



## EXTRA

Criminal & Juvenile Justice  
Information and Bureau of Criminal  
Apprehension Advisory Group  
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### *Have a question or suggestion?*

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In light of the governor's stated priority to reduce violent crimes in Minnesota, and borne out of Superintendent Evans's violent crimes presentation from the previous meeting, a Violent Crimes subcommittee was formed from the Advisory Group. This quarter, the Advisory Group learned about the statistics of homicide over the past five years, and continues to focus on information systems and information integration, and discusses gaps in the systems used by the state of Minnesota entities, and where/how information is being shared—or isn't, but should be.

### The changing nature of homicide

Advisory Group member Prof. James Densley presented on Joyce Foundation/BCA research being performed to determine why there was/is a sudden increase in violent crimes surrounding the COVID-19 years (2020–2021) and into today. While results have not been established, consistent trends show that nearly all the homicide perpetrators had multiple contacts with state systems—mental health, drug and alcohol, the court system, the police, etc. This could tell us that the systems—and the lack of communication between them—are letting people down.

### Overview of forensic investigative genetic genealogy (FIGG)

BCA Deputy Superintendent of Forensic Science Services, Cathy Knutson, presented on forensic investigative genetic genealogy (FIGG)—the DNA process of genetically connecting and identifying individuals using familial DNA. Because FIGG testing requires advanced technology and specialized training, the BCA is currently only a facilitator of FIGG. Offering it at the BCA could not only help to move the current mitochondrial DNA program forward, but it would eliminate the need to send genetic samples out to a private company, only to have us access their databases. Stakeholder feedback and insight into how we can use FIGG technology responsibly is essential to deciding how this will help the state of Minnesota in general.

### Justice Counts presentation

Kelli Williams and Laramie Riggs from Justice Counts revisited the Advisory Group after a 3-year hiatus to provide an update on their services. Justice Counts, a data suite that provides up-to-date and ongoing data from criminal justice agencies, is not currently being utilized in Minnesota. The data collected and provided by Justice Counts can be useful in the consideration of public policy decisions. Williams and Riggs left the Advisory Group members contact information for further information.

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*Note: The information in this publication is an unofficial summary of activity. It should not be considered official meeting minutes or an official program status report. Information subject to change.*

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## Department of Corrections overview

Liz Moua and Grant Duwe presented an overview of the DOC system and emphasized the need to improve the quality and communication of data management. There are a lot of data systems, but they tend to be siloed and aren't user-friendly. How can data be collected better and be higher quality, in an organized and more efficient way? The DOC is working toward trying to establish a centralized repository to enable data to come together across multiple systems into a place that can be accessible and available to data consumers.

## Violent Crimes subcommittee update

The question remains: What would the subcommittee like to achieve? Using the different representation among the committee members, the goal is to identify what data that is available vs. not available, and work together to determine how to close the informational gaps. The subcommittee meets once per month.

**August agenda items:** Updating bylaws of Advisory Group; possibly invite representation from the courts, prosecution, public defense, etc., to understand their records management systems work within the state.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m., with plans to take a poll to determine the date for the next Advisory Group meeting.

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