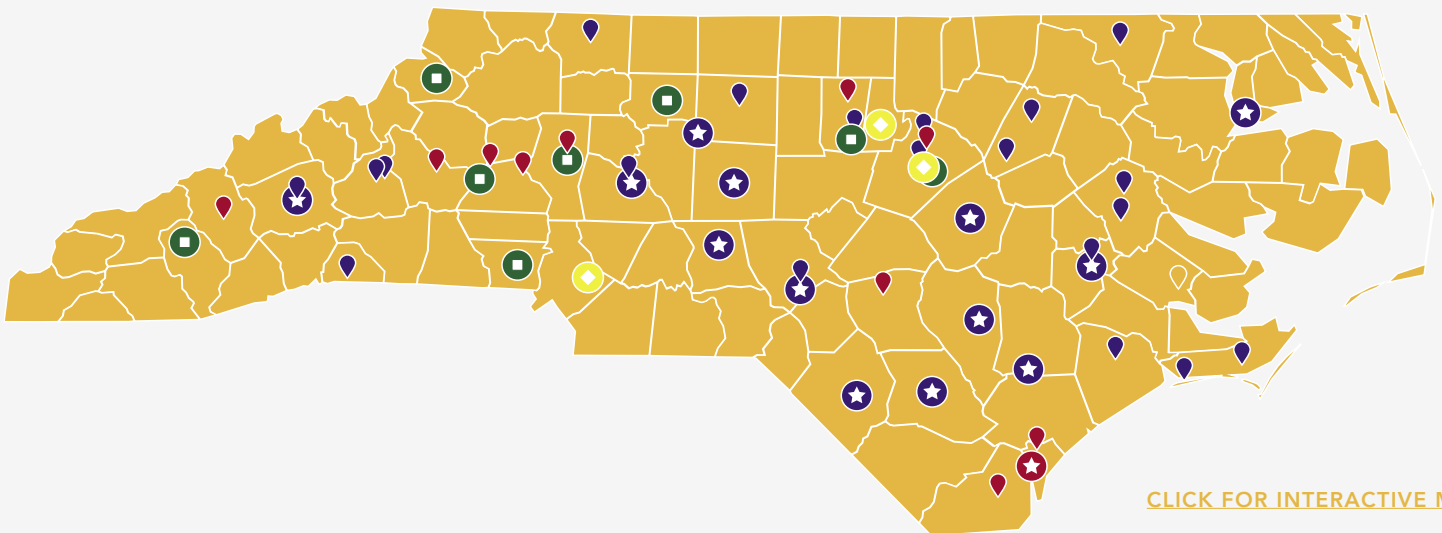
## REIMAGING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The graphic below outlines various routes for implementing TREC’s recommendation around alternative responses to crisis intervention. Existing programs in N.C. are highlighted in the map section on the next page.



# INTERACTIVE PROGRAM AND POLICY MAPS

TREC created three maps housed on [ncdoj.gov/trec](https://ncdoj.gov/trec) to display programs and policies recommended by TREC that are in practice in various local communities. By using the filter function to display different program and policy types, community members and leaders can view the changes in place in their community and their neighbor's. The interactive map contains information about the policies or programs below and the relevant contact information. This feature allows directly impacted people to get access to necessary programs. It also promotes peer learning by enabling local government policymakers to connect to those who have already implemented a proposed policy.



## A. TREC RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS FOUND IN MAP

- ★ Alternative Response Programs
- ◆ Community Bail Fund + Expunction Programs
- ♥ Diversion + Substance Use Harm Reduction
- Restorative Justice Programs
- ★ Violence Prevention Programs

## B. LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES FOUND IN MAP

1. Policy on issuing a citation in lieu of an arrest whenever possible for misdemeanors
2. Require officers to obtain a person's written consent before performing a warrantless search without probable cause

3. Ban or resist the use of choke holds by officers
4. Limit entry by force

## C. LOCAL JUDICIAL POLICIES FOUND IN MAP

1. Post-arrest Diversion
2. Use of Court Reminder System
3. Pretrial Services
4. Ability to pay assessments before levying fines and fees
5. Failure to Appear Policies; Mechanism for curing FTAs or OFAs without paying the associated fines and fees

Because they are tracked elsewhere, this map does not include [North Carolina Recovery Courts](#) and [School Justice Partnerships](#).





# THE WORK AHEAD

## GOING FORWARD, THE NEXT ITERATION OF THE TASK FORCE WILL FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO:

1. Local law enforcement practices and accountability, including:
  - a. Promoting diversity in the law enforcement profession and enhancing training, recruitment, and retention of law enforcement,
  - b. Improving responses to behavioral health crises, including supporting co-responder programs, diversion, and crisis intervention training,
  - c. Enhancing accountability in the criminal justice system, including the use of body worn cameras, and
  - d. Promoting best practices, including on use of force, investigations, protests and demonstrations, and community policing.
2. Violence prevention, including evidence-based community violence intervention programs, restorative justice programs, youth crime reduction efforts, and School Justice Partnerships.
3. Judicial system policies and practices that result in racially inequitable outcomes including but not limited to charging, sentencing, fines and fees, and collateral consequences of convictions.
4. Collection, analysis, and public display of criminal justice system data.



## FUTURE OF TREC

TREC has been a catalyst for change in all branches of state government and at the local level. Given the disparities that are deeply entrenched in the criminal justice system, sustained efforts are needed to make the criminal justice system better. The continuation of TREC by Gov. Cooper via [Executive Order 273](#) will provide a vehicle for continued focus and progress.



# IMPLEMENTATION STATUS CHARTS

The charts below reflect the status of TREC’s 125 recommendations as of December 2022. The listed solutions, recommendations, and necessary actions were defined in the original report published in December 2020. The implementation effort and status columns reflect TREC’s progress over the past year.

**DEFINITIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION STATUSES**

**Success:** Recommendation and/or necessary action identified by TREC is complete.

**Partial Success:** Part of the recommendation and/or necessary action is complete and additional effort is needed to fulfill the full recommendation or accomplish implementation.

**In Progress:** TREC has engaged with relevant stakeholders regarding the implementation of the recommendation and/or necessary action and it is now under consideration or in progress.

**Reimagining Public Safety**

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
1	Reimagine public safety and reinvest in communities	Respond more appropriately to situations concerning mental illness, autism, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse, homelessness, and other non- emergency situations	Local policy change; Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions; Legislative change	Governor’s Crime Commission / DHHS - Funding Opportunity	Partial Success
2	Reimagine public safety and reinvest in communities	Add crisis intervention training for current law enforcement officers	Local policy change; State administrative rule change by the Standards Commissions; Legislative change	Standards Commissions	Success
3	Reimagine public safety and reinvest in communities	Fund grassroots organizations that employ promising and peaceful strategies to help communities promote public safety	Local policy change; State policy change	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
4	Reimagine public safety and reinvest in communities	Develop and provide funding to help communities build violence prevention programs	Local policy change; State policy change	Governor’s Crime Commission - Funding Opportunity	Partial Success
5	Reimagine public safety and reinvest in communities	Form local Community Safety and Wellness Task Forces to examine public safety and wellness needs	Local policy change	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success

## Improving Policing Practices

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
6	Strengthen community policing practices	Adopt community policing philosophies and plans in collaboration with the communities law enforcement serve	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
7	Strengthen community policing practices	Train law enforcement agency heads on community policing	State policy change by North Carolina Justice Academy	Legislative	Partial Success
8	Strengthen community policing practices	Encourage or require officers to spend non-enforcement time, or live in, the neighborhoods they serve	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Local government policy change	Local Implementation Work	In Progress
9	Strengthen community policing practices	Publicly acknowledge mistakes by law enforcement to build trust and transparency	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	Local Implementation Work	In Progress
10	Reform investigations	Improve law enforcement drug enforcement data collection and reporting	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
11	Reform investigations	Use data and objective criteria, instead of officers' subjective perceptions and beliefs, to drive the level of police presence in neighborhoods	State policy change; Local policy change	Recommendation with Task Force	Partial Success
12	Reform investigations	Deemphasize felony drug possession arrests for trace quantities under .25 grams	State agency policy change; Local agency policy change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	Partial Success
13	Reform investigations	Prioritize traffic stops that improve traffic safety	State agency policy change; Local agency policy change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	Partial Success
14	Reform investigations	Require all consent searches to be based on written, informed consent	State agency policy change; Local agency policy change; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	Partial Success
15	Reform investigations	Restrict state law enforcement use of asset forfeiture on low-level seizures where there is no conviction	Agency policy change; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Recommendation with Task Force	In Progress
16	Promote diversion and other alternatives to arrest	Establish and expand access to diversion programs	State policy change; Local policy change; Legislative change	Department of Health and Human Services - Funding Opportunity; Inclusion in Budget	Partial Success
17	Promote diversion and other alternatives to arrest	Treat addiction as a public health crisis, including substance use addictions that disproportionately impact Black and brown communities, such as crack cocaine	State policy change; Task Force collaboration	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	Partial Success

## Improving Policing Practices

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
18	Promote diversion and other alternatives to arrest	Encourage citations and summons in lieu of arrest whenever possible	State agency policy change; Local agency policy change; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	Partial Success
19	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Hire behavioral health professionals in schools	Local policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
20	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Fund school personnel training on mental health, first aid, cultural competence/ diversity/inclusion, and developmental disability	Local policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
21	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Develop inclusive processes for selecting and overseeing SROs	Local policy change	Local Implementation Work	In Progress
22	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Train all public school employees and SROs on the proper role of SROs	State policy change by the Department of Public Instruction and the Justice Academy	North Carolina Center for Safer Schools/ North Carolina Justice Academy	Partial Success
23	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Collect data on discipline in schools and school-based referrals to the juvenile courts	State policy change by the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Public Safety; Local agency policy change	Department of Public Safety	Success
24	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Encourage School Justice Partnerships to reduce students' juvenile court involvement	Local policy change	Administrative Office of the Courts	Partial Success
25	Revise the role of School Resource Officers	Support Task Force on Safer Schools State Action Plan	Task Force collaboration	Recommendation with Task Force	Success
26	Codify judicial approval of no-knock warrants and clarify requirements for use of force in serving search warrants	Change entry by force statute to require the necessary probable cause be specifically listed in the warrant before breaking and entering to execute a warrant and to clarify the meaning of unreasonable delay after an officer announces presence in the execution of a search warrant	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress



## Improving Policing Practices

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
27	Peacefully facilitate protests and demonstrations	Adopt a mandatory statewide policy on law enforcement facilitation of peaceful demonstrations	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; State administrative rule change by the Standards Commissions	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
28	Peacefully facilitate protests and demonstrations	Create and update protest guidelines to consider best practices and First Amendment concerns	State administrative rule change by the Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	In Progress
29	Peacefully facilitate protests and demonstrations	Review and update protest and demonstration training	State policy change by North Carolina Justice Academy; State administrative rule change by the Standards Commissions; Task Force collaboration	North Carolina Justice Academy	Success
30	Peacefully facilitate protests and demonstrations	Commission a study on racial disparities in how protests and demonstrations are policed in North Carolina	State policy change	Study	In Progress
31	Revise use of force policies	Strengthen use of force practices including to prohibit neck holds and require the use of the minimum amount of force necessary	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
32	Revise use of force policies	Require officers to have first aid kits and render aid	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	Legislative	Partial Success
33	Revise use of force policies	Enact agency policies requiring a duty to intervene and report excessive use of force or other abuse	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	Legislative	Partial Success
34	Revise use of force policies	Establish early intervention systems for officers repeatedly violating use of force policies	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	Success
35	Revise use of force policies	Define and collect use of force data	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	Legislative	Partial Success

## Enhancing Accountability

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
36	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Expand investigative and oversight authority of local citizen oversight boards	Local policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
37	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Reform investigation and prosecution procedures for officer-involved use of force incidents	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
38	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Establish statewide sentinel event reviews to evaluate law enforcement practices and suggest policy changes	State agency policy change by Standards Commission; Local agency policy change; Legislative change	Recommendation with Task Force	In Progress
39	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Support Rap Back Program	Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Legislative	Success
40	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Revise standards to require that officers not engage in excessive or unjustified use of force or abuse the power of the position	State administrative change by Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	In Progress
41	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Expand authority to allow for suspension, revocation, or denial of certification based upon an officer's excessive use of force or abuse of power	State administrative change by Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	In Progress
42	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Require notification by both the officer and the agency for specific use of force incidents	State administrative change by Standards Commissions; Task Force collaboration	Standards Commissions	In Progress
43	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Increase transparency about officer discipline and decertification through a publicly available database	NCDOJ policy and procedure change; Task Force collaboration	Legislative	Success
44	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Support psychological screenings for all law enforcement officers	State administrative change by Standards Commissions	Legislative	Success

## Enhancing Accountability

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
45	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Repeat psychological evaluations either after a certain number of years of service or before promotion	State administrative change by Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	In Progress
46	Improve law enforcement accountability and culture	Strengthen the ongoing development of a statewide law enforcement accreditation program	Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Standards Commissions	In Progress
47	Mandate use of body worn/ dashboard cameras and increase transparency of footage	Mandatory body worn cameras for all law enforcement agencies	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
48	Mandate use of body worn/ dashboard cameras and increase transparency of footage	Deploy dashboard cameras in all patrol and field vehicles, except for undercover vehicles	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Legislative change	Legislative; Local Implementation Work	In Progress
49	Mandate use of body worn/ dashboard cameras and increase transparency of footage	Provide citizen oversight boards and local government governing bodies access to law enforcement recordings	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
50	Mandate use of body worn/ dashboard cameras and increase transparency of footage	Require police recordings of critical incidents to be publicly released within 45 days	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress

## Strengthening Recruitment, Training, and the Profession

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
51	Recruit and retain a racially equitable work force	Develop and disseminate best practices guide for recruitment and retention	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Legislative	Success
52	Recruit and retain a racially equitable work force	Expand Criminal Justice Fellows program statewide	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
53	Recruit and retain a racially equitable work force	Collect data on law enforcement recruitment and diversity efforts	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions; Legislative change	Standards Commissions	Success
54	Recruit and retain a racially equitable work force	Ensure the North Carolina Administrative Code provisions regarding Minimum Standards and Revocation, Denial, and Decertification are the same for both Commissions	Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	Success
55	Recruit and retain a racially equitable work force	Require law enforcement agencies of a certain size to create a diversity task force	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
56	Train law enforcement to promote public safety and earn community support	Revamp basic enforcement training	State policy change by the Standards Commissions and the North Carolina Justice Academy; Administrative code changes; Legislative change	North Carolina Justice Academy	Partial Success
57	Train law enforcement to promote public safety and earn community support	Recommend changes to in-service training	State policy change by North Carolina Justice Academy; Administrative rule change by Standards Commissions; Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success

## Strengthening Recruitment, Training, and the Profession

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
58	Train law enforcement to promote public safety and earn community support	Require trainings on internal law enforcement agency policies	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change	North Carolina Justice Academy	Partial Success
59	Train law enforcement to promote public safety and earn community support	Evaluate law enforcement training programs for effectiveness and desired outcomes	State policy change by North Carolina Justice Academy; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	North Carolina Justice Academy	In Progress
60	Enhance the law enforcement profession	Study the effects of officers' physical and mental health on job performance	Local agency policy change; State agency policy change; State administrative rule change by the Standards Commissions	Standards Commissions	Partial Success

## Eliminating Racial Disparities in the Courts

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
61	Support restorative justice initiatives and victim equity	Establish and fund restorative justice programs in local communities across the state and at various points of the criminal justice system	Local policy change	Governor's Crime Commission - Funding Opportunity	Partial Success
62	Support restorative justice initiatives and victim equity	Form a victim advisory group to help develop restorative justice programs and other equity programs for crime victims	Local policy change; Task Force collaboration	Recommendation with Task Force	Success
63	Support restorative justice initiatives and victim equity	Improve and expand access to North Carolina's Victim Compensation Fund to increase racial equity	State policy change by the Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
64	Support restorative justice initiatives and victim equity	Screen incarcerated individuals for victimization and provide appropriate services	State policy change by the Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Success
65	Support restorative justice initiatives and victim equity	Recognize racial equity and the rights and perspectives of, and the potential consequences to, harmed parties, survivors, and their families during the justice system process and when any reform is proposed	State policy change; Task Force collaboration	Recommendation with Task Force	Partial Success
66	Stem the school to prison pipeline and rethink juvenile justice	Raise the minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction to 12	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
67	Stem the school to prison pipeline and rethink juvenile justice	Require a school administrator or school social worker to sign a school-based petition initiated by a School Resource Officer before it can be accepted for filing in juvenile court	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
68	Stem the school to prison pipeline and rethink juvenile justice	Allow prosecutors the discretion to accept pleas in juvenile court for juveniles charged with Class A through G felonies, in line with the Raise the Age Act	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success

## Eliminating Racial Disparities in the Courts

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
69	Stem the school to prison pipeline and rethink juvenile justice	Replace juvenile life without parole with life with parole sentences and parole eligibility after twenty-five years for first degree murder convictions	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
70	Stem the school to prison pipeline and rethink juvenile justice	Establish a juvenile review board within the Governor's Clemency Office	State policy change	Executive Order	Success
71	Decriminalize marijuana possession	Deprioritize marijuana-related arrests and prosecution	State agency policy change; Local agency policy change; Prosecutorial policy change	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
72	Decriminalize marijuana possession	Decriminalize the possession of up to 1.5 ounces of marijuana	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
73	Decriminalize marijuana possession	Convene a task force of stakeholders to study the pros and cons and options for legalization of possession, cultivation and/or sale of marijuana	State policy change; Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
74	Shrink the criminal code	Reclassify Class III misdemeanors that do not impact public safety or emergency management as noncriminal/civil infractions	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial success
75	Shrink the criminal code	Enact legislation with a sunset provision for all local ordinance crimes that criminalize poverty or behavior in public places	Legislative change	Legislative	Success
76	Shrink the criminal code	Eliminate citizen-initiated criminal charges	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
77	Shrink the criminal code	Review and recommend changes to the criminal code	Legislative change	Legislative	Success
78	Shrink the criminal code	Provide for the appointment of counsel in cases where the defendant is facing a \$200 fine	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
79	Improve pre-trial release and accountability practices	Eliminate cash bail for Class I, II, and III misdemeanors unless risk to public safety	Judicial policy change; State policy change by Administrative Office of the Courts; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	In Progress

## Eliminating Racial Disparities in the Courts

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
80	Improve pre-trial release and accountability practices	Require first appearance within 48 hours or next day in which District Court is in session	Judicial policy change; State policy change by Administrative Office of the Courts; Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
81	Improve pre-trial release and accountability practices	Require preventive detention hearing within five days and repeal bond doubling	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
82	Improve pre-trial release and accountability practices	Promote court appearance strategies and develop alternative responses to failure to appear	Judicial policy change; State policy change by Administrative Office of the Courts; Local policy change; Legislative change	Legislative/Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
83	Improve pre-trial release and accountability practices	Create independent pretrial services and improve data collection	Local policy change; State policy change by Administrative Office of the Courts	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
84	Implement racial equity training for court system actors	Require racial equity training for court system personnel, including judges, DAs, and public defenders	State policy change by Administrative Office of the Courts	State Agency Work	Partial Success
85	Implement racial equity training for court system actors	Require implicit bias and racial equity training for parole staff	State policy change by the Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Success
86	Implement racial equity training for court system actors	Require racial equity and victim services training for Victim Compensation Fund employees and members	State policy change by the Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
87	Promote racially equitable prosecutorial practices	Educate prosecutors, their staff, and officers of justice on unconscious bias in the criminal justice process and prosecutorial decision-making	State policy change by the Conference of District Attorneys	Conference of District Attorneys	In Progress
88	Promote racially equitable prosecutorial practices	Enhance prosecutors' data collection, technology, training opportunities, and staffing	Prosecutorial policy change; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	In Progress



## Eliminating Racial Disparities in the Courts

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
89	Promote racially equitable prosecutorial practices	Study and adopt evidence-based reforms for reducing and eventually eliminating racial disparities in charging decisions and prosecutorial outcomes	Prosecutorial policy change; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	In Progress
90	Promote racially equitable prosecutorial practices	Establish working groups led by district attorneys to review and approve every habitual felony charging decision	Prosecutorial policy change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	In Progress
91	Facilitate fair trials	Increase representation of North Carolinians serving on juries through expanded and more frequent sourcing, data transparency, and compensation	Local policy change; Local policy change by county jury commissions; Judicial change by senior resident superior court judges; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Study	In Progress
92	Facilitate fair trials	Broaden protection against the use of preemptory challenges in jury selection for discriminatory purposes	Administrative rule change by North Carolina Supreme Court	Rule change by North Carolina Supreme Court	In Progress
93	Facilitate fair trials	Provide implicit bias training to all jury system actors	State policy change; State policy change of the Administrative Office of the courts; Local judicial district change; Local judicial district change by clerks of court; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Administrative Office of the Courts	In Progress
94	Facilitate fair trials	Establish a state commission on the jury system, with an eye towards comprehensive reform	State policy change; Legislative change	Study	In Progress

## Promoting Racial Equity Post-Conviction

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
95	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Increase funding for Governor's Clemency Office and Parole Commission	State policy change; State policy change by the Parole Commission; Legislative change; legislative appropriations	Legislative	In Progress
96	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Increase NCDPS flexibility on incarcerated individuals' release dates	State policy change by Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
97	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Establish a Second Look Act to reduce racially disparate sentences through the review and action of those currently incarcerated	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
98	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Create and fund an independent Conviction Integrity Unit with representation from prosecutors and defense lawyers and to ensure Indigent Defense Services has significant funding to pay lawyers who handle post-conviction work	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
99	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Amend Motion for Appropriate Relief statute to allow a judge to overcome technical defects in the interest of justice or where the petition raises a significant claim of race discrimination	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
100	Reduce current sentencing and incarceration disparities	Reinstate the Racial Justice Act for individuals sentenced to death	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
101	Reduce use of fines and fees	Assess a defendant's ability to pay prior to levying any fines and fees	Administrative rule change by North Carolina Supreme Court	Rule change by North Carolina Supreme Court	Success
102	Reduce use of fines and fees	Reduce court fines and fees	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
103	Reduce use of fines and fees	Eliminate state government reliance on fines and fees	Legislative change	Inclusion in Budget	Partial Success

## Promoting Racial Equity Post-Conviction

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
104	Reduce use of fines and fees	Develop a process to eliminate criminal justice debt	State agency policy change; Local government action; NC Supreme Court rule change; Task Force collaboration; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work	Partial Success
105	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Transform the use of restrictive housing	State policy change by Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Success
106	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Protect pregnant people in jails and prisons	State policy change by Department of Public Safety	Legislative	Success
107	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Enhance prison personnel	State policy change by Department of Public Safety; Legislative changes	Legislative	Partial Success
108	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Increase funding for mental health services and programs in prisons	State policy change by Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
109	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Increase due process protections for people accused of disciplinary offenses	State policy change by the Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success

## Promoting Racial Equity Post-Conviction

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
110	Amend incarceration facilities' practices and programming and address prison discipline	Expand use of restorative justice and rehabilitation programming	State policy change by Department of Public Safety	Department of Public Safety	Partial Success
111	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Broaden the use of Advanced Supervised Release	Prosecutorial policy change; Legislative change	Local Implementation Work - Model Policy	In Progress
112	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Eliminate the future use of Violent Habitual Felony Status	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
113	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Eliminate future use of Habitual Felony Status for individuals under the age of 21 or convicted of non-violent drug offenses	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
114	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Amend the habitual felony statute to limit the "look back" period to within 8 years of the charged offense	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
115	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Analyze and report on racial disparities in sentencing laws and recommend possible changes	State policy change by the Sentencing Commission	Study	In Progress
116	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Review all future sentences after 20 years or before	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
117	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Prohibit capital punishment for people with serious mental illness and people 21 or younger at the time of the offense and prohibit the use of juvenile adjudications to be considered as aggravating factors	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
118	Study and revise future sentencing guidelines	Establish a truth and reconciliation commission to study North Carolina's history of criminal justice and race	State policy change; Legislative change	Recommendations with Task Force	In Progress

## Promoting Racial Equity Post-Conviction

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
119	Reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions	Expand voting rights to those on probation, parole, or post-release supervision for a felony conviction	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
120	Reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions	Opt out entirely of federal ban on SNAP benefits for individuals convicted of certain felony drug charges, eliminating 6-month disqualification period and other eligibility requirements	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
121	Reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions	Allow NCDMV hearing officers to waive license restoration fees and other service fees for failure to appear or failure to pay	Legislative change	Legislative	Partial Success
122	Reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions	Reform the Certificate of Relief petition process to create efficiencies for individuals with multiple convictions across multiple counties	Legislative change	Legislative	In Progress
123	Reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions	Support the Statewide Reentry Council Collaborative's recommendations	State agency policy changes; Local government policy changes; Task Force collaboration; Legislative changes	Recommendation with Task Force	Success

## Criminal Justice Data Collection and Reporting

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
124	Improve data collection	Identify the places along the criminal justice system where data collection directly impacts the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of the Task Force's recommendations and broader questions of racial equity within the criminal justice system	State agency policy changes; Local government policy changes; Task Force collaboration; Administrative rule change; Legislative changes	Fact finding / Research	Partial Success

## Going Forward

Solution Number	Recommendation	Solution	Necessary Action	Implementation Effort	Status
125	Create permanent structure	Establish the Commission for Racial Equity in the Criminal Justice System as a permanent, independent commission.	State policy change; Task Force collaboration; Legislative changes	Recommendation with Task Force	In Progress



# APPENDIX

# INSIGHTS FROM VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS SHARED WITH TREC

In 2022, TREC staff convened a group of victims and survivors from across the state for their unique perspectives and thoughts and feelings on emerging policy issues in criminal justice. The group is comprised of women with a wide range of experiences and backgrounds. The group contains people effected by various types of violence, including family violence, domestic violence, workplace violence, childhood sex trafficking, gang rape, and incest. Despite very different walks of life, they unite in support of the messages and lessons written below.

Four key principles continued to emerge throughout our conversations that cut across all of the topics below:

1. Community among victims and survivors is healing;
2. All system actors should be trauma and equity informed;
3. The existence of sexism, racism, and classism in our society makes individuals more likely to both be abused and to abuse others;
4. Timing is unique to every survivor, offender, and case when engaging in all aspects of the criminal justice system (investigations, prosecutions, victim impacts statements, sentence reviews, etc.) and healing efforts outside the system such as restorative practices.

Please keep these in mind whenever you work with victims and survivors of crime.

The comments below come directly from the victims and survivors who participated in the advisory group with minor edits for consistent tone.

## EXPAND THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

- Traditional legal and judicial processes are often re-traumatizing for victims (and perpetrators). Those implementing restorative practices should reframe their understanding of justice as the process of restoring the victim's sense of safety in the world and not just about finding the appropriate level or means of punishment.
- Restorative practices should always be survivor-led or -initiated. And it can happen at any stage of the process.
- It is paramount that the goals of restorative practices are made clear from the very beginning. These practices must be about healing for the survivor and the person who did harm. The goal is to eventually help to end repeated violence in our communities.
- A restorative justice approach can greatly impact the children affected by abuse and reduce the occurrence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Restorative practices can benefit the children, the victim, and the abuser in these scenarios. Restorative practices prevent children from growing up to become abusers.
- Some victims are still very resistant to Restorative Practices. Victims still question



if these methods are victim-centered, particularly when the perpetrators are involved in the process. It is important to remember that victims and survivors are not a monolith – this approach will not work for everyone and that should be respected.

- Consider implementing restorative justice practices in family court where perpetrators of violence and their victims are forced to communicate and work together to coparent shared children.

## LANGUAGE MATTERS

- Restorative justice would be better received by survivors if framed as restorative practices that help prevent the occurrence of future violence. This acknowledges the large burden and sacrifice that restorative justice practices place on victims who do not want to engage with their abuser. It is not appropriate to promise victims that they will get justice for their suffering. Instead, we can promise them that we are trying to prevent their tragedy from happening again.
- Replacing “justice” with “practices” makes a difference in maintaining and sustaining open minds to this alternative approach to ending violence. “Justice” is different for everyone. “Practices” allow for effort, progress, and room for growth and improvements. Restorative justice can seem offender-focused. The word, “justice” can keep one’s defensive walls up – the word “practices” helped bring some of the walls down.

## CENTER VICTIM NEEDS AND VOICES

- Victims and co-victims of violent crimes remain overlooked and underserved. Too

many people in our communities remain traumatized by homicide and other acts of violent crimes due to the limited services that offer healing and restoration.

- Listen to the survivors with concern and heart, as if the survivor were your family member.
- Surviving loved ones of victims of homicide are too often overlooked. Loved ones of homicide victims are just as important as living survivors.
- Please consider the traumatizing element of murder and the necessity of re-humanizing all victims.
- Conversations about survivorship need to include more rural voices.
- Properly compensate survivors for their time and expertise.
- Please listen to everyone in your community. Just because people might not have a degree, speak the same language, or speak in the same manner as you, it does not mean they don’t have something crucial to offer. Victims are the experts in their own experience and can offer wise and useful input.

## EXPAND THE REACH AND AWARENESS OF VICTIM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

- Awareness of the North Carolina Victim Compensation Fund is very low even among the victim and survivor community. These are critical resources for those affected by violent crime and their existence needs to be shared more widely with the public.
- Increased funding for funeral costs is positive,

but there are still many barriers to accessing those funds and parts of the process can leave victims feeling blamed.

- There are some broken pieces to this process, and it was refreshing to see administrators working diligently to resolve these problems.
- It is important to remember that victims of sexual assault and domestic violence are not reading the fine print on forms about the Victim Compensation Fund. They cannot process or retain the information given to them in the moments following trauma. Case managers can and should help them navigate this process.
- The Fund should look at ways that compensation process does not require victims to pay for services first and be reimbursed later. This hurts families in poverty who cannot afford funeral expenses up front.
- Victims should be able to access funds without having to exhaust themselves in self-advocacy in order to do so.
- Compensation funds should be comprehensive in considering the appropriate kind of response. For example, if a victim is homeless, aside from the compensation available to them, housing stabilization should be part of the compensation package.

### **BETTER EXPLORE THESE IDEAS IN THE CONTEXT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

- Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault must be part of the ongoing

conversation about how to support and protect victims and survivors. They need to have a voice in policy-making and funding decisions.

- North Carolina should develop Domestic Violence Courts statewide.
- Domestic Violence training and Human Trafficking training should be mandatory for all criminal justice system actors, including law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, clerks, and defense attorneys, etc.
- Restorative practices must be handled on a case-by-case basis when it comes to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. One approach will not fit all victims, their families or their unique circumstances and experiences.
- Further education is needed for all system actors about what Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking really are and their consequences for victims for these types of crimes.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED TO BUILD COMMUNITIES FREE OF VIOLENCE**

- More community focused and community led discussions around the impact of violent crimes are needed in order to serve communities in the most impactful way.
- Communities that systematically experience poverty and financial insecurity need to be provided opportunities for economic advancement. Poverty is violence. When we reduce poverty, we can reduce cycles of violence and community trauma.