

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION NETWORK  
ELECTRONIC GPS MONITORING REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2023

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Criminal Justice Information Network (CJIN) Governing Board promotes collaboration among safety and justice agencies. The Board has been assisted with initiatives that embrace its mission, such as LinX, NC-DEx, VIPER, and CJLEADS. The CJIN Board ensures that processes are streamlined to reduce any duplication of efforts.

The Board has been given the task of overseeing by the General Assembly is the CJIN Electronic Global Positioning System (GPS) Monitoring Program. The Program is unique in the United States and is the very definition of emerging technologies, that is part of the CJIN Board mission. In fact, through the course of both the Pilot and the Program, no victim lethality or harm can be attributed to a defendant that has been placed on this program.

The Program is an active monitoring system to enforce court-mandated "no-contact" orders for defendants accused of crimes related to stalking, sexual assault, domestic abuse, and violations of a domestic violence protective order. The Program provides the victims of these crimes the option to also have a unit that is paired with the defendant's GPS monitoring unit. The unit allows the victims to have immediate notification of a violation of the court ordered exclusion zone. No matter the victim's choice a 24-hour call center will reach out to the victim's provided contact information, to notify them of a violation of the court ordered exclusion zone. The Board understands that this Program supports judicial personnel, law enforcement, victims of crime and the defendant. It is necessary to have that knowledge in order to develop recommendations for statewide implementation of the Program.

The Board remains committed to serving as a resource for decision makers across North Carolina, providing guidance and support to promote integrated justice and enhance safety outcomes through the use of technology. The Board will continue to work closely with justice and public safety agencies, stakeholders, and the General Assembly to identify opportunities for improvement and to ensure that North Carolina remains at the forefront of innovative and effective approaches for the criminal justice community.

# CJIN ELECTRONIC GPS MONITORING PROGRAM

The CJIN Electronic GPS Monitoring Program is an active Global Positioning System (GPS) monitoring program has been implemented in North Carolina to enforce court-mandated "no-contact" orders for defendants accused of crimes related to stalking, sexual assault, domestic abuse, and violations of a domestic violence protective order, as part of a broader effort to develop innovative and effective responses to crime victims. This program represents a unique and promising new approach to addressing these types of crimes, with the potential to improve safety for victims and reduce the likelihood of future harm. In fact, through the course of both the Pilot and the Program no victim lethality or harm can be attributed to a defendant that has been placed on this program.

As with most revisions to an existing approach, the motivation behind this innovative and emerging tactic to pretrial release monitoring using GPS technology in North Carolina was in memory of Laura "Caitlyn" Whitehurst, a young woman who lost her life to domestic violence-murder suicide. Caitlyn's Courage a 501(c)(3), was created in response to this tragedy, the organization's mission is to prevent domestic violence and support survivors through education, advocacy, and awareness-raising campaigns. Caitlyn's Courage groundbreaking initiative to implement GPS monitoring for defendants on pretrial release, in order to protect victims, has exceeded its pilot goals and is now under the oversight of the CJIN Governing Board to scale statewide, a testament to the Whitehurst family's visionary leadership and commitment to innovation in honor of Caitlyn.

## **Recommendations: Looking Ahead**

As the CJIN Electronic GPS Monitoring Program enters its second year of management, staff are dedicated to evaluating the program's technology, processes, court procedures, and data collection methods. This ongoing and continuous evaluation aims to identify areas for improvement and to automate data collection where possible. With these findings an informed set of recommendations have emerged:

- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Program, it is recommended that a comparison of all district's implementation models be made, and recommendations taken from the field that represents best practices. After compiling these best practices, they should be distributed to all districts participating in the program,

- The CJIN Board recommends additional funding be appropriated in order to provide the Program on a statewide basis to all judicial districts and specialty courts. As this Program is unique to the entire United States it puts North Carolina on the cutting edge of crime victim protection.

### Program Utilization by Case Type Percentage

According to the analysis of the cases that were court ordered to the Program, the breakdown of the types of cases include 58% domestic violence cases, 24% are victim units/ court ordered cases, 10% are domestic violence protective order violations, 5% are stalking cases and 3% are sexual assault cases.

