

2024

Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Wrap Report



ASSOCIATION OF
PROSECUTING
ATTORNEYS

Introduction

Happy Holidays from the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA)! We hope that you have a wonderful holiday season! In honor of APA's 15th Anniversary, we would like to share our 2024 accomplishments.



New Transition

In October, we experienced a shift in our leadership structure. Nichole (Nikki) Parisi was promoted from COO to CEO, marking a new chapter for our organization. Additionally, our Board of Directors saw both a transition and an expansion. Mecklenburg County District Attorney Spencer Merriweather stepped in as our new Board Chair, while David LaBahn remains APA's President.¹



Team Building for the Future

² During our 15th anniversary, we held our staff retreat in Gulf Shores, Alabama. We engaged in collaborative discussions and generated many ideas to advance our mission. We focused on strengthening partnerships and sharing essential resources to support prosecutors, law enforcement, and other allied professionals in their efforts to create safer communities.

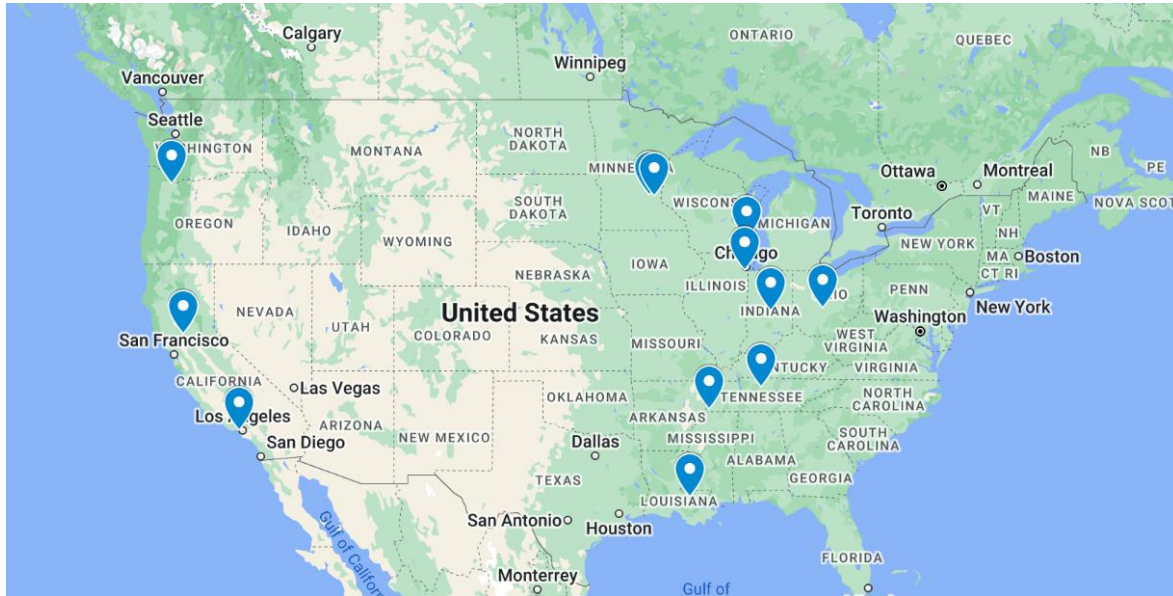


This year, we've been all over the country training, collaborating, and connecting prosecutors with each other as our graphic to the left shows.

¹ Board of Directors: President - David LaBahn, Chair - Spencer Merriweather, Vice Chair - Kym Worthy, Second Chair - Leesa Manion, Treasurer - Steven Naugle, Secretary - Justin Bingham, Directors - John T. Chisholm, John J. Choi, Darcel Clark, Hydee Feldstein Soto, Steve Kunzweiler, Rachel Mitchell, Jean Peters Baker, Mike Schmidt, Todd Spitzer, Nichole Parisi

² APA Staff Retreat, Gulf Shores, Alabama

APA is presently working with prosecutors' offices to implement change across the United States. The map below shows some of our pilot site locations.



APA also served as an advocate in the prosecutorial profession in many ways in 2024. Here are a couple of examples:



In September, the National Academies of Sciences hosted a two-day workshop examining models of prosecutorial programs. Our very own Marlene Biener, COO, moderated several discussions (left, top).



Also in September, our Senior Program Manager Aviva Kurash participated in a panel discussion that included prosecutors and victim advocates from two jurisdictions on “Breaking Cycles of Violence through Survivor Center Diversion” (a pilot site program funded by the DOJ Office for Victims of Crime) at the National Center for Victims of Crime’s National Training Institute. These efforts are part of the significant work ahead as the field of prosecution continues to face new challenges and opportunities—from threats to prosecutorial independence to addressing structural inequities (left, bottom).

We thank you for your partnership over the past year and look forward to another year of working together towards a more just and equitable legal system.

Nichole Parisi, CEO

David LaBahn, President

2024 Outcomes

Prosecutorial Independence: *Protecting Prosecutor Discretion*

In 2024, in Nashville, TN, APA and the Vanderbilt Project on Prosecution Policy hosted the Prosecutorial Independence Summit where we continued to share the “[Prosecutorial Independence: Policy Brief](#),” a statement and policy brief developed by a working group of over 50 members from diverse geographical and ideological perspectives, in response to recent actions that undermine prosecutorial independence and the ability of prosecutors to use their discretion to pursue justice and safeguard their communities.

Data Transparency: *Increasing prosecutor transparency and accountability*



In partnership with Tableau Foundation’s Racial Justice Data Initiative and Measures for Justice (MFJ), APA supported the launch of [Commons Dashboard](#), to encourage prosecutors’ offices to conduct data assessments and increase transparency and accountability. APA continues to work with MFJ to bring Commons Dashboards to prosecutors’ offices across the country and conduct data readiness assessments. Commons is a community-driven data tool that helps shape criminal justice policy and encourages communities to make changes.

In April 2024, through the support of Microsoft, APA held its second annual, “Prosecutorial Data Summit: Transparency, Accountability, and Community Engagement” at Microsoft Silicon Valley Campus in Mountainview, CA, with over 150 participants. The two-day event focused on using data to advance prosecutorial transparency, accountability, community engagement, and strategic decision-making about resource allocation, case prioritization, and programming.

In 2025, we will host the 3rd APA Prosecutorial Data Summit in Dallas, TX. For more information, contact Marlene Biener at marlene.biener@apainc.org.



Prosecutors for Prosecutors: *Saving the Lives of Afghan Prosecutors*

Thousands of U.S. and allied trained prosecutors were left behind in Afghanistan and are now being hunted by the Taliban. Since the fall of Kabul in August 2021, more than 57 Afghan prosecutors have been tortured and killed. The rest remain in hiding— unemployed, facing famine, and starvation.



In 2024, APA continued the [Prosecutors for Prosecutors](#) campaign to raise money to save the lives of Afghan prosecutors and their families by evacuating them and relocating them to a safe country. We raised more than \$270,000 overall for relocations, and hosted a fundraiser, “Saving Aziz and Those Left Behind” with the East Baton Rouge District Attorney’s Office.

To date, Prosecutors for Prosecutors has:

- Relocated 60 Afghan prosecutors and their families to safe countries;
- Opened 2 legal pathways into the United States for justice sector lawyers: prosecutors, judges, and defense attorneys;
- Coordinated with offices for job support; and
- Facilitated the start-up of Welcome Corps in Philadelphia, Louisiana, and Northern Virginia.

In 2025, we aim to continue fundraising and encouraging countries to admit former Afghan Prosecutors. In addition, we will continue to work with the State Department’s Welcome Corps to increase the number of Visa applications.

Trial Advocacy: *Training New Prosecutors*³



Trial Advocacy supports the professional development of new prosecutors. This year APA organized a Trial Advocacy training with the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the Jackson County Prosecutor’s Office. The first training, Animal Cruelty and Domestic Violence Trial Advocacy, was in 2023 in East Baton Rouge Parish in Louisiana. The importance of trial advocacy training was reiterated as the attendees participated in cases, worked with expert witnesses, and gained courtroom experience with feedback from seasoned prosecutors.

In 2025, we will scale trial advocacy to 2 new sites.

³ Jean Peters Baker, Prosecuting Attorney, Jackson County, MO

Survivor-Centered Diversion Pilot Site Initiative:

Addressing the correlation between survivors of gender-based violence and eventual interface with the criminal justice system⁴



APA was awarded a three-year grant by the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) to address the strong correlation between survivors of gender-based violence and eventual interface with the criminal justice system. We are working to provide prosecutors with a set of tools to identify and support criminalized survivors, promote public safety, and target racial and ethnic disparities.

In 2024, both the Multnomah County and Nashville pilot sites implemented their Survivor-Centered Diversion programs referring survivors to services, deflecting survivors out of their systems, and collecting data.

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge:

Reducing racial disparities and safely reducing jail incarceration rates

The goal for APA’s Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC), funded by The MacArthur Foundation, is to build a movement of prosecutors working toward reducing racial disparities and decreasing jail and incarceration rates. In June, APA held the 14th MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC) Leadership Institute in Chicago, IL with the theme of sustaining prosecutorial change through hiring, retention, and increased diversity.

As we are celebrating 15 years, one report essential to highlight is the JustLeadershipUSA and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) report titled: [Building the Table: Advancing Race Equity in the Criminal Legal System](#). Bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders to forge a path forward with a historic roadmap of strategies to advance race equity in the criminal legal system, APA produced the report’s findings following an unprecedented convening between representatives from all components of the justice system alongside community members, those with lived experience, their families, and survivors of crime. This collaboration built a foundation for policies and practices that will successfully advance race equity, improve our approach to justice, and promote community safety and well-being. Aviva Kurash and Marlene Biener, together with JustLeadershipUSA, then facilitated a poster session at the Safety & Justice Challenge Network Meeting in Houston, TX.



⁴ Survivor Center Diversion Pilot Launch

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In 2025, APA will continue to increase prosecutors' understanding of and commitment to the use of alternatives to incarceration and the reduction of racial and ethnic disparities to create safer, more equitable, and just communities and will support the expansion of the Prosecutorial Performance Indicators/Data Dashboard efforts to promote transparency and measure effectiveness and equity.

Domestic Violence:

Advancing the Field of Domestic Violence Prosecution

The goal of the [APA's Domestic Violence \(DV\) Prosecution Committee](#) is to bring the nation's leading, working DV prosecutors, and victim advocates together to advance the field of domestic violence prosecution and address the needs of DV prosecutors, managers, and victim advocates. The Committee's work is informed by the experiences of currently working DV prosecutors, national experts, and allied DV partners.

Comprised of over 40 prosecutors and victim advocates from major jurisdictions experienced in DV prosecution and management, committee members represent over 30 million community members and are responsible for tens of thousands of felony and misdemeanor cases every year. In 2024, the Domestic Violence Prosecution Committee highlighted the role of advocates in prosecution support and provided "[The Victim Advocate Roles & Responsibilities Checklist](#)." There is a blank template for each office to use and tailor to their agency, along with an example for guidance.

The APA filed, in partnership with additional associations of prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement officers, and a major prosecutor's office, the [USA v. Zackey Rahimi, Case No. 22-915, Filed August 21, 2023 amicus brief](#). In 2024, the Supreme Court's near-unanimous decision will help guard the safety of domestic violence victims, their families, the public at large, as well as law enforcement officers responding to domestic violence calls. We commend the Supreme Court for upholding Section 922(g)(8) and correctly ruling that Congress acted lawfully by restricting access to firearms for persons subject to domestic violence protective orders.

In 2024, APA hosted the 5th National APA Domestic Violence Prosecution Conference on January 17-19, 2024, in Phoenix, AZ. This event was co-sponsored by the Maricopa County Attorney's Office and the Phoenix City Attorney's Office. It addressed foundational and advanced topics in domestic violence prosecution and provided a forum for sharing new ideas and highlighting innovative strategies among working DV prosecutors, managers, and victim advocates. [The 6th National Domestic Violence Prosecution Conference will be held in Brooklyn, NY, on March 12-14, 2025.](#)

Retail Theft Diversion:

Addressing the Underlying Causes of Low-Level Retail Theft

APA continued [Retail Theft Diversion](#) with prosecutors' offices and their law enforcement and community partners to determine effective retail theft responses that diagnose the underlying causes of theft while balancing the needs of retailers and the safety and equity of the communities that prosecutors serve.

Participating sites have engaged in a collaborative assessment, planning, and implementation process with APA staff, including site visits to meet with the offices, system stakeholders, and key program individuals. The offices are also working with Justice System Partners (JSP) to provide case-level data for assessment and program evaluation.

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The model framework for the program is based on a needs assessment and direct services approach in which each participant has an opportunity to have their needs individually addressed. Participants answer entry and exit questionnaires to evaluate changes and obtain input for improving the program. The programs also include working with partners in the community, the criminal justice system, and businesses to ensure buy-in and program sustainability.

In 2025, APA will be disseminating the findings of the program to the field, including lessons learned, webinars, and a retail theft diversion toolkit.

Juvenile Human Trafficking:

Ending the criminalization of minor victims of sex trafficking and strengthening victim service programs

APA partnered with the National Council of Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) as a subgrantee to the Juvenile Human Trafficking program. The program aims to provide training and technical assistance to six pilot sites working to end the criminalization of minor victims of sex trafficking and develop, expand, or strengthen victim service programs to support victim-centered, trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and evidence-based responses to minor victims of sex trafficking.

In 2024, APA developed a cohort of 6 locations and facilitated training, technical assistance, and peer-to-peer learning to prevent the criminalization of human trafficking survivors. APA trained each of the prosecutor cohorts on building sustainable relationships with the support of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). Each site is working within its jurisdiction to decriminalize juvenile human trafficking. Collaborating with service providers requires MOUs with other stakeholders, and through the training, these resources were provided to help foster relationships.

Case Backlogs:

Providing insights into the current state of case backlog around the country

Case Backlogs, funded by the Stand Together Trust (STT), was an effort to provide prosecutors with insights into the current state of case backlogs around the country while also elevating model practices and protocols for addressing them.

In 2022, APA partnered with Dr. Adam Biener at Lafayette College to evaluate the state of case backlogs for prosecutors nationwide and produced the [*“Prosecutorial Case Backlog Project: Survey Findings Report,”*](#) a first-of-its-kind report which revealed that “there has been an average increase of 5,565 cases per office and a 62% increase in case backlogs since the court disruptions due to COVID-19.” The Report also revealed that hiring and retaining staff is an issue as well, compromised by low morale and funding. APA hosted a kickoff meeting in June 2023, and virtual capstone meeting to conclude the project in May 2024. Each site had individualized findings and support, informed by the Survey Findings Report and APA staff’s collective prosecutorial expertise, to meet their specific situations. As a result, the five pilot sites implemented changes directly associated with their participation in Case Backlogs. A higher-level takeaway report for prosecutors nationwide, containing key issues, common themes, and recommended interventions, will be drafted and published by APA in early 2025.

Capital Case Litigation Initiative:

Providing support to prosecutors on implementing improvements throughout the field of capital case litigation

The Capital Case Litigation Initiative (CCLI) has been ongoing for over 6 years with two awards from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in fiscal years 2018 and 2022, respectively, and supplemental awards to address key urgent needs of the field. CCLI provides training and technical assistance (TTA) to prosecutors nationwide to assist with implementing improvements throughout the field of capital cases and complex homicide litigation. This includes in-person and virtual trainings, research, fact sheets and publications, trial advocacy programs, and other resources as dictated by the needs of the field.

During the 2018 award, the pandemic refocused the deliverables to expand our virtual trainings. This resulted in an expansion of the virtual curriculum for prosecutors and allied professionals in need of important TTA in capital and complex homicide prosecution. APA continues to build on its virtual offerings with a Complex Homicide Essentials webinar course for newer and less experienced capital litigators.

Under the current award, APA's TTA priorities include bridging the resource and education gap of capital and complex homicide prosecutors, particularly those with less experience or in rural jurisdictions, by bringing hands-on trainings such as Trial Advocacy and peer-to-peer exchanges to jurisdictions around the country. APA also partners with local prosecutors' offices and state associations to ensure that trainings are relevant, timely, and responsive to the specific needs of that state.

2024 events included:

- January 17-19 Complex Homicide & Murder Conference in Athens, GA (Prosecuting Attorneys Council of Georgia)
- August 7-10 Capital and Complex Homicide Conference Washington DC Hosted by AGACL in partnership with the APA
- September 18-20 Complex Homicide 101 Trial Ad with Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office
- APA initiated a series of webinars on basic skills for prosecutors in Complex Homicide Cases.

In 2025, we would like to become a leader in in-person training, especially in rural jurisdictions for these complex and violent cases.

Conviction Integrity:

Supporting prosecutors with resources to create Conviction Integrity Units and review cases

Over the last decade, Conviction Integrity or Review Units have been created in prosecutors' offices to review and, when appropriate, seek to overturn convictions where there is evidence of actual innocence, prosecutor or law enforcement misconduct, or other considerations that undermine the integrity of the conviction. Many offices that do not have dedicated units have established processes for the review of cases. Conviction Integrity provides training and technical assistance to enhance efforts of Conviction Integrity Units, joint reinvestigation efforts, and address issues prosecutors face in the post-conviction

innocence claims process. The program works with other criminal justice partners, such as the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, to promote strong partnerships between conviction integrity units and entities representing individuals with post-conviction claims of innocence. This Program hosted a [webinar series](#) that can be an integral resource for prosecutor's offices.

Political Violence:

Empowering prosecutors to address community violence amid personal threats

In 2024, APA participated in a Political Violence Virtual Tabletop Exercise hosted by the States United Democracy Center. APA, in partnership with the Joyce Foundation, brought together a bipartisan group of prosecutors, federal partners, and national experts in political violence and, in 2022, published the report [Prosecutors and Politics: Collaborative Strategies and Model Policies for Addressing Threats and Acts of Political Violence](#) that contains model policies and collaborative strategies to confront and mitigate political violence.

Procedural Justice: Elevating Trust and Legitimacy for Prosecutors

Developing gun violence intervention programs that build community trust

More than a decade's work in policing and court settings has shown that procedural justice—treating individuals fairly and with dignity and respect as they move through the criminal justice system—helps build public trust and increase voluntary cooperation.

In 2024, APA expanded its Elevating Trust and Legitimacy efforts and added four additional pilot sites in the Great Lakes region to co-design procedural justice-based gun violence reduction strategies that increase community safety and advance racial equity.

APA and Prosecutors Against Gun Violence (PAGV), co-chaired by Bronx County DA Darcel Clark, successfully hosted a national convening of prosecutors, "Prosecutors and the Other Pandemic: Preventing Gun Violence, Restoring Communities" June 4-5 in Bronx, NY. On June 6th, APA hosted the "Gun Violence Prosecutor-Led Alternatives COP Meeting." The conference brought together prosecutors and subject matter experts from across the country to discuss gun violence and promising practices and policies prosecutors can adopt.

APA also hosted a Virtual National Summit on Machinegun Conversion Devices: Defining the Threat and Taking Action in November 2024 to address the extraordinary rise in gun violence due to the proliferation of machine gun conversion devices, particularly "Glock switches" or "auto sears" and to seek solutions through a collaborative platform ultimately seeking to reduce the prevalence of these lethal devices.

In 2025, APA will create a written document from the prosecutorial perspective detailing the scope of the problem and lessons learned from the Summit, intending to provide policy solutions and practical guidance to address the issue across the country.

Major County Prosecutor’s Council (MCPC): *Sharing innovative ideas and information*

APA created the Major County Prosecutors Council (MCPC) over ten years ago to bring elected prosecutors together to share model practices and build relationships with peers. The Council is comprised of elected prosecuting attorneys from the most populated 40 jurisdictions in the United States, who together are prosecuting one-third of the crimes in the country.

MCPC gathers bi-annually for a two-day summit that highlights and disseminates smart and innovative prosecutorial practices that resolve common prosecution challenges and enhance equity, justice, and community safety. These summits have a major impact on advancing criminal justice reform efforts and have resulted in direct policy and practice changes in prosecutors’ offices throughout the country.

The 2024 Winter Meeting was hosted by the Jackson County Prosecutor’s Office in Kansas City, MO. Topics discussed included responding to mental illness, reducing racial disparity in marijuana prosecutions, Extreme Risk Protective Orders/Red Flag Laws, and prosecutor recruitment and retention.

The 2024 Summer Meeting was hosted by the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office in St. Paul, MN. Topics discussed included: AI, strategies for employee recruitment and retention, the impact of a mental health epidemic, and prosecutorial independence.

In 2025, MCPC will continue to elevate issues impacting prosecutors and share the most innovative and effective practices with one another with meetings in Charlotte, NC, and Seattle, WA.

Animal Abuse Prosecution: *Addressing animal cruelty and fighting⁵*



APA recognizes animal cruelty and fighting as a co-occurring crime with family and interpersonal violence, and other violent crimes that should be prosecuted. APA’s Animal Cruelty Advisory Committee (ACAC) consists of animal cruelty prosecution experts from all over the country, including prosecutors, law enforcement, veterinarians, animal control, and other key stakeholders in their investigations and prosecutions. The ACAC provides national technical assistance, networking, and partners with various

⁵ ACAC Committee Members

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animal welfare and other law enforcement organizations to hold an annual Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference to develop ideas to fight animal cruelty and fighting.

This year, the 13th National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference, held in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund in Richmond, VA, was a resounding success, selling out completely. We were honored to have the Richmond Commonwealth Attorney, Colette Wallace McEachin, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares, and Senior Justice William C. Mims of the Virginia Supreme Court share their experiences presiding over animal cruelty cases in Virginia, along with their goals and expectations for the future of animal cruelty prevention and prosecution in the state.

The presentations covered a range of topics, including data collection, specific case examples, and the use of technology in investigations and courtroom proceedings. They also highlighted the correlation between crimes against animals and crimes against people, known as the Link. Experts shared key insights on expert witness testimony and even a presentation on a “Sham Rescue.”

During our Social Function on the first night, we hosted an award ceremony to honor several distinguished individuals. Marc Kissel and AnnMarie Gaudio of the Hudson Valley Humane Society (NY) were recognized for their extensive years of law enforcement investigations and long-standing attendance at our conferences. John Thompson, Executive Vice President of the Small & Rural Law Enforcement Executives’ Association, was celebrated for his groundbreaking work in supporting animal cruelty investigations and leading the FBI’s collection of animal cruelty data through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Additionally, we honored David LaBahn, President of APA, for his 15 years of leadership and excellence in creating and implementing APA’s animal cruelty initiatives.

Finally, in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, two amicus briefs were drafted and filed in February 2024: [State of Ohio v. Alonzo Kyles, Case No.: 2023-1182, Filed February 27, 2024](#), and [Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Maryann Russo, Case No. SJC-13531, Filed February 13, 2024](#).

In 2025, we will host the 14th Annual National Animal Prosecution Conference in November and continue the Animal Cruelty Prosecution Webinar Series.

Addressing Disparities in Reproductive Health:

Educating prosecutors about the medicine, science, and evidenced-based research of reproductive health

APA provides education and resources to prosecutors about the medicine, science, and evidenced-based research of reproductive health, including abortion, and the disparate impact of laws that ban or severely restrict access to this fundamental component of healthcare. Disparities in Reproductive Health is funded by the Collaborative for Gender + Reproductive Equity (CGRE) and an anonymous donor.

APA provided and hosted a series of regional educational healthcare law forums and webinars for prosecutors in 2024. APA continued to update its reproductive health web page with public health data, research, state abortion statutes, codes, recent case decisions, and other pertinent information for prosecutors to easily access. APA works by providing educational healthcare law forums to prosecutors and hosted a series of regional educational forums. APA filed several amicus briefs to further support access to reproductive health. APA will continue to provide education for prosecutors to support their use of discretion for reproductive health-related decisions.

In 2025, APA will continue to provide education, training, and resources to the prosecution field.

Prosecutors' Public and Behavioral Health:

Educating prosecutors about the medicine, science, and evidenced-based research of public and behavioral health

In 2024, APA issued a [call to action](#) for prosecutors regarding mental health diversion. This included resources such as a Prosecutor-Led Diversion Toolkit and a website cataloging diversion programs across the country. These resources aim to help prosecutors develop and implement diversion programs that connect individuals with behavioral health needs to community-based care. to support mental health diversion.

The APA is also working on a white paper from the White House Working Meeting on the Prosecution of HIV Criminal Laws. This meeting, held in collaboration with the Center for HIV Law & Policy and the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, aimed to modernize state criminal laws related to HIV, ensuring they are supported by the latest scientific evidence. The goal is to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination and align the criminal justice response with public health goals.

In 2024, APA worked with RTI International on the Comprehensive, Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) Training and Technical Assistance Project to support efforts for pretrial, prosecution, defense counsel, and courts in jurisdictions working to respond to substance use and misuse by providing access to prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support in the community and justice system.

Child Abuse Prosecution:

Training and technical resources for child abuse prosecutors and their multi-disciplinary teams

APA has provided legal day training for forensic interviewers at the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC) in Huntsville, Alabama for over 10 years: monthly trainings for those working with children. The APA Team that provides these trainings are expert prosecutors with over 90 years of experience prosecuting child abuse.

In 2025, APA was awarded an OJJDP grant and will continue our child abuse work with, the "Child Victimization and Juvenile Justice Prosecution Training and Technical Assistance Program."

BJA/JRIN Researcher Practitioner Smart Suite Training & Technical Assistance:

Identifying and sharing evidence-based practices

For over ten years APA has partnered with the Justice Information Research Network, the Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice, the George Mason University Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence, and others to support the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA's) "Smart Suite" of programs.

This suite of programs re-examines every aspect of the criminal justice system to identify what is working in the field to reduce crime and recidivism and make our communities safer. It represents a strategic approach that brings more "science" into criminal justice operations by leveraging innovative applications of analysis, technology, and evidence-based practices to improve performance and effectiveness while containing costs. Central to the JIRN/BJA effort is helping jurisdictions build stronger researcher-practitioner

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partnerships that develop innovative, data-driven, evidence-based criminal justice strategies.

In 2023 the program launched the Smart Suite Academy learning platform on the [GotoStage site of Justice Information Resource Network \(JIRN\)](#).

APA Goes International: *APA as Ambassadors for US Prosecution Systems*

APA hosted the Criminal Law Symposium for Brazilian prosecutors in September after previously speaking to two delegations in Miami last year. Earlier in the year, we also hosted the Kazakhstan Visitor Leadership Delegation. We shared conversations on the comparative roadmaps of the US Prosecution Systems. We had many discussions that spanned various topics of prosecution including capital litigation, victim advocacy, domestic violence, animal abuse, human trafficking, child abuse, plea deals, and more. APA looks forward to a continuing relationship and learning opportunities with our international colleagues.



Women of Color Roundtable: *Recognizing field contributions and leadership roles*

APA hosted a one-day roundtable in November with women of color prosecutors to recognize their significant contributions to the field and to acknowledge the leadership roles they have assumed, which have driven innovations that promote equity within the justice system. Throughout the day-long event, APA engaged in meaningful discussions on how best to support female prosecutors of color, strategies for prosecutor offices to attract and retain more women of color, and the development of actionable next steps to enhance APA's efforts in supporting leaders in the field. APA looks forward to continuing its commitment to supporting women of color in the prosecution profession looking to develop mentorship opportunities, identify opportunities to address wellness, and elevate the history and ongoing work of women of color in criminal justice system reform.

2025 Future of APA: *After 15 years of service, where do we go from here?*

In 2025, we want to focus on growth and supporting community problem-solving through the prosecutor's offices. With this, we are collaboratively working on these upcoming resources:

- APA and the Justice Reform Foundation (JRF) are proposing a Symposium on Ethical Reporting on Criminal Cases. APA and the JRF recognize the growing concerns about the ethical implications and challenges media professionals face in reporting criminal cases.
- The APA and the Urban Institute are leading a Census project, as the last Census was in 2020. The objective is to collect comprehensive data on prosecutor offices across the country, including information on staffing levels, case types, case management practices, and other relevant metrics.
- The APA is also working towards a Grand Jury paper in collaboration with [Justice for All](#).

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Programs of particular importance that continue to provide resources include: Trial Advocacy, Domestic Violence Conference, Animal Cruelty Conference, and Data Summit. Based on valuable feedback received, APA will continue to provide prosecutors with training in Trial Advocacy. This training enables participants to engage in case scenarios and receive feedback from seasoned experts, thereby building confidence in attorneys, particularly when handling expert witness testimony.

Additionally, developing innovative training programs for supervisors in prosecutor offices to enhance staff support and supervisory skills is a key priority. These programs aim to promote the overall well-being of the workplace and reduce staff turnover. Alongside this, pilot training initiatives focused on mental health for elected officials are also being prioritized.