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Probation Association of New Jersey

Serving New Jersey Since 1904

An affiliate of the American Probation and Parole Association

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The New Jersey State Probation System Facts and Background Information

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Approximately 130,000 adults and 20,000 juveniles are under probation supervision in New Jersey. The Bureau of Justice reports there are more than 4 million people under probation supervision in the United States today.

Despite a drop in the overall crime rate, the number of dangerous and repeat offenders serving probation sentences has continued to rise in New Jersey.

At an average of 114 probationers per officer, New Jersey's probation officers have an extremely high caseload. Probation officers must have smaller caseloads.

The national Bureau of Justice Statistics finds that approximately 11 percent of probationers abscond. The rate in New Jersey is higher, however, at 25 percent equating 30,000 probationers who are absconders.

The number of probationers who have violated the conditions of probation and have a warrant issued exceeds 25,000 in New Jersey.

According to the American Probation and Parole Association, it costs approximately \$1,250 per year to keep a person under probation supervision as opposed to \$30,000 per year to incarcerate.

Probation officers are peace officers in approximately 40 states, and are permitted in 31 states to carry a firearm.

The people under the supervision of probation are generally the same as those under the care of parole officers, yet parole officers are permitted to carry a firearm in New Jersey.

New Jersey-based federal probation officers are permitted to carry a firearm as a reflection of federal judges deciding that it is dangerous for these officers to perform their duties in the field.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics approximately 13 percent of all adult probationers are rearrested each year while 49 percent will eventually re-offend.

More than 40 percent of all felony probationers are rearrested for new felonies within three years after being placed under supervision.

Half of all probationers violate the terms of their sentence, but only one fifth go to jail as a result.

Bench warrants for adult probationers and juvenile probationers are kept active for only 60 days. After that, they are placed in an unsupervised category. However, warrants are usually disposed of after the probationer is arrested for a new offense.

The Judiciary currently does not permit probation officers to enforce these warrants. Moreover, probationers who are picked up outside of New Jersey are almost never returned to the state.

Hundreds of probationers have been arrested in New Jersey for new offenses during the past several years. As such, PANJ has compiled data on 102 adult and juvenile cases to underscore the severity of the crimes committed by the individuals:

▪ NUMBER WITH WARRANTS		34
▪ MURDER	36	
▪ MURDER OF POLICE OFFICER		3
▪ ATTEMPTED MURDER		5
▪ ATTEMPTED MURDER OF POLICE OFFICER		3
▪ AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	12	
▪ AGGRAVATED ASSAULT ON A POLICE OFFICER		3
▪ AGGRAVATED ASSAULT ON A PROBATION OFFICER		2
▪ CAUSING THE DEATH OF A CHILD	1	
▪ SEXUAL ASSAULT/ RAPE	13	
▪ SEX OFFENDER FAILED TO REGISTER		3
▪ ARSON		1
▪ KIDNAPPING		5
▪ ROBBERY	8	
▪ WEAPONS OFFENSES		2
▪ POSSESSION OF A GUN		4
▪ ENDANGERING THE WELFARE OF A CHILD		1
▪ BURGLARY		1
▪ DISTRIBUTION OF CDS		1
▪ POSSESSION OF CDS		6

CONCLUSION:

Probation officers are responsible for supervising criminal offenders in the community who are often dangerous. Like parole officer, federal probation officers, and local police officers, probation officers need to be properly trained and armed in order to protect themselves and our communities. If the Judiciary cannot provide adequate training and protection, then the New Jersey Legislature needs to transfer probation services to a branch of government that will do so.