

CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Pretrial Working Group

January 9, 2026

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Minutes

- I. **Introduction**, Undersecretary Karpowitz
 - a. Trying to bring clarity to the handling of misdemeanor cases, and then we will move beyond misdemeanors.
- II. **Approval of minutes from 12-22-2026 Meeting**
 - a. The minutes of the 12-22-2026 meeting were unanimously approved.
- III. **Pretrial Misdemeanor Exploration: Misdemeanor Case Flows, Length of Stay, and Charges Pending**, Matt Hono, IMRP
 - On any given day, ~200 misdemeanor-only clients in pretrial detention.
 - In 2024, 3,300 misdemeanor arrestees were held at least one night in DOC. 5% of total misdemeanor arrests.
 - 2018-2024 – about 4% of misdemeanor arrests held at least one night.
 - From 2018-2023, out of 442,198 total misdemeanor arrests, 19,402 arrestees held at least one day.
 - Release rates varied across courthouses.
 - During pandemic, release rates were higher across most courthouses.
 - Enfield and Norwalk had highest release rates (~98%)
 - During Covid, those two 100% release rates for select years.
 - Hartford Community Court – Lowest release rate 91%
 - Did releasing during Covid decrease public safety or increase FTA? Could we return to those rates?
 - Mike Gailor – Taking average daily population, people being detained are higher risk (-6). Idea we should not detain anyone is not feasible.
 - Mike Hines – Some who post bond at PD might have bond set by courts – only option is to pay it there. If one person had six cases, are we only counting once?
 - Matt Hono – If separate arrests, count each arrest separately.
 - Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz – For clarity, why isn't it easy to count people rather than arrests? Let's not normalize, it's dysfunctional.
 - Matt Hono – It's possible but adds steps.

- Bryan Sperry – It’s possible. But one person arrested four times, each pass through the system is unique with unique facts and circumstances.
 - Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz – My feeling is complicated. I’m a “yes and....” person. From a state perspective, I get it. From policymakers, it can’t be that approach. We have people encountering the system. Are we happy how we are handling this. Not happy with the number of people in prison and how we use DOC. Want to make a strong case from social perspective regarding reducing social harm associated with imprisonment and reducing recidivism ultimately. System is functioning as it intended, but we should focus on the threat they pose, and what it cost them to post bond.
- Rep. Renee LaMark Muir – Seems like the system is using discretion appropriately. Can the system be more efficient? Process cases faster, reduce impact on defendants. Interested where we might go.
 - Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz – Agree. Look for takeaways. 200 on any given day. FTA overweighted on risk. What does that have to do with putting person in prison? Behavioral mental health issues – sending to DOC will not make those better.
 - Rep. Renee LaMark Muir – I am meeting with Rep. Walker. Do we have better resources to properly staff diversionary alternatives rather than DOC. How can we get more beds up and running.
- Anne VanCleave – Data is helpful for me in that if/when we eliminate cash bail is whether to include misdemeanors in detainees. How to handle FTAs in future as risk.
- Judge Pavia – Data during Covid is difficult to use, people were not out, crime was down, so careful using that as benchmark.
- Matt Hono
 - 2023 Misdemeanor length of stay; half of defendants stayed less than or equal to 28 days.
 - Most held on bonds less than \$25,000
 - Median length of stay increased across most bond amounts
 - If felony charge, the median days detained is ~25 days longer
 - Median days increased as amount of bond amount increases

- Most common top charges at the time of admission – Interfering with officer, possession of a controlled substance, assault third degree, criminal trespass (FTA is the true most common, but excluded and will discuss later). Do all these charges warrant detention?
 - Average number of charges pending 5.4 to 6 charges per person, indicating complex involvement with the legal system.
 - The number of misdemeanor defendants who have an FTA pending at the time of admission increased post Covid from 44%-54%.
 - As of 12-31-2025, 38,586 active FTA warrants in system.
 - FTAs are a factor in a significant portion of misdemeanor bail decisions.
- Joe Greelish – From policy perspective, don't look at bond amount, should look at what people are paying – 7%-10% of the total bond amount. Regarding FTAs, purpose of bonds is to ensure showing up to court. Need to get people to come. If we can change the number of people showing up, we can change the prevalence of FTAs
 - Matt Hono – It's a challenge from DOC data to find the bond type, making it difficult to calculate the exact dollar amount the defendant needs to pay. Also, professional bondmen's payment plans vary.
- Kevin Neary – Regarding FTAs, during Covid, impact on courts and appearances regarding data.
- Rep. Renee LaMark Muir – We need FTA reform, not bail reform. Not showing up for variety of reasons. If we can clean that up, it would be great, would move the needle.
 - John DelBarba – Weighted FTA reform. Look at the weight, reduce it, and monitor it.
 - Matt Hono – Looking at the pretrial risk assessment tool, prior FTA is scored highly.
- Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz – Interesting hybrid of data analysis and policy prompting. We can look at FTAs together. Status quo is not the best we can do.

IV. Adjourn 2:30