



PRETRIAL RELEASE PROGRAM

"CITIZENS RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT"

Section 907.043 Florida Statutes

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

***Based on statistical data tracked for period:
January 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019***

Office Location:

St Lucie County Courthouse

218 S. 2nd Street

Ft. Pierce, FL 34950

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The St Lucie County Pretrial Release Program is funded through the St Lucie County Board of County Commissioners, under the office of the County Attorney, with direct supervision of the St Lucie County Criminal Justice Director. In addition, Okeechobee and Martin Counties have contracted with St. Lucie County to provide pretrial and GPS monitoring services for their respective counties.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY PRETRIAL PROGRAM
2019 ANNUAL REPORT (PER F.S. 907.043)
(January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019)

- Section I.** Required questions and answers per F.S. 907.043 “Citizens Right-to-Know Act”
- Section II.** Charts and graphs for statistical data required to provide answers to the questions in Section I. (Per F.S. 907.043) (Including separate data for the Programs in St. Lucie, Okeechobee and Martin Counties)
- Section III.** Summary and explanation of statistical data, services provided, required conditions, and plans for expansion and accomplishments of The St. Lucie County Pretrial Program
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The St. Lucie County Pretrial Release Program ("Program") has been staffed by county employees since June 2007. The Program was initially started in order to provide supervision of pretrial defendants and to alleviate jail over-crowding. The Program has since been expanded to provide supervision of other cases when ordered by the Judiciary. As a result, defendants have been sanctioned to the program from Drug Court, Mental Health Court, while pending appeal, and or while their cases are pending for Violation of Probation (County Court). In addition, due to the success of the Program, several of the County Court Judges requested that the Program take sentenced cases (misdemeanors only), as a condition of probation. The enhanced supervision conditions can include GPS monitoring, field visits (which are not provided by county probation services), along with house arrest and curfew requirements as an alternative to a county jail sentence.

In the spring of 2015, Okeechobee County requested the St. Lucie Pretrial Program assist them with their jail overcrowding issues. Okeechobee County has since developed a Public Safety Coordinating Council and it was recommended that they create a Pretrial Release Program with St. Lucie County's assistance. An inner-local agreement was drafted and presented to the Board of County Commissioners in both counties, which was approved. In August 2015, the St. Lucie County Pretrial Program began supervising the first cases in Okeechobee County.

In 2018 following in Okeechobee County's footsteps, the Martin County Sheriff's Office contacted St. Lucie County Pretrial to inquire the possibility of the St. Lucie County Pretrial Program to provide pretrial supervision and GPS monitoring services to ease their jail overcrowding issues. An interlocal agreement was drafted and passed by both County's Board of County Commissioners. On October 1, 2018, the Martin County Division of the St. Lucie County Pretrial Program began supervising the first cases in Martin County.

In 2019, the program provided significant savings in St. Lucie County, when you consider a basic inmate (not including any medical costs) can cost St. Lucie County \$71.66 per day. As a direct result of the program, approximately 92,856 "bed days" were saved from jail incarceration during 2019. The projected savings (again, not including medical costs) would be approximately \$6,654,060.96. It is estimated that over 50% of the cases supervised have medical conditions that require treatment that could easily add several million dollars in additional savings. Again, this is based on the fact that the St. Lucie County Jail is not responsible for the medical cost once a defendant is released.

The program also provided significant savings in Okeechobee County, where a basic inmate (not including any medical costs) can cost the county \$70.00 per day. As a result of the program, approximately 3,042 "bed days" were saved from jail incarceration during 2019. The projected savings (again, not including medical costs) is approximately \$212,940.00. It is estimated that over 50% of the cases supervised in Okeechobee County also have medical conditions that require treatment that could easily add several hundred thousand dollars in additional savings. Again, this is based on the fact that the Okeechobee County Jail is not responsible for the medical cost once a defendant is released.

In 2019, the program provided significant savings in Martin County where a basic inmate (not including any medical costs) can cost the County \$106.00 per day. As a result of the program, approximately 13,157 "bed days" were saved from jail incarceration during 2019. The projected savings (again, not including medical costs) would be approximately \$1,394,642.00. It is estimated that over 50% of the cases supervised have medical conditions that require treatment that could easily add several hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional savings. Again, this is based on the fact that the Martin County Jail is not responsible for the medical cost once a defendant is released.

Requirements for Pretrial Release Program per Florida Law

The following data provides the specific information required by Section 907.043 (4) (a), Florida Statutes (2020) for the annual report. There will be additional information (not required by Section 907.043) in other sections.

(4)(a) No later than March 31 of every year, each pretrial release program must submit an annual report for the previous calendar year to the governing body and to the clerk of the circuit court in the county where the pretrial release program is located. The annual report must be readily accessible to the public.

(b) The annual report must contain:

1. The name, location, and funding sources of the pretrial release program, including the amount of public funds, if any, received by the pretrial release program.

The St Lucie County Pretrial Program is located in the St Lucie County Courthouse, 218 South Second St., Fort Pierce, FL 34950, and is fully funded by the St Lucie County Board of County Commissioners. The Program is funded through the Fine and Forfeiture Fund. Total 2019 Pretrial Program budget - \$1,466,444.98

2. The operating and capital budget of each pretrial release program receiving public funds.

St Lucie County Pretrial Program budget

| | <i>Budget</i> | <i>Actual</i> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Operating Expenses</i> | <i>\$1,427,444.98</i> | <i>\$1,182,231.19</i> |
| <i>Capital Expenses</i> | <i>\$ 39,000.00</i> | <i>\$ 37,192.00</i> |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>\$1,466,444.98</i> | <i>\$1,219,423.19</i> |

Operating budget includes salary expenses and GPS monitoring cost for 2019.

3a. the percentage of the pretrial release program's total budget representing receipt of public funds.

The Program is 100% St Lucie County funded with contributions from Martin County and Okeechobee County to fund the program in their respective County.

b. The percentage of the total budget which is allocated to assisting defendants obtain release through a non- publicly funded program.

At this time, the program (including the GPS monitoring cost) is fully funded by St Lucie County Board of County Commissioners with contributions from Martin County and Okeechobee County to fund the program in their respective County.

c. The amount of fees paid by defendants to the pretrial release program.

***In some instances defendants have been ordered by the Court to pay toward their Supervision/GPS monitoring cost.
2019 amount collected was \$15.00.***

4. The number of persons employed by the pretrial release program.

Professional staff consists of 16 positions (Program Manager, two Supervisors, ten Pretrial Officers, two Case Managers and one Staff Assistant).

5. The number of defendants assessed and interviewed for pretrial release.

No defendants were assessed or interviewed for pretrial release. In St Lucie, Okeechobee and Martin Counties assessments and interviews are conducted in court by the presiding judge to determine pretrial suitability.

6. The number of defendants recommended for pretrial release.

The St Lucie County Pretrial Program does not make recommendations but can review cases to determine if they meet criteria or court-ordered conditions (per occasional request of judges).

7. The number of defendants for whom the pretrial release program recommended against non-secured release.

The program does not recommend whether the release should be secured or non-secured. The Judiciary makes that decision.

8. The number of defendants granted non-secured release after the pretrial release program recommended non-secured release.

The program does not recommend whether the release should be secured or non-secured. The Judiciary makes that decision.

9. The number of defendants assessed and interviewed for pretrial release that were declared indigent by the court.

No defendants were assessed or interviewed for pretrial release in St Lucie, Okeechobee or Martin Counties

Indigent defendants:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>St Lucie County</i> | <i>605</i> |
| <i>Okeechobee County</i> | <i>22</i> |
| <i>Martin County</i> | <i>92</i> |

10. The name and case number of each person granted non-secured release (ROR) who:

a. Failed to attend a scheduled court appearance.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>St Lucie County</i> | <i>0</i> |
| <i>Okeechobee County</i> | <i>0</i> |
| <i>Martin County</i> | <i>0</i> |

b. Was issued a warrant for failing to appear.

St Lucie County **0**
Okeechobee County **0**
Martin County **0**

c. Was arrested for any offense while on release through the pretrial release program.

| <u>Name:</u> | <u>Case Number:</u> | <u>County:</u> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| GONZALEZ,ROLANDO | 432019MM000149 | Martin |
| MATEO-MIGUEL,ELISA | 432019MM001215 | Martin |
| BRODELL,MICHAEL,RAYMOND | 432019MM003418 | Martin |
| MOORE,JACQUELINE,SABRINA | 562019MM001983 | St Lucie |

11. Any additional information deemed necessary by the governing body to assess the performance and cost-efficiency of the pretrial release program.

2019 Annual Report and Summary – SLC Pretrial Program

The St. Lucie County Pretrial Program, which is now fourteen years old, has supervised approximately 9,861 cases in its lifetime. Supervision is varied and can include GPS monitoring with house arrest, curfews, and exclusion zones in cases involving a victim. Drug and alcohol testing through the SLC Drug Lab, weekly reporting (or more often) to the office, and field /residence checks (seven days a week including holidays, and response to GPS alerts 24/7 as needed) are also required as conditions of release to insure compliance with court orders.

In St. Lucie County, there were 642 new defendants that entered the program and 111 carry-overs from 2018 totaling 753 defendants supervised in 2019. There were 3,236 field/residence checks conducted during the year. Approximately 92,856 “bed days” were saved at the rate of \$71.66 per day (without medical), for an estimated savings of \$6,654,060.96.

In Okeechobee County, in 2019 the St. Lucie County Pretrial program supervised 23 new pretrial defendants, 13 defendants were carry-overs from the year 2018 totaling 36 defendants supervised in 2019. There were 330 field/ residence checks conducted during the year. Approximately 3,042 “bed days” were saved at the rate of \$70.00 per day (without medical), for an estimated savings of \$212,940.00.

In Martin County, in 2019 the St Lucie County Pretrial program supervised 152 new pretrial defendants, 14 defendants were carry-overs from the year 2018 totaling 166 defendants supervised in 2019. There were 774 field/ residence checks conducted during the year. Approximately 13,157 “bed days” were saved at the rate of \$106.00 per day (without medical), for an estimated savings of \$1,394,642.00.

The Program has continuously provided an alternative solution to incarceration by use of GPS tracking and enhanced supervision techniques. These methods are exceptionally helpful for defendants experiencing medical issues thereby significantly reducing taxpayer funded medical expenses (reduced cost to the county for on-going treatment, surgical procedures and terminal defendants). In the first year of the Martin County program, there was a known medical savings of \$512,000.00 through supervision of five defendants with known medical needs. The daily GPS cost per unit is now \$3.35 (down from \$8.00 per day in 2007), which provides for a tremendous savings when an inmate could cost several thousand dollars a day for medical care.

The St. Lucie Pretrial Program utilizes 4 different labs sights for drug testing.

- ***218 South 2nd St. Fort Pierce, FL***
- ***1680 Lyngate Drive Port St. Lucie, FL***
- ***406 NW 3rd Avenue, Okeechobee, FL***
- ***435 SE Flagler Ave., Stuart, FL.***

Regardless of which county the defendant is on pretrial supervision with, they are allowed to select the lab that is most convenient for them. In 2019, the total number of drug tests ordered and conducted by all 4 labs was 2101.

The Program was initially started strictly for “pretrial supervision”, as an alternative to jail incarceration. The program provides the court with options for supervision of defendants pending disposition of criminal cases both in County and Circuit Court. While the jail over-crowding was one factor that was of main concern at the time, the cost of jail medical care and treatment was also a major concern. Allowing specific defendants to be released under restrictive conditions to continue medical treatment or surgery, provided savings to both the county and the jail (with the defendants using their own insurance or resources).

In addition, the County Court Judges requested consideration of the program providing enhanced supervision (as a condition of probation), to allow specific type cases to serve their sentence without incarceration (not losing their job, providing for their family, and at times receiving treatment and care for substance abuse, medical and mental health issues). More recently, the program has been used as a diversion or intervention for the purpose of getting the defendant “back on track”. At times, a defendants may be in need of resources such as relocation of residence (especially in the instance of a domestic situation involving a victim), referral to services for substance abuse or mental health evaluations and treatment, drug testing, employment referral or even veteran’s services. With today’s economic situation, the court has options that will offer appropriate services, while still providing for public safety.