

DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Kevin T. Kane, Chief State's Attorney

John J. Russotto, Deputy Chief State's Attorney for Personnel, Finance and Administration

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Established: 1973.

Constitutional Authority: Article XXIII of the amendments to the Connecticut Constitution.

Statutory Authority: General Statutes §§51-276 and 51-277.

Central Office: 300 Corporate Place, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Number of Employees: 486 (positions authorized) 433 (positions filled)

Recurring Operating Expenses: \$48.3 million (all sources)

Structure

The Division of Criminal Justice is composed of the Office of the Chief State's Attorney and one State's Attorney's office for each of the state's thirteen Judicial Districts: Ansonia/Milford – Margaret E. Kelley; Danbury – Stephen J. Sedensky III; Fairfield – John C. Smriga; Hartford – Gail P. Hardy; Litchfield – David S. Shepack; Middlesex – Michael A. Gailor; New Britain – Brian W. Preleski; New Haven – Patrick J. Griffin; New London – Michael L. Regan; Stamford/Norwalk – Richard J. Colangelo, Jr.; Tolland – Matthew C. Gedansky; Waterbury – Maureen Platt; Windham – Anne F. Mahoney.

Mission

The Division of Criminal Justice is the agency within the Executive branch of government responsible for investigating and prosecuting all criminal matters, both in adult and juvenile courts, in the State of Connecticut. The agency also represents the state in all appellate, post-trial and post-conviction proceedings arising from the prosecution of criminal matters.

Improvements/Achievements 2018-2019

Prosecutors and Inspectors assigned to the Division's Cold Case Unit continued their success in solving and prosecuting previously unsolved murders. Since its inception in 2011 the Cold Case Unit has solved approximately 25 cold case homicides and obtained convictions of nearly 30 violent offenders. In November of 2018, a new Supervisory Assistant State's Attorney was assigned to the unit. Since that time, the unit has conducted 3 murder trials. All three resulted in convictions. Rafael Ortiz was sentenced to 50 years to serve for a 2003 murder. Brock Davis was sentenced to 50 years to serve for a 2016 murder and Harold Patterson was sentenced to 100 years to serve for a double murder from 2008. He subsequently pleaded guilty to another murder from 2008 and received a concurrent prison sentence. The unit has also established relationships with other State Agencies such as the Connecticut State Police, the Department of Corrections and the forensic science laboratory as well as a number of municipal police departments in an attempt to solve more cold case homicides within our state, especially our inner cities, where violence is a pervasive problem for our most vulnerable citizens. The unit has numerous ongoing homicide and

sexual assault investigations and has effectuated two arrests this year on homicides from Hartford which occurred in 2003 and 2008.

Since 2003 the Division has conducted an Annual Professional Development Program for prosecutors. Over 200 Division personnel attended 2019's intensive program which included a presentation on Attorney-Client Privilege Issues, a discussion of What Every Prosecutor Needs to Know About Habeas, a session on Brady-Giglio and Cooperation Agreements and an update on Exercise of Peremptory Challenges. The Division was honored to have a panel on Victim Rights and Advocacy in Connecticut hosted by the Office of the Victim Advocate; Mothers Against Drunk Driving; Survivors of Homicide; Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence and the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence. This training was supplemented by targeted development sessions held throughout the state, covering all thirteen Judicial Districts, encompassing topics ranging from Video Surveillance Identifications to Utilizing Digital Evidence to examining Abusive Head Trauma to an Overview of the State Forensic Laboratory to a program on Diversity and Social Justice.

Recognizing the depth and breadth of topics that impact the prosecutor's charge to achieve justice, Division personnel participated in over 450 other training efforts, including Courtroom Success in the Impaired Driving Case, Current Trends in Juvenile Justice – School Security, Financial Crimes Against Seniors, Digital Evidence for Prosecutors, Investigating and Prosecuting Human Trafficking, Heroin and Opioids, Prosecuting Sexual Assault and Related Violent Crimes, Medical Records for Child Abuse Investigation, Mental Health Practitioner Requirements, Search and Seizure Law, Shaken Baby Conference, Advanced Fire Investigation School, Appellate Advocacy, Procedural Justice and Early Screening and Intervention, Investigation of Drug-Related Deaths, Lift the Mask – Diversity and Inclusion, Cyberbullying, Trauma-Informed Justice, Illegal Dumping Workshop, Facebook 101 for Law Enforcement, Under the Influence of Cannabis, Understanding Connecticut's Medical Marijuana Regulations, Major Incident Response and Crime Scene Management, Symposium on Pre-Trial Justice, New England Drug Courts Conference, Autism Spectrum Disorders and the Criminal Justice System, Untested Evidence and the Investigation of Cold Case Sex Crimes, Eliciting Information in Child Sexual Assault Cases, UCONN Conference on Understanding Hate Crimes, CT Sentencing Commission Symposium on Sex Offender Registration, Dual Arrest Training, Ethical and Effective Social Media for Attorneys, Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Forum, Quinnipiac Law School Forum on Animals and the Law, "I Just Knewed It" – What to Expect from Young Witnesses, Sex Trafficking and DV Active Aggressor, Division of Criminal Justice's Witness Protection Program, Victim Rights Symposium, Best Practices – Immigrant DV and Sexual Violence, Sexting and Texting Laws, and Implicit Bias Train the Trainer.

The Division's highly successful internship program provided educational opportunities to 51 students, 34 of whom are law students, representing 15 schools and 6 schools of law, including Columbia School of Law, Michigan State College of Law, Penn State Law, Quinnipiac University School of Law, the University of Connecticut School of Law, the Suffolk School of Law, Howard University, Marist College, St. Joseph College, and the University of New Haven.

The Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity was formed by concerned individuals to increase the

recruitment, retention, and promotion of lawyers of color and other diverse individuals, not only as good social policy but also as good business practice. The Division, being in concert with this vision hosted an intern from Wesleyan University who collected and reviewed all legislation passed by the Connecticut legislature relating to criminal justice, assisted in preparing trial files, reviewed evidence to ensure the accuracy of police reports evidence reports, and researched state laws regarding the use of state DNA databanks to conduct familial testing.

The Division, with its significant caseload,* continued to seek out innovative means to further its public safety mission despite ongoing budgetary pressures. Under the guidance of its Administrative Staff the Division is continuing to upgrade its information technology infrastructure. Significant progress was made in the development and implementation of an internal Case Management System that will minimize case processing time, eliminate redundant data, streamline reporting, and, overall, support the statewide Criminal Case Management needs of the Division of Criminal Justice. The project includes a central repository of criminal case data to be shared statewide by all Division Districts and Bureaus and integrate with the statewide Criminal Information Sharing System that is being developed by the Criminal Justice Information System. The project is well into the design and construction phases for investigations, warrants, asset forfeiture cases, criminal infractions, and criminal felony cases. This will mark the first time in its history that the agency possesses an electronic database of case activity.

*In FY 2017, the Division processed over 585,000 criminal/motor vehicle case events, with more than 241,000 such cases added.

In 2017, utilizing over \$200,000 in support from the Herbert and Nell Singer Foundation, and with the assistance of the Center for Court Innovation, the Division built upon a landmark study of first appearance practices for low-level offenders and created a pilot project in the Bridgeport and Waterbury Geographical Area Courts to provide a special focus on opportunities for early screening, assessment and diversion. The legislature recognized the validity of this concept and passed Public Act No. 17-205 -*An Act Establishing a Pilot Program to Provide Enhanced Community Services to Those in the Criminal Justice System*, wherein “the office of the Chief State's Attorney shall establish a pilot program to serve the geographical area courts for Hartford, New Haven, New London and Norwich in the judicial districts of Hartford, New Haven and New London in identifying and tracking the homeless, addicted or mentally ill persons entering the criminal justice system.” The Division responded to the charge of PA 17-205 through securing an additional \$367,000 in private Singer Foundation funds to expand its Early Screening and Assessment Project to identified jurisdictions. A report on the Division's response to PA 17-205 was provided to the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary on February 1, 2019. Promising results include that compared to control locations program participants are five times more likely to receive targeted diversion and are required to make a formal court appearance 80% less often.

The Division continued its strategic partnership with the University of Connecticut's School of Public Policy in order to optimize its business planning and management training procedures.

Significant innovation occurred amongst the Judicial Districts. Highlights include:

The State's Attorney's Office in the Judicial District of New Britain has instituted a Community Engagement Board (CEB). The CEB is a formal mechanism by which the Office regularly engages with the communities it serves and keeps community members abreast of developments in the jurisdiction. The CEB's diverse membership is comprised of individuals from the medical field, faith-based organizations, youth services, neighborhood revitalization groups, children's law center, registrar of voters, NAACP, and Central Connecticut State University. The CEB's meetings, which involve a wide array of community stakeholders, have been extremely insightful for both the State's Attorney's Office and the community alike. Topics have included juvenile justice reform, the opioid crisis, and the investigation of officer-involved uses of force. Future meetings will center on rehabilitation, the pardon and parole system, as well as marijuana decriminalization.

The Stamford/ Norwalk State's Attorney's Office conducted an ongoing series of lectures for community members of all ages on the perils and pitfalls of living passively in the digital world. There are crucial safety considerations everyone should be aware of when using technology. The State's Attorney's Office has provided lectures for high schools, middle schools, parent groups, police departments, and other governmental agencies. Lectures have covered a broad range of topics related to youth safety and technology— avoiding hacking, improving parental awareness of risqué online behavior, sharing information on apps that are popular with young people, and explaining how youth access online spaces they should not access.