



Innovations in Criminal Justice Summit
September 28-30, 2011
Chicago, IL

Intelligence Led Policing through Community Policing, Community Prosecution, and Community Partnerships (IL3CP) (Rockland County, NY)

Program Start Date: 2008

Website: <http://rocklandcountydada.com/community-prosecution.html>

Information: The Rockland County District Attorney, Thomas P. Zugibe, started his administration in January 2008 with the belief that a statistical analysis of crime was insufficient and did not present a clear picture of the true needs of the county. DA Zugibe believes that at varying times when statistically crime can be “down” or crime can be “up,” statistical analysis can lead to different conclusions. Research varies on why and what affects crime. Little focus is given to what affects people’s lives and why. In the 21st Century two things must be considered 1) that crime is not down, it is different and 2) that new methods are needed to address new issues.

This belief has led to the development of a new philosophy founded on a comprehensive integration of prosecution, law enforcement and community partnerships. In Rockland County, Community Prosecution is not a program, it is the guiding philosophy. District Attorney Zugibe initiated the implementation of this new philosophy in 2008 and it continues to evolve today.

In contrast to other community prosecution initiatives, IL3CP is not simply the introduction of a new program. Instead, it represents a complete paradigm shift involving every employee of the office including support staff and detectives. The entire staff of the Rockland County District Attorney’s Office (RCDAO) has been fully indoctrinated in the community prosecution philosophy. While a few of the planned deliverables described herein may require additional funding in the future, the initial implementation of community prosecution, as well as its basic structure, did not require additional staff or funding. Every attorney, including the District Attorney, has integrated this approach into every aspect of his or her duties.

The foundation for Community Prosecution is built on an established organizational structure within the RCDAO that focuses on integrating Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) with law enforcement and community residents. ADAs are assigned to specific Towns and/or Villages and work primarily out of the local police agency(s) in addition to working at the Main Office and the courtroom. These ADAs also attend local community meetings, whether formal or informal, to develop relationships with residents to help identify local concerns. These ADAs are responsible for following all cases from their assigned jurisdictions through vertical prosecution. Working directly with community groups and individuals is a primary responsibility for the ADAs assigned to the local jurisdictions. These ADAs, along with Criminal Investigators, attend local meetings that include Collaboratives, business associations, civic associations, neighborhood watch groups, co-op/condo boards, school districts, religious communities, and other community groups. Through these formal and informal interactions, relationships are built and the perceived safety of the community is raised. Each ADA spends significantly more time in the community gaining knowledge by attending meetings, speaking with residents, local groups and agencies to identify areas of concern and problem-solving these issues.

It is through this close working relationship with the police and the community that ADA’s gain valuable knowledge. They, in conjunction with law enforcement and the community, analyze problems and formulate solutions that will make the community safer. In addition to vigorous prosecutions, solutions to specific issues often take more non-traditional responses, i.e. mediation or civil action, as opposed to solely focusing on prosecution.