

Application: Citizens for Prison Reform - FIRST Hub

Citizens for Prison Reform
Administration of Justice Grant Program

Summary

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Administration of Justice Grant Final Report

Completed - Apr 27 2026

Administration of Justice Grant Final Report

Project Outcomes

1. Describe actual results that were achieved through the use of the grant funds. Include outcomes identified in your grant application.

Since May of 2025, when the MI State Bar Foundation Funded the FIRST Hub, it has seen growth and increased networks with organizations in Lansing. It continued to connect with the court systems to gain referrals and education of what the FIRST Hub offers. This growth has increased our capacity to provide direct legal navigation, caregiver support, and system navigation resources to justice-impacted families in Eaton and Ingham Counties. The FIRST Hub has not yet directly served a family or individual in Clinton County. The FIRST Hub has partnered with Lifeboat Recovery Network, which has graciously provided free weekly meeting space that is welcoming and easy to access.

Outreach & engagement for the funding period included:

- 26 Formal Intakes
- 19 Presentations Delivered
- 54 Community Events where Tabling and information were distributed
- 40 plus Resource Guides and Caregiver's Toolkits distributed to schools, churches, and community centers
- 24 Court proceedings attended by FIRST Hub Team, providing client support/advocacy
- 2 Cases dismissed
- 35 plus families referred to and supported through the Family Participation Program with a loved one facing incarceration or already incarcerated when they found the FIRST Hub.
- 37 years, 2 months of "time saved" for multiple individuals. This is the amount of time they were originally facing or had left in their maximum sentence minus the amount of time sentenced to or actually served. The FIRST Hub has assisted in getting lower sentences and CPR has been able to assist in getting issues addressed that were holding people in prison beyond their Earliest Release Date (ERD), preventing them from accessing necessary programming to be released, such as being wrongly held in Security Threat Group for 10 years.

Many families and individuals were assisted with referrals for employment, mental health support, housing, food assistance, and other assistance through organizations in the Lansing region.

2. Where there any unanticipated challenges or outcomes? If so, describe below:

The FIRST Hub did experience some staff turnover, and hired new core team members. This slowed down the networking within Clinton and Eaton Counties, but the work is in progress.

Provide "actual" numbers of how many people will be served by completing the chart below. (Enter numbers without punctuation: 1000 rather than 1,000.00)

Type of legal problem	Cases closed after limited service	Cases closed after extended service	Total cases closed
Consumer/finance			
Education			
Employment			
Family			
Juvenile			
Health			
Housing			
Income Maintenance			
Individual rights			
Other*			
Total cases	0	0	0

3. If applicable, explain if all the grant conditions set forth in the grant award letter were accomplished. If not, explain why.

The FIRST Hub met all of the grant conditions, except for moving into Clinton and Eaton Counties to the level it had hoped. Current outreach and networking is occurring with the hope that the FIRST Hub will be able to have materials within both court systems in the next month. The Hub has published seven webinars to the FIRST Hub web page with at least three additional webinars being uploaded in the next week. With departure of some team members and training new members, the webinar production was slowed down. The county experienced staff changes that prevented the Specialty Court webinar from occurring through them.

Webinars published on CPR's FIRST Hub page:

- Before you Take a Plea Deal
- Intro to MI Criminal Court Process
- Michigan Criminal Court Process
- Understanding Courtroom Language and Terminology
- Financial Impact: How Fines and Fees Capture Justice-Involved Families
- Mental Health While Incarcerated
- Expungements

Webinars being published within the next two weeks:

- Creating a Social Biography Packet
- MI Standards of Indigent Defense
- Specialty Courts in Michigan

Resources developed:

- Justice-Impacted Resource Guide (published 03/2025): comprehensive directory of legal, housing, behavioral health, and reentry services.
- Toolkit for Caregivers of Justice-Impacted Children and Youth (published 05/2025): step-by-step caregiver checklist, school advocacy letters, and trauma-informed support tips.
- Information Sheets (published 04/2025): Know Your Rights; Navigating the Court System; Finding a Lawyer, Criminal Justice Process Flow Chart, and Social Biography toolkits were also produced to give to those who complete an intake form, assisting them in

providing their strengths, backstory and history that could assist their attorney with their case.

4 If applicable, describe the plans for continuing or expanding this project following exhaustion of MSBF funds. If not, explain why.

The FIRST Hub has experienced increased demand, reflected in a rise in intakes and referrals for both internal supports and external community services, including the Family Participation Program. This growth underscores the ongoing need for the project and its continued impact on individuals and families navigating the legal system.

To sustain operations beyond the exhaustion of MSBF funds, the FIRST Hub has secured support from the Beckwith Fund and has reapplied for funding through the City of Lansing for a third year.

Looking ahead, the Hub intends to strengthen collaboration with court administrators to encourage referrals from the courts, including judges, to ensure that more families in need of support are connected to available resources and services.

5. Should this project be tried elsewhere? If so, what changes would you suggest and/or what partners should be involved? If not, explain why.

Yes, this project should be replicated in other communities. The Participatory Defense model has demonstrated its effectiveness in strengthening families, empowering individuals, and fostering peer support among those navigating the legal system. Expanding this approach would benefit communities by increasing access to advocacy, information, and collaborative problem-solving.

Successful implementation elsewhere should prioritize partnerships with organizations serving vulnerable populations, as well as strong collaboration with key justice system stakeholders, including public defenders, court administrators, probation and parole agencies, and members of the judiciary. While the Public Defender's Office has been a strong partner in this project, additional relationship-building with probation, parole, and judicial stakeholders would enhance outcomes.

Future growth could also include the development of a Restorative Justice Specialty Court in Ingham County. Advancing this goal will require constructive engagement with the Prosecutor's Office to identify shared priorities and opportunities for collaboration. Building and strengthening these relationships will be essential to expanding restorative approaches within the local justice system.

Media and Acknowledgements

1. Was the Michigan State Bar Foundation acknowledged? If so, describe how? If not, explain why.

Yes, the Michigan State Bar Foundation is being acknowledged on the FIRST Hub website page, along with on the FIRST Hub Facebook page. The Michigan State Bar Foundation will also be acknowledged at our upcoming Legislative Education Day for Families and Advocates at the Capitol

2. Describe how a sample individual or group benefited as a result of the project funded by the grant. (Do not mention names.)

One individual had been held in the Eaton County Jail for nearly 11 months awaiting transfer to a Forensic Center. Through the Hub's coordination and advocacy, the transfer was expedited. After being found incompetent at the time of the offense, the individual was released and demonstrated stability in the community, maintaining casual employment and caring for his elderly mother. When re-entry into the Forensic Center was later encouraged by prior counsel, the Hub intervened by securing pro bono legal representation, facilitating a change in counsel, and supporting the individual's transfer to Ingham County's Mental Health Specialty Court.

The individual has since successfully completed eight months in the program and continues to make positive progress with treatment and medication adherence. Efforts are ongoing to pursue expungement of the felony charge, as his charge remains a barrier to full-time employment.

3. If applicable, describe to whom and when were materials or project results and information distributed.(Do not mention names.)

The Justice Impacted Resource Guide and Caregiver's Toolkit of Justice Impacted Children and Youth were broadly disseminated throughout the Lansing area. Printed binders were made available at all tabling events and distributed to libraries, local and regional schools, the Intermediate School District, and various faith-based organizations. Digital versions were also shared via a countywide email distribution list that includes social service providers and legal and social justice organizations.

Educational information sheets were consistently provided at tabling events and during FIRST Hub Tuesday meetings. In addition, staff worked directly with individuals and families to utilize the Social Biography packet, supporting them in documenting personal strengths, support systems, and contributing circumstances related to their legal involvement. These materials were then used to inform public defenders and, when appropriate, the court.

Financial Information

1. Complete the chart below to reflect the project's actual expenditures detailed by major line items. Include only direct needs for this project under "MSBF funds." Explain any variances from the budget submitted in the application. (Enter numbers without punctuation: 1000 rather than \$1,000.00.)

Category	MSBF Funds	Other Funds	In-kind Support	Total	*Provide further details
*Personnel - Existing	24634	13150			
*Personnel - New	0	0			
Employee benefits	0	0			
*Consultant fees	0	0			
*Travel	1078	200			
*Space	125	600			
*Equipment	882	0			
*Supplies	233	200			
Telephone	39	400			
Postage	20	0			
Printing/copies	156	450			
Audit	0	0			
*Other	2833	0			
Total	30000.0	15000.0	0	0	

2. List all other revenues that were used to complete this project:

Source	Amount	Description
Government grants (list)	10000	City of Lansing Racial Equity Grant
Foundations (list)	5000	Beckwith Fund
Corporations (list)	0	
Religious institutions (list)	0	
United Way (list)	0	
Income from project	0	
Other (list)	0	
Total	15000.0	

Grant Payment(s) and Request for Final Payment

Total MSBF Funds used	30000
Less amount previously disbursed (if any)	15000
Balance to be paid	15000

Responses Selected:

The payment of \$ {{FinPmt[2]}} constitutes the final payment for this grant. Following this payment the grant will be closed and no additional funds will be available for this project from the grant funds.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Apr 25 2026

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature consists of the name "Lois Pullano" written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Lois" is on the left, and the last name "Pullano" is on the right, connected by a thin line.

Comments

Please add any additional comments you wish to provide.

I was unable to upload the link to the Youtube webinars, it wouldn't accept the link. All completed webinars are located on the FIRST Hub webpage at <https://micpr.org/participatory-defense-hub/>

Thank you so much for your support for the FIRST Hub.

Lois Pullano