

# **DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

*Office of the Chief State's Attorney*

## *At a Glance*

**PATRICK J. GRIFFIN**, *Chief State's Attorney*

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

**Kevin D. Lawlor**, *Deputy Chief State's Attorney for Operations*

*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 - 501 (positions authorized) 426 (positions filled)*

*Recurring Operating Expenses - \$54 million (all sources)*

## **Organizational 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 –**

**Joseph T. Corradino; Hartford – Sharmese L. Walcott; Litchfield – David R. Shannon;**

**Middlesex – Michael A. Gailor; New Britain – Christian M. Watson; New Haven – John P.**

**Doyle, Jr.; New London – Paul J. Narducci; Stamford/Norwalk – Paul J. Ferencek;**

**Tolland – Matthew C. Gedansky; Waterbury – Maureen Platt; Windham – Anne F.**

**Mahoney.**

## **Mission**

The Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) is the agency within the executive branch of government responsible for investigating and prosecuting all criminal matters in the adult and juvenile courts of 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.

## **Statutory Responsibility**

The Division of Criminal Justice is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of criminal matters in Connecticut. Through the Chief State's Attorney and the thirteen State's Attorneys, the Division takes necessary and proper steps to prosecute all crimes and offenses against the laws of the state. This includes ordinances from municipalities and regulations from proper authorities.

## **Public Service**

The Division serves the public by conducting investigations and prosecutions fairly, justly and transparently with deference to the rule of law. The Division maintains the highest ethical standards to serve the public appropriately. This includes accused persons, victims of crime and the public at large.

### **Improvements/Achievements 2021-2022**

The Appellate Bureau is responsible for representing the State of Connecticut in the vast majority of appeals challenging criminal convictions. This bureau, which employs approximately twenty-five prosecutors, prepares written legal arguments (briefs) and presentations (oral argument) before the Connecticut Supreme and Appellate Courts. Appellate Bureau attorneys also track developments and trends throughout the state's trial courts, and conduct important research for the Chief State's Attorney on criminal justice issues and training.

Prosecutors and Inspectors assigned to the Division's Cold Case Unit continued their success in solving and prosecuting previously unsolved murders. In the case of *State of Connecticut v. Mark White*, the unit diligently investigate this 2008 shooting death in Hartford. A variety of tips from the community assisted investigators. Mark White was ultimately returned to Connecticut via a Governor's warrant. This case is pending in the Superior Court for the Judicial District of Hartford.

The Cold Case Unit conducted an Investigatory Grand Jury in the fall of 2021 in a case involving the shooting death of a young mother in June 2005 in Hartford. The Grand Juror found probable cause that three individuals involved in the shooting were responsible for this death. These cases are pending in the Superior Court for the Judicial District of Hartford: *State of Connecticut v. Shane Henriques*, *State of Connecticut v. Maurice Snowden*, and *State of Connecticut v. Brandon Jones*. Further, the Grand Juror found probable cause to arrest Victoria Harris, the girlfriend of one of the shooters with Tampering with Physical Evidence and Perjury. Her case is also currently pending.

The Cold Case Unit launched a Facebook page. This page will be used to highlight unsolved cases in Connecticut. This page is a contemporary tool to assist the unit in generating leads to help solve cases. A social media platform like Facebook has the ability to put a renewed focus on criminal cases that have remained unsolved for years.

The Division continues to refine the Early Screening and Intervention (ESI) program at six locations throughout the state. ESI is designed to shift certain accused individuals from a more traditional court based response to a solution based system. Staffed with trained prosecutors and resource counselors the program works to meet the needs of low level offenders by addressing root causes of their criminal behavior. This focus on an individual's criminogenic needs helps to reshape behavior with resources targeting the unique situation of a particular offender. The program continues to have success diverting individuals away from the more traditional consequence based criminal justice system. ESI also continues working with outreach programs and their local police departments to combine efforts to give back to the community.

The Division of Criminal Justice continues to work directly with police departments in Connecticut. The police and the DCJ work with and share videos related to criminal cases. DCJ has been creating evidence sites for individual Districts enabling police to electronically share videos with prosecutors. This is an area where DCJ continuously looks to improve. A statewide digital evidence management system is forthcoming.

The Division continues to refine the statewide case management system. All DCJ staff have been trained on the use of the new system. As of January 1, 2021, prosecutors and staff at the DCJ have

been tracking and updating case information in this new system. The next phase of development for the eProsecutor system is the deployment of Juvenile and Civil Litigation cases. This system will assist the DCJ in complying with the Division's reporting requirements under Public Act 19-59 collecting important criminal justice data points.

In addition, the DCJ has been participating in the Criminal Justice Information Sharing Governing Board's (CJIS) new Criminal Information Sharing System (CISS). We work directly with other criminal justice agencies. The initial exchanges of adult criminal case data from the Judicial Branch are being transmitted to DCJ and inserted into this new system. The DCJ IT department is working on configuring and testing additional exchanges through CISS. The next phase of deployment will be to receive new arrest information electronically from the police through the CISS system and into the eProsecutor system. This data exchange is currently working for case data from the Clinton and Middletown police departments. Further implementation will continue for other police departments in the Middlesex Judicial District later this year. Other Judicial Districts will see preliminary rollouts in the near future.

The Division of Criminal Justice started a new project titled *Moving Justice Forward*, a collaboration between the Division of Criminal Justice and The Center for Court Innovation that focuses on improving fairness and efficiency in Connecticut's criminal justice system. Funded with private support from the Herbert & Nell Singer Foundation, the project will create a blueprint for *Moving Justice Forward* in Connecticut based on a comprehensive analysis of the current state of prosecutorial policies and practices in four of the state's 13 Judicial Districts - Hartford, New Britain, New London and Danbury. The diversity in size and demographics of each district ensures that the project captures varying dimensions across Connecticut's court system. To implement the project successfully, *Moving Justice Forward* will rely on the strategic advice and expertise of an advisory panel made up of esteemed criminal justice stakeholders, decision-makers and partners from the court system, both in prosecution and defense, law enforcement and those impacted by crime. The Division will announce the members of the advisory panel at a later date. Panel members will serve as advisors for the criminal justice system, the community and citizens in order to develop cohesive plans for *Moving Justice Forward* in Connecticut.

The Division of Criminal Justice continued its efforts to reduce the incidence of impaired driving and improve traffic safety throughout our state. Despite the ongoing health crisis caused by the coronavirus, the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) provided remote and in person training to prosecutors and law enforcement officers.

The Division continues to devote attention to developing trainings that will aid in the successful investigation and prosecution of unsafe driving. To this end, the Division will be hosting a two-day course on impaired driving collisions and is coordinating with state toxicologists and law enforcement experts on programs to address the increasing use of multiple impairing substances by drivers on our roadways. The Division also will be working with the Department of Transportation and Police Officer Standards and Training Council on proposals to increase the number of police officers trained on advanced roadside impaired driving enforcement techniques and drug recognition.

The Division actively participates as a member of the Statewide Impaired Driving Task Force to implement programs and policies to reduce alcohol and drug-related fatalities in Connecticut. The Division also works closely with state agencies, the Governor's Office, and community traffic safety partners to advance new legislation addressing the dangers on our roads.

### **Information Reported as Required by State Statute**

#### **Abbreviations**

CISS- Criminal Information Sharing System

CJIS- Criminal Justice Information Sharing Governing Board

DCJ- Division of Criminal Justice

ESI- Early Screening and Intervention

TSRP- Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor

#### **References**

Connecticut General Statutes § 51-276 et seq.

Connecticut General Statutes § 51-277

Public Act 19-59