

*The Stanford Executive Sessions on  
Sentencing and Corrections*

---

County to County, Agency to Agency:  
**Information Sharing and  
Operational Collaboration in the  
Bay Area and Southern California**

June 27, 2008  
Stanford Law School



**About The Stanford Executive  
Sessions on Sentencing and Corrections**

Executive Director: Kara Dansky

Writer: David Ball

Editing and design: Lara Luepke

The Stanford Criminal Justice Center

Crown Quadrangle

559 Nathan Abbott Way

Stanford, CA 94305-8610

[crim@law.stanford.edu](mailto:crim@law.stanford.edu)

**Stanford** Law School

Stanford Criminal Justice Center

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	5
INTRODUCTION – LOCAL AND REGIONAL DATA SHARING .....	7
LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZING .....	9
CASE STUDY: ORANGE COUNTY’S ILJ .....	12
HELPFUL ROLES FOR THE STATE.....	15
THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD .....	21
CONCLUSION .....	23

*“Ultimately, while it might be easier to organize and recapitulate a meeting with presentations and directed monologues, opening up a conversation – or network – to new sources and viewpoints results in something more engaging, more useful, and less sterile than an information exchange imposed from the top-down.”*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Stanford Executive Sessions on Sentencing and Corrections* is an innovative form of policy working group designed to bring together key public, academic, and organizational leaders in the field of criminal justice policy. The goal of the Executive Sessions is to move cooperatively towards reform of California's sentencing and corrections systems, as well as the criminal justice system as a whole.

Our mission in the 2008 Executive Sessions is to encourage collaborative criminal justice policy development. We seek to promote public/private partnerships with state, county, and municipal governments in the criminal justice arena; create opportunities for the use of social science research to aid in the development and implementation of empirically-validated, data-driven criminal justice programs and policies; and serve as a public service consultant to the State of California and its fifty-eight counties.

For our June 2008 meeting, we focused on local and regional information sharing, bringing together judges, DA's, sheriffs, police chiefs, public defenders, probation officers, and court administrators from Southern California and the Bay Area to discuss collaborative efforts within and among counties and regions. Local agencies are already sharing information, are planning to share more information, and see information sharing as a necessary part of their day-to-day operations. These localities are not waiting for statewide or nationwide efforts; they are already moving forward. In some ways, local efforts make more sense: they respond to real demand on the part of those who will be entering and receiving data. These networks aren't built; they grow. At the same time, the state can play a vital role in laying out the ground rules for these new networks, helping create an environment where there are common approaches and standards about data privacy, information architecture, and agency indemnification. The state can eliminate the chilling effects of uncertainty without substituting the chilling effects of micromanagement.

This Executive Session was a working meeting. There were no long speeches and no Power Point presentations were permitted. Information flowed freely, according to the interests of the participants. In some ways, the meeting itself was like a local

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

network: subjects were not imposed by a higher authority, but, instead, emerged. While the open-ended nature of the meeting helped ensure that the conversation was of both high quality and quantity, it means that summarizing the discussion is more difficult than it was for previous Executive Sessions meetings. We will therefore outline the major themes and subjects that emerged throughout the Executive Session, emphasizing that in a dynamic and multi-party conversation, the recounting is necessarily approximate. Ultimately, while it might be easier to organize and recapitulate a meeting with presentations and directed monologues, opening up a conversation – or network – to new sources and viewpoints results in something more engaging, more useful, and less sterile than an information exchange imposed from the top-down.

# INTRODUCTION – LOCAL AND REGIONAL DATA SHARING

**ALTERNATIVES TO STATE CONTROL.** The June 2008 meeting of the *Stanford Executive Sessions on Sentencing and Corrections* was designed to explore the emerging local and regional criminal justice information sharing networks in the state, particularly in Southern California and the Bay Area. Our premise was that state-driven information sharing is not the only, or even a necessary, way to approach the subject. In the world of information management generally, a self-organizing collective of networks is emerging — networks *grow* as much as they are *built*. In the field of criminal justice, the regulatory and statutory framework set by the state can certainly help, but it's a mistake to think that the state can force or control a network, or even that it should try to do so.

**LOCAL NETWORKS ARE EMERGING.** A virtue of focusing on local and regional information sharing is that this sharing is happening now anyway. Local law enforcement, social services, and courts are increasingly exchanging information, without waiting for a statewide program or the imprimatur of other governments. This is not to disparage state efforts — as we will discuss later, the state is crucial, at a minimum, in ensuring that there's a common legal and regulatory understanding of the underlying rules and responsibilities of various nodes in the network. But the state efforts, by virtue of their greater complexity and scale, are going to take years to get fully up to speed. To be sure, local actors face uncertainty about the implementation timeline and eventual size and scope of statewide projects. They might trust that state programs are going to work perfectly, and surely the AOC's success with its Criminal Case Management System (CCMS) rightfully gives them some confidence. But they still don't know precisely what the state programs are going to look like.

**INFORMATION SHARING IS A CONTINUUM.** Information sharing is a continuum. Systems can be rolled out, built piece by piece, and modified, and as they grow, their capacities and applications can grow along with them. There is no reason that local, county, or metropolitan efforts can't all proceed alongside one another — provided there is some way of ensuring that the individual pieces, once brought together, can

be blended effectively. Think of a puzzle — we can fit individual pieces together in areas of similar color, or shape, or however it works for us, and then fit those larger subgroups together into the finished whole. There’s no reason not to get started, even if we’re unclear what the eventual picture in the completed puzzle is going to look like.

**THE STATE SHOULD SUPPORT EXISTING LOCAL EFFORTS.** For certain information-sharing functions, one way to look at how to design a statewide information sharing system is *not* to attempt a macro-design at all. The state might instead think about subsidizing and supporting existing networks, rather than building them out. Perhaps it’s true that, as in *Field of Dreams*, if you build it, they will come, but if counties are already building it, the state might want to think about how to support it — and how to help coordinate counties’ building efforts — rather than attempting to build the whole enterprise on its own. On the other hand, a lack of state-level coordination might result in a patchwork system, where individual agencies might join together in a proprietary network, each of which is unable to talk to one another. Managing the twin concerns of user-centered design and universal compatibility will require a state approach that is engaged, but not dictatorial; deferential, but not absent. Thus, the state could exercise leadership not by dictating, but by listening and learning, and by supporting local and regional initiatives.

*“Managing the twin concerns of user-centered design and universal compatibility will require a state approach that is engaged, but not dictatorial; deferential, but not absent.”*

# LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZING

**HOW DO WE DRAW NETWORK BOUNDARIES?** When we began to prepare for this Executive Sessions meeting, we focused on the *county* as the organizing jurisdiction. But we learned through our work in this Session that the county is not necessarily the optimal criminal justice organizing unit, especially if we think functionally in terms of geography, population density, transportation corridors, and the like. On some levels, the county is a prime candidate: counties tend to have one budget, and the sheriff's authority extends throughout the county and involves both policing and jails.

Focusing on the county as the key unit can lead to further useful differentiation — distinguishing *intra*-county from *inter*-county sharing, and this framework was of special interest during this Executive Sessions meeting. Our participants reported sharing a great deal of information with other in-county agencies. Most of them needed information from other county agencies at least once a day, and almost everyone regularly participated in county-wide planning sessions and shared this information with co-workers. In short, *intra*-county information sharing is widespread and highly valued.

**SHARING OUTSIDE COUNTY BOUNDARIES.** *Inter*-county information sharing is also a key part of criminal justice practice. Although participants reported needing inter-county information less often, more than half reported needing to draw on other counties' agencies at least once a week. Participants reported needing two kinds of information from other counties: information about a particular case — priors, investigation information — and information at a more general level — best practices, strategies, and budget/staffing information.

Obtaining this inter-county information is more difficult, however — there is less regular contact than there is for intra-county agencies. Contacts

*“... the county is not necessarily the optimal criminal justice organizing unit, especially if we think functionally in terms of geography, population density, transportation corridors, and the like.”*

across county lines tend to be personal, not organizational. That is, respondents know the individual, not the office, and people spend a lot of time on the phone trying to get information. They have “their people” they go to in other counties — and, to a lesser extent, within other in-county agencies. This works, but there are huge transactions costs.

**THE NEED TO SYSTEMATIZE.** There’s also a randomness to picking up the phone. What you learn depends on the individual you happen to know, or happen to have called. There’s no way for anyone to track these kinds of exchanges. Putting information sharing on an agency-to-agency level increases the efficiency of the transfer.

Then there are the “dropped calls” — that is, someone might need information and not know whom to call, and the person with the information has no way of knowing what he or she missed. Or someone might have information and not know who else might need it. In a system that depends on personal contacts, you can only call the people you know and only give information to people who call you. A more systematic approach to information exchange would allow individuals and agencies to send out information they knew was valuable to any present and future users who would want it. Similarly, individuals and agencies could send out generalized requests to get information from users they don’t know. A successful system will be designed to accomplish these goals.

**LET THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND DETERMINE BOUNDARIES.** There are many ways to draw maps, and a natural criminal justice information “ecosystem” might or might not correspond to county boundaries. For example, in the Bay Area, there’s the corridor around Highway 101, which is more heavily populated, and the corridor around Highway 1, which is rural. One could also draw the areas of the Bay Area connected by BART. Each of these corridors cuts across several counties and municipalities, but each would also be a logical frame for organizing jurisdictions needing access to common information. Looked at another way, the coastal areas of San Mateo County, which are quite rural, might have more in common with neighboring rural

areas in Santa Clara County than they do with the urban parts of San Mateo County bordering 101. Similarly, the coastal areas of Santa Clara County have less in common with metropolitan San Jose than with the neighboring areas of San Mateo County. So for some criminal justice purposes, it makes sense in some ways to think about counties, but in other ways it might not. Criminal law agencies should think creatively about who their sharing parties are in terms of common sense questions — where the benefits of sharing are most evident. They need not limit themselves to formal jurisdictional structures.

*“There’s also a randomness to picking up the phone. What you learn depends on the individual you happen to know, or happen to have called. There’s no way for anyone to track these kinds of exchanges. Putting information sharing on an agency-to-agency level increases the efficiency of the transfer. “*

## CASE STUDY: ORANGE COUNTY'S ILJ

Orange County has undertaken a complete transformation of its criminal justice information exchange. The project has taken several years and is continuing. But one of the lessons from Orange County is that governance and process — starting with the way the planning process itself proceeds — are crucial to long-term success.

**THE ILJ: A JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY.** Orange County's criminal justice agencies share information via the Integrated Law & Justice Agency for Orange County (ILJ). The ILJ is a Joint Powers Authority under California-based law — basically, a hybrid form of authority that isn't entirely geographical, county-based, or municipal. Courts, police departments, probation, and, recently, the Sheriff now share criminal justice information electronically. The ILJ's member agencies vote on initiatives and finance them jointly. Every agency in the ILJ has one vote, regardless of size. Six police chiefs vote for the 21 municipalities, and the Sheriff's Department, which is responsible for policing more than half of Orange County's million plus residents, also gets one vote. According to the ILJ's governance, approval of any action requires a 2/3 supermajority. The ILJ's staffing is distributed: each participating agency has an employee who works on the ILJ.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNANCE.** The ILJ began as a task force. The crucial first step was getting decision-makers, not just their deputies, to the table so that things could actually happen. One cause of early success was that Orange County used existing organizations — police departments, probation officers, and the like — which had already developed personal and professional networks of individuals. Organizing these larger pieces into a whole was much easier than starting from scratch. In other words, if you organize organizations, rather than individuals, half of your work has already been done. Funding was also crucial early on. The ILJ relied on a grant from the Urban Area Security Initiative, and Orange County's congressional delegation also secured early money.

**SETTING PRIORITIES.** The ILJ originally set out 25 initiatives to pursue. The working group whittled this number down to 8, and is still implementing these 8 proposals.

The initial application that made the most sense was calendaring. Police departments were spending huge amounts of money on officers called to testify in court, costing overtime money and removing officers from investigation or patrol.

**CALENDARING — THE INITIAL BUSINESS CASE.** Calendaring through ILJ brought several benefits:

- 1 It streamlined the process, making coordination of schedules easier and more rational.
- 2 It demonstrated how much how much money police departments were spending, and also framed the issue in terms of the cost of lost officer time.
- 3 It allowed partner agencies to benefit from the new calendaring system simultaneously.
- 4 It knit together courts and police, and allowed other pieces of the puzzle to build out from there.

Systems like the ILJ allow agencies to begin thinking in terms of how sharing information with each other benefits the system as a whole, even if the sharing agency does not accrue any immediate benefit to itself.

**MOVING FORWARD.** The ILJ is currently expanding and the ILJ also now has inter-governmental agreements with the other nodes in Spokane, Tucson, San Diego, and with the LAPD and LA County. Part of what makes the ILJ able to grow is that its foundation of good governance means that the organization is solid. The 2/3 supermajority means that the only decisions which the ILJ makes have a great deal of buy-in. There's no point in trying to *force* agencies to do something — if any member of the leadership can't convince 2/3 of the rest of the group to do something, it's probably not worth it.

*“Executive Sessions participants agreed that to some extent, the state may indeed need to remain in the background and let local and county-wide networks develop. But there was also much discussion about whether and how the state could play a more affirmative role.”*

## HELPFUL ROLES FOR THE STATE

**SHOULD THE STATE REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND?** The state was not driving the process of Orange County’s ILJ (see the Case Study on pages 12-13); the funding came from federal grants and earmarks from its congressional delegation. So, on one analysis, perhaps the state could just sit back and let the market take over, while counties, municipalities, and everything in between could organize their own information sharing the way Orange County did. Under that scenario, when it comes time for the state to step in, it will be integrating a bunch of networks, rather than a bunch of individual agencies.

Executive Sessions participants agreed that to some extent, the state may indeed need to remain in the background and let local and county-wide networks develop. But there was also much discussion about whether and how the state could play a more affirmative role. And that discussion, in turn, required some consideration about long-term or structural problems in achieving a healthy state/local partnership.

**STATE/COUNTY MISTRUST.** In California, a lingering mistrust between the state and counties often inhibits stakeholders from working cooperatively on criminal justice projects. Some Executive Sessions participants lamented that the state was not capable of leading — specifically, that the state cannot engage an issue without taking it over, that it cannot be a co-equal partner to the counties without eventually dictating and dominating. Some local officials described the state as “broken” and complained that the state dumps problems on the counties, mandating programs without paying for them. The degrees of mistrust are as heterogeneous as the counties, but the core problem remains: How do we give flexibility to counties (or other local and regional actors) without engendering anarchy? Is there a way to ensure some happy medium of healthy collaboration?

**TERM LIMITS INHIBIT LONG-TERM INVESTMENT.** Participants also reported that legislative term limits have hindered the state’s ability to embark on projects with long-term payouts, and that criminal justice information sharing, like so many areas of criminal justice reform, is one of those projects that requires a short-term increase for long-term returns. For an interesting contrast, one participant noted that backers of criminal

*“ ‘Thinking state-wide’ is not the same thing as placing all authority in state government.”*

justice IT investment in Minnesota made the case to the legislature by, in part, bringing business leaders to testify about the amount of IT capital investments they make in business.

**THE PROBLEM OF THE ‘AVERAGE’ CALIFORNIA COUNTY.** Executive Sessions participants also discussed problems inherent in the very structural tension between a single state and multiple counties. The state needs to consider how it is going to “average” across counties — the ways in which it will accommodate the small counties, the medium counties, and Los Angeles County (which is a category unto itself). Participants suggested that the state consider such approaches as the federal model used in the United States and elsewhere, the model used in Orange County, and other kinds of systems. The state might also consider simply rolling out block grants and pilots. Of course, as some noted, how to fix the state-county relationship, which has grown extremely complex after Proposition 13 decoupled county expenditures from county-controlled sources of revenue, is a much larger issue than criminal justice information sharing, but it is nevertheless one which must be taken on as part of the discussion.

**WAYS THE STATE CAN HELP LOCAL EFFORTS.** But with those concerns aired, participants offered a range of ideas about the useful contributions the state could make to information-sharing at the state, local, and regional levels.

**1. CLARIFY REGULATIONS.** One approach might be for the state to simply take the lead in removing regulatory obstacles as well as uncertainty about the legal restrictions on sharing information (see Section IV. The Legal Framework). Everyone wants natural sharing ecosystems to develop, but local and regional governments should not have to figure out the regulatory framework. Instead, the state can provide leadership in this area. Where sharing needs to happen and parties want it to happen, the state

should make it as easy as possible.

**2. ENCOURAGE COUNTY STANDARDS.** A second approach would involve encouraging counties to migrate to a single integrated system such as Coplink, and then ensure that state information systems like CCMS map easily onto that system. Coplink is a private system, developed in response to the market, not in response to a particular government contract. Local governments use it and typically like it. One growth path for information sharing in California might be if Coplink organizes the investigative side of the criminal justice system, and the state, possibly with the AOC's impressive CCMS, organizes the courts. Then, all that would remain is making a single interface between Coplink and the CCMS. If that were the case, then integration would be easy, since so many departments are "on" Coplink already. The system just needs to have big enough pieces to be administrable, and, most importantly, agencies and line officers have to like it and use it.

**3. STATE ROLLOUT.** A third approach would be for the state to roll out its own program. However, many of the Executive Sessions participants came from counties with a rich data environment and were worried that any state program would involve a loss of functionality. A key problem with statewide programs is that California is so heterogeneous, considering the range from Alpine County, rural and sparsely-populated, to Los Angeles, the largest metropolitan area in the United States. Somewhere in between are counties like Santa Clara and Orange, with populations over a million and sizeable investments in IT infrastructure. As an example, Santa Clara's courtwide data system has 900 variables that can be transmitted to partner agencies. The statewide CCMS, comprehensive though it is, cannot be expected to track all of those variables.

**THE STATE CAN HELP WITHOUT DOMINATING.** The consensus was that the state should enhance its capacity to enable sharing to take place locally, rather than to force schemes downward on local agencies. To do so, both state and local officials can think of creative and flexible ways of thinking about the state role that go beyond seeing the state as formal authority. "Thinking statewide" is not the same thing as placing all

authority in state government. For example, one option might be to use existing *state-wide associations* of sheriffs, police, probation, and the like as a means of organizing the state without involving the apparatus of state government. These statewide associations could be a form of “shadow government” that would set statewide policy, or at least sketch out possible policy and program directions the state might take. These associations could even be used to figure out some of the process and governance issues at statewide or regionwide meetings, and associations could conceivably meet with each other and hammer out a more holistic vision that cuts across different areas of criminal justice. All participants reported attending inter-county strategic meetings, but there was little discussion of how much time is spent at these meetings planning/strategizing and how much time is spent exchanging information. It is unclear how adequate these standing meetings might be for addressing systemic problems, but it is an avenue worth exploring.

*“Rather than attempt to build a network and compel various agencies to join, or mandate what information sharing must look like, the state could simply establish the baseline rules and regulations for information sharing”*

# THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

**THE STATE CAN SET THE RULES.** It was in the course of addressing another theme — the *legal* framework in which information-sharing occurs — that a consensus developed on another highly constructive role the state could play. Rather than attempt to build a network and compel various agencies to join, or mandate what information sharing must look like, the state could simply establish the baseline rules and regulations for information sharing: a set of default rules/best practices and expectations that allow people to share without uncertainty about liability or unforeseen hazards. Localities would still have to tailor criminal justice information sharing to their needs, but this task would be about needs and resources, not avoiding pitfalls. In this regard, the state can also play a kind of educational role by keeping the local agencies fully informed about the precise state and federal legal constraints that must be considered.

**PRIVACY/LIABILITY CONCERNS INHIBIT COLLABORATION.** These ideas emerged when participants focused on the stubborn set of legal concerns about *privacy* and *liability*. These areas have produced a legal morass, and although the state may not be the cause of the problem, it could play a terrific role in solving it. A myriad of privacy laws potentially covers the exchange of information. HIPAA covers medical information, including mental health. State laws prevent the unauthorized disclosure of criminal justice information. Litigation records with multiple defendants require redaction. Individuals are reluctant to share information in a climate of uncertainty: if I give information to you, I won't necessarily see the benefit, but I'll definitely be the one whose head is on the line if something goes wrong. (Texas has taken a somewhat novel approach to this problem, making it a felony not to share information upon request.)

**MOVING TOWARDS COMMON CRIMINAL JUSTICE GOALS?** The state might also want to set general policies about both information sharing and criminal justice in general. Participants reported that other agencies were sometimes reluctant to share information with them because they didn't feel this information would be used in a manner consistent with their organizational mission. One example of this is immigration requests for information from probation. Probation officers only have current information from those who have complied with the terms of their probation — that is, from their “best” probationers. Giving this information to immigration seems to penalize immigrants for

## THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK CONTINUED

compliance and to reward non-complying immigrants. At the same time, deporting an individual probationer, who often leaves behind a family, contributes to the destabilization of local communities. So, in some sense, it's never about data, but about how that data is used, and having some sense of state-wide criminal justice priorities — how we model criminality, where we prioritize funding and resources — is crucial. Otherwise, individual decisions drive the system without any coordination or sense of the big picture.

**THE INFORMATION SHARING PRIMER.** One suggestion about the state's role in clarifying the legal framework was that all local agencies could benefit from a professionally-vetted legal “primer” that gives uniform information to all agencies about the actual unquestionable rules that emerge from state and federal legislation. Participants encouraged the SCJC itself to play a role here, suggesting that a neutral academic institution could help create the content of such a “primer.”

## INFORMATION SHARING CHALLENGES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Two examples of the difficulties associated with information-sharing in the legal system include the discovery of exculpatory information and the extent of discoverable information.

**1** Under the due process doctrine *Brady v. Maryland* (1963), District Attorneys are required to turn over potentially exculpatory information to defense counsel. But if police reports are on paper, DA's might not have enough turnaround time to digitize the information along and send it electronically. If the DA's workflow is electronic and there are parts of the investigation that aren't electronic, DA's might not be able to share information in time for trial.

**2** Today, paper information inhabits a kind of practical obscurity — there are no regulatory or legal barriers to its discovery, but it's so dispersed and difficult to obtain that, for all intents and purposes, no one ever has access to it. As electronic information exchange gets faster and more widespread, we might need to figure out whether certain kinds of information are discoverable. For example, if there is information in a police report that didn't result in an arrest or other disposition — say a report of a bar fight where no action was ultimately taken — is that discoverable?

# CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD

**IT INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES.** Several practical, organizational, and legal challenges could potentially impede progress towards integrated criminal justice data and operations. On the practical level, the first problem is that many local and state agencies have locked-in contracts with a particular vendor, which makes IT coordination more difficult. The state has recently sought to coordinate the procurement of information services, both as a means of coordinating these services and to use pooled buying power to reduce costs, but even if this program is successful, many contracts will take a while to expire. Second, many localities lack the capacity to receive and/or process information electronically.

**WHO OWNS THE DATA AFTER IT IS SHARED?** Organizationally, the primary challenge is the issue of who “owns” the data and who is responsible for it. That is, if we’re going to track the information through the system, how do we handle the maintenance of databases across the many agencies who have sequential (or, sometimes, concurrent) jurisdiction over an offender? What happens to this data when an offender leaves the system? Two options are to have the data called up from individual computers as needed or to have a centralized database. Under the former model, which is more of a peer-to-peer network model, searches for offenders would turn up whatever information an individual agency has. This would build in redundancy to the system, but it would also mean that individual agencies would have to be able to handle potentially heavy demand from outside requests. On the other hand, a centralized model might engender the same mistrust and sclerosis as the state’s current siloed databases.

**THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF MEASUREMENT.** As we necessarily talk about measuring outcomes, it’s important to note that there are policy and definitional questions involved that run quite deep. When we talk about outcomes, how do we define those outcomes? For example, when we measure recidivism, are we measuring return to prison within the term

*“These definitions have profound policy implications – they are more than just data labels.”*

## CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD CONTINUED

of parole for a new offense, are we measuring desistance from any criminal activity, or are we measuring something in between? Definitions tie in to goals. It's not the case that everyone agrees what recidivism is and different computers code it differently — various criminal justice data standards already seek to resolve this problem. Definitions have profound policy implications — they are more than just data labels. One other question is how wide to cast the net of measurement, in both geographic and temporal terms. As data sets get more comprehensive, agencies might find that some of their “wins” were due to the system losing track of offenders. They moved to another county, or they absconded from parole. In the short-term, then, more data might give us a more pessimistic picture of the efficacy of current programs. Agencies must prepare for these kinds of findings to emerge.

## CONCLUSION

Local and regional information sharing is already underway. The June Executive Sessions meeting addressed the scope and trajectory of information sharing at a non-state level, and also illuminated potential opportunities for the state to exercise leadership, as well as potential pitfalls the state should avoid. Local and regional agencies are moving to integrate data and operations at both an inter-county and intra-county/municipal level. They are building out their networks via a variety of legal mechanisms, whether memoranda of understanding, contracts with private providers, or, in the case of Orange County, establishing a Joint Powers Authority. The state can facilitate these efforts by clarifying the privacy and liability concerns about the sharing of information. The state should tread very lightly, however, when it comes to its role. Participants in the Executive Session were leery of state control of information sharing.

We may be entering a new era in information sharing, where individual departments join individual networks. The parts of the criminal justice system that are ready to be networked are going to be networked. In some ways, the organic nature of this growth can look like chaos. But out of this organic growth, structure is emerging. The “city-states” which share common data are getting larger. As these pieces grow, these “local” efforts tend to have increasing momentum and reach. Having a well-developed system of information capture, management, and sharing allows different actors to follow up in different ways. And, crucially, it allows policymakers and managers to see how the system fits together as a whole.