



## Research Brief:

# Evaluating Onondaga County's Offender-Focused Policing Strategy

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### Academic Partner:

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### Project Completed:

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### Summary:

The Finn Institute conducted a process evaluation of changes to Onondaga County's offender-focused strategy to reduce violent crime in the city of Syracuse. The evaluation included an assessment of fidelity to program design and an analysis of outcomes.

[Knowledge Bank Program Profile](#)

### Background

Onondaga County has used a strategy called Chronic Offender Recognition and Enforcement (CORE) since 2008 to identify, monitor and prosecute chronic violent offenders in Syracuse. In July 2017, Onondaga County created PerpStat, which manages the CORE strategy, promotes discussion among partner agencies, and aims to ensure accountability. Partners include the Syracuse Police Department, District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, Probation Department, New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and Federal Probation, with technical assistance and support from the Onondaga Crime Analysis Center (OCAC). Each identified individual is assigned to one of the partner agencies, which maintains contact with the individual and coordinates any enforcement actions. Bi-weekly meetings are used to report on activities, plan methods of contact, and plan potential enforcement actions.

### Design

Researchers provided technical assistance and evaluated the program. They conducted interviews with key stakeholders to solicit feedback on the program, including strengths, challenges and recommendations for improvement. Interviews were supplemented with direct observations of PerpStat meetings by researchers. OCAC provided information on identified individuals, including arrests, stops, and calls for service. Probation

provided information on home visits, office visits, drug tests, and violations of probation, and the District Attorney's Office provided information on indictments, convictions and sentences. Researchers used these data to analyze short-term outcomes for CORE offenders pre-intervention (July 2016 — June 2017) and post-intervention (July — December 2017).

### Results

- Having a formal mechanism for communication, collaboration and accountability among agency partners was identified as a program strength.
- Ensuring that agency staff at all levels are committed to the strategy was identified as a challenge. Stakeholders expressed that some individuals identified as chronic offenders are treated with judicial leniency.
- An analysis of outcomes, however, showed a 41 percent increase in arrests, a 56 percent increase in indictments, and a 15 percent increase in convictions for CORE offenders post-intervention.
- Post-intervention, CORE offenders had more arrests for violent and weapon offenses compared to individuals with similar criminal histories, and were more than twice as likely to be stopped.
- CORE offenders also received more home visits, drug tests and violations of probation, and were indicted and convicted more frequently.

## About the Research Consortium

*An initiative of the state Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Research Consortium promotes criminal justice research and the use of data and evidence by facilitating partnerships between local practitioners and college and university-based researchers. The research design and conclusions detailed here are the sole work product of the academic partner that conducted the research. Neither DCJS nor the State of New York endorse the program, methodology or results.*