

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

MAKING IMPACTFUL, SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN D.C.



DECEMBER 2023

New Second Chance Hiring Alliance Promotes Employment for D.C.'s Justice-Impacted Residents

To address the unique employment challenges faced by people with criminal records, CCE launched the Second Chance Hiring Alliance (SCHA), a coalition of D.C.-area employers, organizations, and service providers. The SCHA aims to develop and expand local second chance hiring efforts by building relationships between employers and job readiness programs while centering the experiences and perspectives of individuals with criminal records.



Since its launch in April, the SCHA has raised awareness for second chance hiring by offering free webinars to local businesses that share best practices for hiring formerly incarcerated citizens and promote the value of building inclusive, equitable workplaces. To learn more about the SCHA and get involved, visit: <http://www.scha-dc.org>

Youth Justice in Action: Empowered Youth Spaces and School Jury Education Program

CCE launched an exciting new youth-focused initiative and expanded educational programming for D.C. students in 2023. Our newest program, Empowered Youth Spaces (EYS), offers a series of facilitated discussions between small groups of District teenagers and CCE volunteers. EYS is designed to give our young people a platform to voice their opinions about justice and safety and provide feedback on how D.C. organizations and leadership can better advocate for and support children. Each EYS youth participant received helpful community resources and a stipend as recognition for their valuable time and contribution. CCE staff has begun sharing the youth's priorities with government leaders and will utilize them in 2024 project planning. Additional EYS sessions will continue in 2024.



The School Jury Education Program (SJEP), which is in its third decade of service, engages District students to learn about the jury system through a professionally-guided, interactive mock trial session, deliberating and discussing the legal process. In May, CCE held a special reception and speed-mentoring event at Proskauer Rose LLP for this year's participating high school students and volunteers. SJEP students interested in pursuing legal careers connected with local judges and attorneys committed to supporting the next generation of advocates. Because the students who participated were energized by the chance to engage with mentors from the legal community, CCE plans to make the networking reception an annual part of the programming going forward.

IMPACT STATS

SCHA in 2023

- 21** active Alliance participants
- Outreach to more than **150** employers since launch
- 4** information sessions held
- 3** networking events held

2023 Youth Justice

- 9** events hosted (**2** EYS sessions, **6** SJEP sessions, **1** SJEP networking event)
- 187** children served

Advocacy in 2023

- Testified before D.C. Council **18** times.

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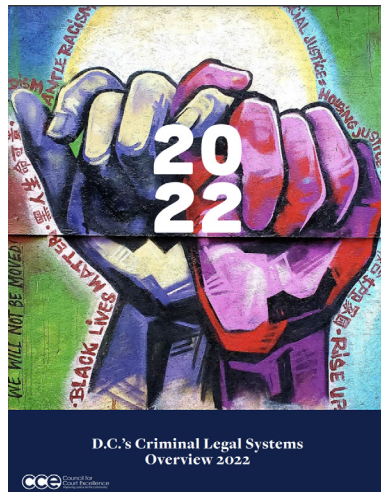
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CCE Spearheads Successful Campaign to Pass Jail Oversight Law

Thanks to the tireless advocacy of a small coalition organized by CCE, the *Corrections Oversight Improvement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2022* became law in April 2023. This important legislation strengthened transparency and improved the capacity for oversight at D.C. Department of Corrections facilities. Because of our advocacy, inspectors are now able to video and audio record all areas of the facility that are accessible to incarcerated people, the number of annual inspections of the D.C. Jail facilities increased, and the Department is required to give notice of any staff or resident deaths within 24 hours. Helping to pass this bill marks a significant win demonstrating CCE's commitment to driving urgently needed equity-focused justice reforms.

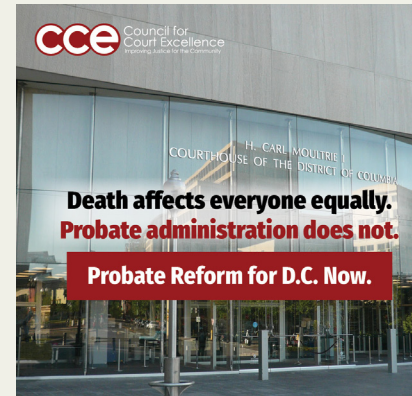
CCE's 2023 Publications: Task Force "Report Card" and D.C.'s Criminal Legal Systems Overview

CCE released two reports in 2023 that offered important updates about the state of D.C.'s adult and youth justice systems. The first, *Jails & Justice: Tracking Change*, is a "report card" that tracks the implementation status of the 77 recommendations made by the District Task Force on Jails & Justice, which CCE founded in 2019. These findings come at a critical time, as D.C. policymakers are seeking innovative ways to address ongoing community safety concerns. This report card informs D.C. leaders of many possible policy opportunities that can simultaneously address public safety and enhance equity in the legal system.



Additionally, CCE published *D.C.'s Criminal Legal Systems Overview 2022* in July. These annualized reports cover all facets of the District's adult and youth criminal legal systems, including violence and policing; adult prosecution and the courts; incarceration; reentry; and youth justice. The report provides easy-to-read updates on major news and developments and offers a data-forward look into the District's significant challenges and innovations.

D.C. Council Introduced Probate Legislation Based on CCE Findings



In October, Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen, along with nine cosponsors, introduced the Strengthening Probate Administration Amendment Act of 2023 at the D.C. Council. The proposed legislation is based on CCE and the D.C. Access to Justice Commission's 2022 report, *Strengthening Probate Administration in the District of Columbia*.

Simplifying and modernizing probate will help everyone, but based on the findings in our report, Councilmember Allen's bill will especially benefit lower-income District residents who have less access to the resources and legal support demanded by estate administration. CCE's research showing the significant financial and administrative burdens to D.C. families going through probate was instrumental to the development of legislation that would bring D.C. in line with best practices around probate.

Why Probate? Why Now?

- Self-represented individuals make up **97%** of small estate cases
- Last major probate legislation dates back to **2001**
- Un-probated estates exacerbate DC's affordable housing crisis