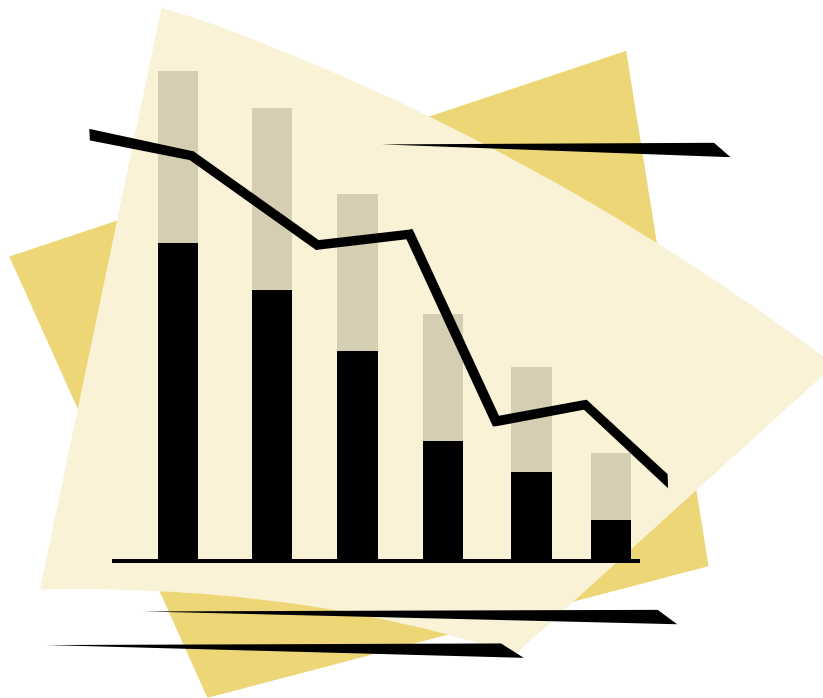


Palm Beach County Criminal Justice
Commission

Annual Monitoring Report
of
Pride Misdemeanor Probation
Services



October 1, 1998 – September 30, 1999

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- Pride Mission Statement
- Pride Organizational Chart
- Pride Probation Client Flowchart
- Pride Probation Appointment Policy
- Pride Scope of Services in Palm Beach County

The data for this report was collected by Community Court employees Manny Iglio, Dolores Cutlip and Ronald Hinkle. The report was prepared by Jerry Wardrop, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst with the Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission and presented to the Probation Advisory Board in August, 2000.

PROBATION ADVISORY BOARD
PRIDE MISDEMEANOR PROBATION SERVICES
1999 AUDIT REPORT

The Probation Advisory Board (PAB) is required by provisions in the County Probation Services contract to conduct an annual audit on Pride misdemeanor case files. The present reporting period is October 1, 1998, through September 30, 1999. A total of 5498 case files were terminated during this period. A random sampling of 5% of the total closed case files were audited totaling approximately 281 from all three Pride offices that include West Palm Beach, Delray Beach and Belle Glade.

1) West Palm Beach Pride Office:

A total of 3707 cases were terminated at this office during the above period. A random selection of every 20th case resulted in 192 cases being audited.

2) Belle Glade Pride Office:

A total of 385 cases were terminated at this office during the above period. A random selection of every 20th case resulted in 19 cases being audited.

3) Delray Beach Pride Office:

A total of 1406 cases were terminated at this office during the above period. A random selection of every 20th case resulted in 70 cases being audited.

The purpose of the annual audit is to ensure that Pride Integrated Services, Inc., is in compliance with the County misdemeanor Probation Services contract and the required Scope of Work as stipulated by the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners.

The audit focused on the accuracy, timeliness, quality and contract compliance by Pride in providing services to misdemeanor offenders in Palm Beach County. The audit data was collected through the Probation Audit Form that was adopted by the Probation Advisory Board and then entered into a Microsoft Access database.

The audit criteria was extrapolated from the Contract for Professional Services existing between Pride and Palm Beach County which originated in 1993. The contract was renewed annually until December 6, 1999 when the BCC, acting upon the recommendation of the CJC, entered into a 3-year contract. The contract remains in effect until December 5, 2002. The following is a synopsis of the audit findings, recommendations, and statistical data derived from the audit.

SUMMARY OF

Contract Requirements	Compliance Status
1) Intake Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • orientation & conditions of probation • personal history information • offense information & prior criminal history 	Yes Yes Yes
2) Enforce monthly reporting by probationer	Yes
3) Maintain monthly written record of probationer activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain probable cause affidavits • maintain victim contact & information • conduct palm checks • document violation of probation filings 	Yes Yes Yes Yes
4) Enforcement of court ordered conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fine, court costs, restitution & supervision costs • community service & prescribed treatment 	Yes Yes Yes
5) Verification of residence	No
6) Verification of employment	No
7) Determination of financial hardship	Yes
8) Referral to vocational, job training, literacy assistance & other social services	Yes
9) Maintain appropriate office hours	Yes
10) Maintain probation officer standards	Yes
11) Prepare & submit quarterly & annual reports	Yes
12) Maintain probation officer case load parity	Yes
13) Annual payment to the County	Yes
14) Maintain certificate of insurance	Yes
15) Assessment, collection, disbursement, & transfer of Monies	Yes
16) Provide operational & financial records when requested	Yes

FINDINGS:

- Pride's policy of having a Probation Officer in every County Criminal Court division ensures immediate contact after disposition between themselves and the offender. Conditions of probation are verbally explained by the Probation Officer and verified by the offender's signature. The probationer is then given a reporting date for their initial Pride office visit, usually within seven days.
- During the initial office visit, a personal history form is completed on every probationer together with the probation requirements, fines, court costs, restitution, treatment and supervision costs. Violations of probation conditions are explained in detail also.
- Pride did a good job of enforcing all court ordered treatment and probation conditions. Non-compliance with probation conditions or re-offending resulted in a violation of probation (VOP) being filed with the court. It was noted the court exercised numerous options including reinstatement of probation, revocation of probation and jail time.
- Pride enforced and verified all community service and restitution conditions. As a matter of Pride program policy, treatment and community service obligations require a letter of completion from the treatment provider or the recipient of the community service.
- It was noted that all three Pride offices utilize a uniform administrative procedure in documenting all contacts and reporting visits with probationers.
- Pride was very timely in their quarterly and annual reporting as required by the county professional services contract. Copies of probationer and financial reports are mailed concurrently to the Chief Judge of the 15th Judicial Circuit, the Chair of the Probation Advisory Board and CJC staff assigned to the PAB.
- Pride is currently in compliance with the requirement to maintain a certificate of insurance of general liability and automobile policies with Palm Beach County included as additional insured. The present coverage extends until 7/1/01.
- In the original 1993 Pride – County Professional Services contract, Pride agreed to reimburse the County the sum of five thousand dollars per year (\$5,000) payable in two semi-annual installments, to offset the cost to the County of monitoring the contract. This continues in effect.
- The Pride "Probation Client Flowchart" closely correlates to the present system of activities that occur between the offender and the probation officer.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

✿ It was noted that general history form data fields are not being completely filled out by Probation Officers. In many instances, the form contained several omissions. Sufficient time should be allocated during intake to thoroughly complete all data fields. These omissions will skew final statistics.

✿ In several instances, case files contained probation timelines provided by the Judiciary. Pride stated these timelines assist them in the enforcement of conditions while minimizing the chances of the probationary period expiring without total compliance by the probationer. PAB members and Pride have advocated this practice in the past and have indicated they will continue to address this issue with the Judiciary.

✿ Verification of residence has been a requirement of the County contract but according to the audit, is not being complied with by Probation Officers.

✿ Employment verification has also been a requirement of the County contract but has never been fully enforced by Pride. Pride has agreed to rectify this by requiring utility, rent or pay receipts of the probationer.

✿ Through their own initiative and with support of the PAB, Pride has agreed to be more proactive with probationers. As opposed to only ensuring compliance with court ordered probation conditions, Pride has now initiated a needs assessment program to identify and facilitate services to their probationers. The PAB feels very strongly about the need for this service.

✿ Pride, in conjunction with the Probation Advisory Board and the Criminal Justice Commission, has developed a survey instrument to measure the quality of services they deliver to the 15th Judicial Circuit. Plans are to survey representatives of the Judiciary, State and Public Defenders Office and the Private Defense Lawyers Association who have direct contact with Pride personnel for their input. Results of the survey will assist Pride in determining if and where improvements are needed. Survey results will be published in future monitoring reports.

PROBATIONER PROFILE:**N = 281**

Demographic	Probationers		Percentages
Gender	Male	212	75.4%
	Female	69	24.6
Race	White	197	70.0%
	Black	57	20.0
	Hispanic	18	10.0 (combined)
	Other	10	
Age	< - 18	27	9.6%
	18 – 25	59	21.0
	26 – 35	77	27.4
	36 – 45	55	19.6
	46 – 55	37	13.1
	56 >	12	9.3 (combined)
	Unknown	14	
Marital	Unknown	16	5.7%
	Married	82	29.2
	Single	122	43.4
	Divorced	32	11.4
	Other	29	10.3
Employed	Yes	217	77.2%
	No	64	22.8
Employment verified	Yes	47	21.7%
	No	170	78.3
Income	< \$2,500	57	20.3%
	2,500 – 5,000	9	3.2
	5,000 – 10,000	21	7.5
	10,000 -20,000	41	14.6
	20,000 –30,000	23	8.2
	30,000 >	36	12.8
	Unknown	94	33.4
Education	<12 th grade	128	45.6%
	12 th grade	81	28.8
	12>	72	25.6
Residence	Own	157	55.9%
	Rent	124	44.1
Residence Type	House	161	57.3%
	Apt	73	26.0
	Condo	12	4.3
	Trailer	12	4.3
	Other	23	8.1
Palms check	Yes	260	92.5%
	No	21	7.5
Claimed financial hardship	Yes	12	4.3%
	No	269	95.7

Early termination		108	38.4%
Regular termination		136	48.4
VOP		37	13.2
Prior convictions	None	111	39.5%
	1	123	43.8
	2 or more	47	16.7
Drugs/alcohol in present charge	Yes	136	48.4%
	No	145	51.6
Present charge	DUI	106	37.7%
	DOV	46	16.4
	Traffic	41	14.6
	Other	88	31.3
Community service ordered	Yes	164 out of 281	58.4%
	No	117 out of	41.6
Community service completed	Yes	135 out of 164	82.3%
	No	29	17.7%
Treatment ordered	Yes	215 out of 281	76.5%
	No	66	23.5
Treatment completed	Yes	182 out of 215	84.7%
	No	33	15.3
Treatment type	DUI School	128/215	59.5%
	DOV Counsel	17	
	BIP	25	
	VIP	100	46.5
	Other	54	
	No listing	60	27.9

PROBATIONER MEAN PROFILE

N = 281

Gender	Male	75.4%
Race	White	70.0%
Age	Between 26 – 35	27.4%
Marital	Single	43.4%
Income	<\$10,000	31.0%
	<\$20,000	45.6%
% of probationers employed	217 out of 281 audits	77.2%
Education	Less than 12 th grade	45.6%
Prior convictions	170 out of 281 audits	60.5%
Drugs/Alcohol	136 out of 281 audits	48.4%

Pride Status

North County Probation Office

Pride reported their newly opened Probation Services office located at 524 Northlake Boulevard is doing well and as designed, providing services primarily to North County residents. This North County location is also designed to take some of the burden off the West Palm Beach office. Pride reports the caseload has been climbing steadily since opening and they have recently added a third Probation Officer to their staff.

West Palm Beach Office

Pride CEO Maureen Ferrill reported their facility located at 2711 Exchange Court has been out grown due to facility age, space and configuration. In addition, the facility does not meet federal ADA standards. Pride has experienced an increased probation caseload at the West Palm office together with consolidating their administration offices there. Plans are to remain in the geographical area but with larger and more modern space. Courthouse staffing commitments also require they remain in proximity to the main County Courthouse.

Automation

Pride reported that automation of their records system is proceeding with Probation Officers now able to “real time” their client reporting data. Client data can be queried for tracking purposes and case information has already been accessed by the Judiciary for their use. The financial component is still being worked on whereby monies collected by Pride for cost of supervision, restitution payments, fines and court costs will be documented electronically with the Clerk’s Office.

Quality Assurance Program

Pride instituted an organizational wide Quality Assurance Program (QAP) this year. It is an internally focused mechanism designed to review the way they conduct business and deliver services. The QAP is the result of management and staff working together to strive for efficiency and increased quality of service. The program has received enthusiastic commitment and ownership from Pride employees and has resulted in dramatic improvements. QAP meetings continue on a regular basis with all internal systems under review.

Community Liaison Specialist Position

The idea behind this proposition was to determine if a greater range of social service needs might exist among probationers. If so, Pride reasoned that perhaps they could better help their clientele by facilitating referrals to the proper County social agencies for assistance. This began as a pilot program to see if there would be interest from probationers.

Under this program, Probation Officers during their monthly visits with clients would determine if any needs existed. If so, the client would then be referred to the proper social service agency within the County. It was believed that literacy and employment referrals, substance abuse, mental health needs, food and shelter would be among the services most in need.

Pride reported that due to staffing, automation and facility transition, this program has not been given the attention and focus it needs. Pride reported they intend to revisit this program in the future to make it more viable.

Probation Services Handbook

Pride in conjunction with the PAB instituted the Probation Services Handbook designed to provide probationers with terms of their probation. The handbook allows Probation Officers to enter costs of supervision, court costs, fines and any other specific and general probation terms. The handbook is either provided to probationers at their first court appearance or at their first probation reporting visit. The handbook after initially being distributed in English has now been printed in Spanish. Pride reports that the handbook has been an excellent referral source for them.

CONCLUSION

In summary, Pride was very cooperative throughout the audit. Upon request, they provided a master list of all cases terminated for the period October 1, 1998, through September 30, 1999. The CJC staff randomly selected files from the master list for review that were then obtained in a timely fashion. The audits were conducted for the most part, on-site at three of the Pride offices. (North County records are maintained at the West Palm Beach office) The physical facilities were clean and geographically located in proximity to their client base and appeared to have sufficient space to meet the needs of probationers. It was also noted that aside from providing probation services to Palm Beach County, Pride's Scope of Services includes DUI and Traffic schools for offenders sentenced by the court.

Pride also provides assessment services for the Substance Abuse Awareness Program functioning in the County. These treatment services are not part of the probation services contract but reflect Pride's commitment to providing the most comprehensive service possible to the 15th Judicial Circuit and the offenders who pass through their venue. Pride has also been actively involved in the planning of Drug Court since the beginning and their role in Drug Court when it becomes operational is under review.

The audit demonstrated that Pride is doing a very good job of enforcing the conditions of probation while attempting to be proactive in identifying probationer needs. Pride's history of responding to audit recommendations has been very positive especially noted during the past three years. During this period of time, Pride has been encouraged to attend and provide input at the PAB meetings. This participation has allowed for increased communications between Pride representatives and members of the PAB. This partnership has allowed both entities to constructively work together to provide efficient service to Palm Beach County while serving the needs of a diverse clientele. This audit finds that Pride is in compliance with the provisions of the professional probation services contract with Palm Beach County.