

## Collaborative Justice Services (CJS)

### Description

*Collaborative Justice Services (CJS) offers a jail-diversion program for adults diagnosed with a mental illness released from Essex and Morris County Correctional Facilities. Upon referral from police, courts, or social agencies, CJS begins services immediately, starting intake and discharge planning from day one. Using a consumer-centered, wellness-based approach, CJS assesses consumers' strengths and needs to develop personalized plans that aim to reduce or eliminate additional jail time by promoting therapeutic over punitive outcomes. The goals are to decrease arrests and incarceration, reduce repeat offenses, and improve access to mental health and social services post-release. CJS also provides mental health training for law enforcement officers to enhance awareness and best practices regionally.*

### Personnel

Collaborative Justice Services continues to benefit from exceptionally high staff retention, fostering continuity and trust in its operations. At the Essex campus, the team includes three Forensic Case Managers (FCMs), one Administrative Assistant, and a Program Director, all of whom operate both within the jail and in the broader community. At the Morris campus, the staff comprises one Program Director and one Forensic Case Manager, who similarly serve clients within the Morris County Correctional Facility and follow them into the community as needed. The CJS teams are culturally diverse and reflect the demographic profile of the individuals it serves.

### Caseload

As of June 30, 2025, Collaborative Justice Services Essex is managing 40 active cases, illustrating robust engagement with the community and county systems. Referrals originate from a wide range of sources: the Mental Health and Medical Departments at Essex County Correctional Facility (ECCF), the Essex County Office of the Public Defender, Essex County Probation, and the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. Additional referrals come through the ECCF Social Services Department, Justice-Involved Services programs, state prisons, as well as self-referrals, family members, and internal CJS staff networks, reflecting a well-integrated consortium of justice, legal, and community stakeholders. At the same time, CJS Morris had 15 active cases on that date. Referrals to this campus are made by the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, Morris County Correctional Facility, Morris County Public Defender's Office, Community Connections, community organizations, and Morris County Probation Services, underscoring similarly broad collaboration in that jurisdiction. This referral breadth across both campuses highlights CJS's strong interagency relationships and its capacity to engage individuals at multiple entry points within the justice system—whether entering through court systems, corrections, or community-based relationships. It also reflects CJS's active role in identifying and supporting individuals at risk of incarceration via direct, self, and family-initiated referrals. By mid-2025, both campuses were steadily serving clients across the entire referral spectrum—from legal entities to families—supporting reentry through tailored service planning, linkage, and discharge support.

## Demographics

MHA's CJS programs provide services to residents of Essex and Morris counties who are 18 years of age and older, diagnosed with a serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI) and have a history of treatment non-compliance.

**Gender:** At the end of the fiscal year, the self-reported gender for individuals served in CJS Morris was 14% female, and 86% male. For Essex, 76.92% were male and 23.08% female. Zero percent of participants reported trans male/female, nor gender non-conforming.

**Ethnicity:** During Fiscal Year 2025, CJS Morris provided services to individuals who self-reported the following races and ethnicities: 40% African-American, 40% White, 5% Hispanic, 10% unknown, 5% American Indian/Alaskan Native/Indigenous. CJS Essex provided services to individuals who self-reported the following races and ethnicities: 7.69% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 0% Asian, 53.85% Black or African-American, 0% Multi-Racial, 15.38% Hispanic, and 23.08% White.

**Age:** CJS Morris provided services to 14% of individuals between the ages of 18-29, 31% between the ages of 30-39, 27% between the ages of 40-49, 14% between the ages of 50-59, and 14% above the age of 60. CJS Essex provided services to 23.08% of individuals are ages of 18 to 24, 30.77% are between 25 and 34 years old, and another 15.38% fall within the 35 to 44 age range. Those aged 45 to 54 make up 7.69%, while the 55 to 64 group represents 23.08%. Lastly, 0% of the population is between 65 years old or older.

## Performance Outcomes

Performance outcomes for Collaborative Justice Services were systematically measured and monitored through the Mental Health Association's Quality Assurance Committee. During Fiscal Year 2025, Essex CJS tracked consumer recidivism to the Essex County Correctional Facility at key intervals—specifically within 30, 60, 90, and 120 days post-release. According to the QA threshold, fewer than 50 consumers were expected to return to jail within each of the 30/90-day and 60/120-day timeframes. Of the consumers monitored, 17 were re-incarcerated within either 30 or 90 days of their release, while only 4 were re-incarcerated within either 60 or 120 days—demonstrating relatively strong outcomes against the program's target benchmarks.

At the Morris campus, consumer recidivism was also monitored monthly for return to jail within 30, 60, 90, and 120 days following release. The QA threshold in Morris aimed to have fewer than five consumers re-incarcerated within 30 and 90 days, and fewer than ten within 60 and 120 days. Impressively, during FY2025, no consumers returned to jail within any of the measured intervals—at 30, 60, 90, and 120 days. These results underscore the effectiveness of discharge planning and community linkage strategies at the Morris location and reflect a highly successful year in terms of recidivism prevention.

This year, CJS Essex successfully diverted three (3) consumers from a state prison sentence. As a result of the jail diversions, a total of 7,029 days were reduced in our consumers' prison sentence and 59,850 days were reduced in our consumers' county sentence. CJS continues to monitor the cost-effectiveness for county costs. In FY2025, the program saved approximately \$8,857,800 in county costs, and \$1,040,292 in

state costs. (Please note the approximate cost to house a county inmate daily is \$148.00). Based on the data gathered, CJS will continue to monitor time saved for consumers both for county and state time.

During FY 2025, CJS Morris made significant strides in collaborative efforts with the Morris County Correctional Facility, the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, and the Morris County Public Defender's Office. Through these partnerships, staff successfully diverted individuals from potential incarceration—preventing approximately 364 county jail days and 3,650 state prison days. These efforts translated into substantial fiscal impact: the program delivered estimated savings of \$53,872 in county-level incarceration costs and \$540,200 in state-level corrections costs. This outcome reflects both the effectiveness of the diversion work and the value of close cross-agency coordination in achieving cost-avoidance and safer community outcomes.

## Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

**Essex:** Collaborative Justice Services in Essex County distributed approximately 40 client satisfaction surveys to consumers—hand-delivered, mailed, or left at their residences—with assurances that responses would remain confidential. Ultimately, 13 consumers responded, and 100% reported being overall satisfied with CJS services. These surveys align with best practice standards for preserving confidentiality and promoting high-quality, trustworthy data collection.

**Gender:** Of the thirteen (13) consumers that responded to the survey; eleven (10) were male (76.92%) and three (3) were female (23.08%).

**Ethnicity:** Of these thirteen (13) consumers, seven (7) consumers identified as African American (53.85%), three (3) as Caucasian (23.08%), one (1) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native (7.69%), and two (2) identified as Hispanic (15.38%).

**Age:** Of the thirteen (13) consumers, three (3) identified between 18-24 (23.08%), four (4) identified 25-34 (30.77%), two (2) identified as being between 35-44 years old (15.38%), one (1) as 45-54 years old (7.69%), and three (3) as 55-65 years old (23.08%).

**Morris:** In Morris County, approximately fifteen satisfaction surveys were distributed to consumers—either hand-delivered, mailed, or personally left at residences—all accompanied by sealed envelopes to reinforce anonymity. Ultimately, six consumers submitted surveys, with five respondents indicating their experience. Remarkably, 100% of respondents reported that they were overall satisfied with CJS services.

**Gender:** Of the six (6) consumers that responded to the survey; four (4) were male (66.67%) and two (2) were female (33.33%).

**Ethnicity:** Of these six (6) consumers, two (2) consumers identified as African American (33.33%), three (3) as Caucasian (50%), and one (1) identified as Other (16.67%).

**Age:** Of the six (6) consumers, one (1) identified as being between 35-44 years old (16.67%), three (3) as 45-54 years old (50%), one (1) as 55-65 years old (16.67%), and one (1) as 65 years old and older (16.67%).

## Program Highlights

- During Fiscal Year 2025, Essex Collaborative Justice Services staff successfully facilitated 164 community linkages, connecting clients to vital mental health services, housing supports, and social resources to promote stability and recovery. Similarly, Morris CJS staff facilitated 118 community linkages, helping clients access a range of essential services, including behavioral health care, housing assistance, substance use treatment, employment resources, and other supports critical to successful community reintegration.
- Essex CJS Director—working in partnership with the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office—delivered a robust 121 hours of Crisis Intervention Team training, reaching approximately 70 law enforcement officers. In collaboration with the Morris County Prosecutor’s Office, the Morris CJS Director led a total of 160 hours of Crisis Intervention Team training, reaching approximately 132 law enforcement officers throughout the year.
- In August 2024, the Morris CJS Director represented MHA at the CIT International Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. This annual event brings together law enforcement, mental health professionals, public safety leaders, and advocates to promote best practices, innovation, and collaboration in crisis response and mental health diversion efforts.
- Annual Consumer Achievement Awards ceremony was held at the Essex County Elks Lodge, celebrating the success and progress of program participants and reinforcing positive community recognition. In addition, throughout the year, CJS consumers engaged in several MHA community-building and social wellness events. These included a summer picnic, annual boat trip, a fall festival, and a holiday celebration. These gatherings play a meaningful role in promoting recovery, fostering social connection, and reducing isolation among participants.

## Advocacy Activities

CJS actively participates in several key systems-level meetings across both counties, including the System Review Committee (SRC), Professional Advisory Committee/PACADA, the Mental Health Initiative, the Essex County Task Force, the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office Mental Health Diversion Program, Review Team for the Morris County Prosecutor’s Office Mental Health Diversion Program, the Morris County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Steering Committee, and the New Jersey State CIT Committee. These collaboratives provide an essential platform for interagency communication, service coordination, and strategic planning. In addition, CJS engages in regular case review meetings with the Essex County Correctional Facility, partnering closely with CFG (Correctional Focus Guidance) and the facility’s Mental Health Team to support integrated care planning and transition support for incarcerated individuals.

Both Morris and Essex County CJS programs participate in the Statewide CJS Directors’ Meetings convened by the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). These meetings serve as a critical venue for exchanging insights with peer programs from other counties, addressing challenges in service delivery, identifying best practices, and staying informed on policy changes, protocol updates, and new initiatives impacting CJS statewide.

CJS staff across both counties also work directly with consumers to build self-advocacy skills, promoting active participation in their recovery and encouraging involvement in peer-led organizations and advocacy groups such as self-help centers and NAMI-NJ. Through open dialogue and individualized support, clients

are empowered to take a more active role in shaping their own treatment and in representing the needs of the justice-involved mental health community.

## **FY 2026 Goals**

- CJS staff will work on increasing the total number of contacts with consumers, their families and service providers.
- CJS will continue to work closely with the Public Defender's Office to increase collaboration for consumer success.
- CJS will continue to collect data and will closely monitor all performance indicators.
- CJS will continue to work with consumers to empower them to reach their goals.
- CJS will attend any relevant trainings to increase their knowledge in best practice measures.
- CJS will continue to conduct trainings and presentations as needed to those wanting to learn the role of CJS, as well as to local law enforcement.
- CJS will continue to work collaboratively with Morris and Essex County Correctional Facility to increase referrals.
- CJS will continue to work collaboratively with the Prosecutor's Office to provide CIT training to local law enforcement.
- CJS will continue partnerships and collaborations with courts and local police municipalities with the hopes of increasing the number of consumers referred for diversion by law enforcement and/or the court before arrest or at the time of initial detention/first appearance hearings.

## **Morris Mental Health Diversion (MMHD) (Morris) Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) (Essex)**

### **Description**

The Morris Mental Health Diversion (MMHD), part of the CJS team, promotes recovery by engaging individuals, assessing readiness for change, and connecting them to mental health, housing, and other services. It partners with local law enforcement and courts to divert eligible individuals from the justice system early on, aiming to reduce recidivism and support wellness.

The Essex Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) program is an outpatient initiative for individuals approved for pre-trial release. It emphasizes early intervention, assessment, and linking clients to mental health, housing, and support services. CJR collaborates with courts, pre-trial services, and community partners to identify and support individuals, offering counseling, psychiatric care, peer support, and diversion programs to prevent deeper involvement in the justice system and promote recovery and stability.

### **Personnel**

At MMHD, the team includes one Program Director, one Administrative Assistant, one Peer Support Specialist, two Forensic Case Managers (FCMs), and two Licensed Forensic Clinicians. Staff work both within the jail and in the community, completing intakes and developing discharge plans for eligible consumers incarcerated at Morris County Correctional Facility.

CJR is staffed by a multidisciplinary team consisting of one Program Director, one Peer Support Specialist, one Navigator Case Coordinator, and two licensed clinicians. Team members operate both within Essex County Correctional Facility and in the community, conducting screenings, intake assessments, and providing treatment for eligible individuals approved for pre-trial release.

Both teams reflect the cultural diversity of the population it serves, fostering a more inclusive and responsive approach to care.

### **Caseload**

As of June 30, 2025, MMHD had 26 active cases. During FY2025, referrals for MMHD were made through the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, the Morris County Public Defender's Office, Sussex County Prosecutor's Office, and Morris County Sheriff's Department (Community Connections).

As of June 30, 2025, CJR had 37 active cases and 56 total for the year. During FY2025, referrals for CJR were made through Essex County Correctional Facility, Essex County Public Defender's Office, Essex County Pre-Trial Services, and Central Judicial Processing Court.

## Demographics

MMHD accepts individuals who are 18 years of age or older, are mental health consumers not yet incarcerated but at risk of incarceration due to criminal involvement, or are criminally charged adult residents of Morris County who have a mental illness or a co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder. These individuals may be either;

- Pending discharge or incarcerated in the Morris County Correctional Facility (MCCF), or
- Released or charged on summons and are facing indictable charges.

CJR accepts individuals who are 18 years of age or older, have a positive mental health screen, are criminally charged adult residents of Essex County on pre-trial release with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> degree charges.

## Performance Outcomes

Performance outcomes were measured and monitored through MHA's Quality Assurance Committee (QA). MMHD's consumer recidivism to jail within 30, 60, 90, and 120 days was tracked monthly. The performance threshold indicates that fewer than five consumers would return within 30 and 90 days, and fewer than ten consumers within 60 and 120 days. During FY 2025, zero (0) consumers returned to jail within 30 days, zero (0) within 60 days, zero (0) within 90 days, and zero (0) 120 days.

This year, MMHD successfully collaborated with the Morris and Sussex County Prosecutor's Office to admit eleven (11) clients into the Prosecutors Mental Health Diversion Program. As a result, staff diverted consumers from a criminal sentence, saving approximately 10,950 prison days. In FY 2025, the program saved approximately \$1,620,600 in state costs. (based on an estimated daily inmate cost of \$148.00).

CJR's performance outcomes were also tracked through MHA's QA Committee. One key metric was consumer recidivism to Essex County Correctional Facility within 30, 60, 90, and 120 days post-release. During FY2025, zero (0) consumers returned within 30 days, two (2) within 60 days, and two (2) within 90 and 120 days. In total, four (4) consumers re-entered the correctional system during these periods, resulting in a 7% recidivism rate (4 out of 56 consumers served during the fiscal year). This remained well within the program's performance threshold.

CJR also collaborated effectively with Essex County Superior Court, Municipal Courts, and the Essex County Public Defender's Office to facilitate the dismissal of 25 cases. These dismissals represent approximately 67% of the program's active caseload. These outcomes highlight both the legal benefits of participating in CJR and the program's effectiveness in diverting individuals from the criminal justice system, reducing recidivism, and promoting long-term recovery and stability.

## Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

In Morris and Essex Counties, surveys were distributed and tallied to measure consumer satisfaction. All consumers were informed that their answers would remain confidential. They were provided with a sealed envelope to protect anonymity and informed of several methods for returning the surveys.

**MMHD:** Approximately twenty-three (23) surveys were distributed to consumers via hand delivery, mail, and/or left at their residence. From this distribution, twelve (12) surveys were returned, resulting in a 52% response rate for the program. A core strength of the MMHD program is its exceptional client satisfaction and commitment to a respectful, empowering environment. Recent survey results show a remarkable 100% satisfaction rate on key measures, including overall satisfaction, dignity and respect, and staff availability. Furthermore, the program encourages self-direction and personal choice, with 100% of individuals reporting they are encouraged to make their own decisions and actively participate in their treatment goals. The data also underscores the program's effectiveness in its primary mission, as 91% of clients report receiving resources and support to avoid incarceration, a testament to the program's real-world impact.

**Gender:** Of the twelve (12) consumers who responded to the survey; five (5) were female (41.67%), and seven (7) were male (58.33%).

**Ethnicity:** Among these twelve (12) consumers, four (4) consumers identified as Hispanic (33.33), and eight (8) identified as Caucasian (66.67%).

**Age:** The exact ages of the consumers were collected. Of the twelve (12) consumers, three (3) were between 25-34 years old (25%), six (6) were 35-44 years old (50%), and three (3) were 45-54 years old (25%).

**Essex CJR:** Approximately **thirty (30) surveys** were distributed to consumers via hand delivery, mail, and/or left at their residence. From this distribution, **eleven (11) surveys were returned**, resulting in a **37% response rate** for the program. The CJR program demonstrated an exceptionally high level of client satisfaction and a strong commitment to a person-centered approach. Survey results were overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of clients reporting overall satisfaction, positive interactions with staff, and the ability to freely voice their concerns. The program excelled at fostering autonomy, as 91% of individuals strongly agreed they are encouraged to make their own decisions while the remaining 9% agreed the same and as well as actively participate in their treatment plans. This commitment to empowerment and respect is further reinforced by a 100% agreement rate on clients feeling they are treated with dignity and respect. The fact that 100% of clients would recommend this program to others serves as a powerful testament to the quality of care and the impactful, positive experience provided.

**Gender:** Of the eleven (11) respondents, five (5) were male (45 %) and six (6) were female (55%).

**Ethnicity:** Among these eleven (11) respondents, nine (9) identified as African American (82%) and two (2) identified as Hispanic (18%).

**Age:** Of the eleven (11) consumers, two (2) were 18-24 (18%), six (6) were 25-34 (55%), one (1) was 35-44 which was (9%), and two (2) were 55-64 (18%).

## Program Highlights

During FY25:

- MMHD staff successfully link clients to 289 community linkages.
- Morris Program Director and Morris County Prosecutors Office provided 160 hours of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to approximately 132 law enforcement officers.
- Five (5) consumers successfully graduated from the Prosecutors Mental Health Diversion Program, resulting in a full dismissal of their criminal charges.
- There were nine (9) new admissions into the Morris County Prosecutor's Mental Health Diversion Program, two (2) new admissions into the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office, and two (2) new admissions to mental health probation.
- In August 2024, Morris Program Director attended the CIT International Conference held in Indianapolis, Indiana. The purpose of the conference is to bring together law enforcement, mental health professionals, advocates and public safety leaders.
- Morris Program Director provided a presentation on mental health diversion to the Sussex County Bar Association.
- MMHD consumers, in collaboration with all other MHA adult programs, attended a picnic at Hedden Park, as well as a fall festival at the Morris Campus and holiday party held by Holiday Express at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey.
- MMHD participated in the Annual Consumer Achievement Awards ceremony, held at the Morris campus, acknowledging the success and progress of program clients.
- CJR staff pre-screened 703 individuals utilizing the social determinants of health tool at Essex County Correctional Facility and completed 57 clinical assessments.
- CJR staff were able to successfully linked consumers to 171 community linkages.
- CJR in partnership Essex Municipal Courts established Mental Health Diversion Court in Newark, East Orange, and Irvington meeting one Friday a month.
- CJR continued the peer group for our consumers to increase coping skills and socialization.
- CJR established a relationship with The Beck Institute, which provided Recovery Oriented Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CT-R) training and supervision to the entire team.
- In March 2025, Essex Program Director presented for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority's Wellness Day where we educated them on criminal justice reform, MHA's programs, and trauma informed care.
- In April 2025, Program Director attended The Re-Entry Conference, focusing domestic violence, and made a significant connection to assist our consumers with their civil cases.
- CJR partnered with Orange Police Department to hold community engagements events in June, September and December.
- CJR Program Director continues to offer Mental Health First Aid Training and Motivational Interviewing Training to the community and within MHA.
- CJR participated in the Annual Achievement Awards, held at The Elks Lodge West Orange, celebrating the mental health achievements of our consumers.
- CJR participated in the annual Boat Trip, Halloween Party, Thanksgiving Party, Holiday Party, and Annual Picnic this fiscal year. These events highlight MHA's commitment to fostering community.

## **Advocacy Activities**

The MMHD Program Director participates as a member of the Review Team for the Morris County Prosecutor's Office's Mental Health Diversion Program, the Morris Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Steering Committee, and the NJ State CIT Committee.

The CJR Program Director and CJR Clinicians actively participate in monthly review meetings for the Newark, Irvington, and East Orange Mental Health Diversion Courts. In addition, they continue to advocate for consumers involved in other municipal courts, superior courts, and civil cases by collaborating closely with community partners to ensure comprehensive support and representation.

Morris and Essex County staff work closely with consumers to help them develop self-advocacy skills by maintaining an open dialogue about various ways they can become involved in different levels of advocacy (e.g., self-help centers, NAMI-NJ).

## **FY 2026 Goals**

MMHD staff will focus on increasing the total number of contacts with consumers, their families, and service providers. They will continue to work closely with the Public Defender's Office to enhance collaboration and support for consumer success. Additionally, MMHD will persist in collecting data and closely monitoring all performance indicators to ensure ongoing improvement. The team will also continue to work with consumers to empower them to achieve their goals. To enhance their effectiveness, MMHD staff will attend relevant trainings to expand their knowledge of best practice measures. They will also conduct trainings and presentations as needed to educate others about the role of MMHD, including local law enforcement. Furthermore, MMHD will maintain collaborative efforts with the Morris County Correctional Facility to increase referrals and will continue working with the Morris County Prosecutor's Office to provide CIT training to local law enforcement.

CJR staff will focus on increasing the total number of consumers served and expanding the number of contacts with consumers, their families, and service providers. They will continue to work closely with Essex County program partners, including Administrative Office of the Courts, Superior Court, Municipal Courts, Central Processing Judicial Court, Pre-Trial Services, the Public Defender's Office, and Probation, to enhance collaboration and support for consumer success. Additionally, CJR will persist in collecting data and closely monitoring all performance indicators to ensure ongoing improvement. The team will continue to work with consumers to empower them to reach their goals and will attend relevant trainings to enhance their knowledge of best practice measures. CJR will also conduct presentations as needed to educate others about the program and will maintain collaborative efforts with Essex County Correctional Facility to increase referrals.