MAC
MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

2026-27 JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLATFORM

This committee shall review all pending criminal justice, judiciary and public safety policy that may impact county governments. This committee is responsible for assessing the impact and adequacy of state appropriations related to local criminal justice systems.

COURTS

MAC supports:

- The creation or expansion of sustainable court-funding mechanisms.
- Courts assessing reasonable costs on criminal defendants in accordance with PA 352 of 2014.
- Court reforms that seek administrative and operational efficiencies, including, but are not limited to, controlling personnel costs, streamlining records management procedures, maximizing data collection efforts across the criminal justice system including an updated case management and tracking system for prosecutors.
- The role of county clerks in the circuit court system, as they have a constitutional stake in the trial court funding reform and should be consulted as the state considers critical funding reforms for the court system.
- The establishment and expansion of funding for specialty courts.
- The recognition of prosecutorial discretion within specialty court programs and the ability to use state funds to support these efforts.
- The creation of a funding source to compensate prosecutors for their participation in Specialty Courts.
- Statutory language that prohibits judges from bringing an action against a county without prior approval by the Michigan Supreme Court regarding claims of inadequate funding from a county board of commissioners.
- Implementation of indigent defense standards only if the state provides full funding, not including dollars remitted from local funds for changes, now and into the future.
- Appropriate use of non-financial pretrial release options, such as citation release and release on recognizance on a case-by-case basis, where there is a reasonable expectation that public safety will not be threatened.
- Expansion of pre-trial risk assessment tools that create accuracy in the criminal justice system while maintaining safe communities.
- Continued partnership with the state, the Michigan Supreme Court and law enforcement partners to support smart criminal justice reform and lessening burdens on county jails while maintaining public safety.

CORRECTIONS

MAC supports:

- County discretion to utilize private detention facilities.
- Statutory and budgetary changes to reduce the cost of health care and mental health services in county detention facilities.
- Changes to allow health care providers to bill at the Medicaid-established rate for all inmates who do not possess private health care insurance and receive medical care outside of the county jail.
- The continuation of Truth-in-Sentencing policies.
- The funding of and new investment in community corrections programs.
- The continuation of the County Jail Reimbursement Program that does not include any financial penalties due to county policy/ordinance/rule, especially those policies/ordinances/rules that county boards do not have sole authority over.
- Mandatory impact analyses of all state juvenile and adult criminal justice policy proposals, including estimates of fiscal impacts on state and local budgets.
- The continuation of at least the 75% County Child Care Fund reimbursement rate for community-based juvenile justice services, as well as an additional increase to the 50% reimbursement rate for all non-community based services State investment and funding to ensure adequate housing for juveniles under the care and supervision of the county/court, and increased state funding for juvenile detention centers to improve staff recruitment and retention.
- A policy emphasizing the implementation of the following before initiatives to house state prison inmates in county jails are contemplated:
    - Primary prevention
    - Juvenile education
    - Drug education and effective law enforcement
    - Expanded substance abuse treatment programs
    - Adequate funding of youth assistance prevention programs
    - Expanded Mental Health Treatment alternatives to incarceration
    - Use of the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Program (MPRI) to reduce probation and parole failure rates

MAC opposes:

- Any state-led efforts to alleviate prison crowding by shifting responsibilities to counties unless full funding for all related costs is appropriated and sufficient time is allocated for all diversion programs.
- Any effort to remove the constitutional right of crime victims to be treated fairly and with dignity in the truthful sentencing of defendants.
- The addition of new subjects to collective bargaining for county employees.
- Medicaid suspension upon incarceration for individuals.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

MAC supports:

- Funding of Marine Patrol, ORV, & Snowmobile Patrol.
- Legislation that holds county governments and law enforcement harmless from liability accrued in pursuit situations and emergency responses.
- State investment to help counties reduce the number of adults with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders in jails.
- Increased state funding to create financial parity between Prosecutors and Public Defenders Offices.
- Increased state funding of prosecutor's offices, comparable to the annual state appropriation dedicated to the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission.
- Continuation of the Public Safety Trust Fund, with funds appropriated to counties and not restricted to solely to MCOLES certified agencies to allow for law enforcement/public safety funding as a county sees fit.

EMERGENCY 911 FUNDING AND OPERATION

MAC supports:

- Extension of the statutory sunset under the 911 Service Enabling Act.
- Keeping 911 operations and funding at the local level.
- The concept of voluntary consolidation of local 911 centers, either physically or virtually, when efficiencies can be gained and public safety is not diminished. The state should grant opportunities for this purpose.
- Adequate state funding for Next Generation (NG) 911 or 911 services and the continued ability for county governments to ensure all telecommunication devices share in the responsibility of funding the retention of the 911 surcharge.
- Local and/or state funding source for counties, especially in high tourist areas to help support 911, public safety and the public cost of tourism.
- Legislation to increase the surcharge on telecommunication devices to help support 911.
- Rules to require entities with multi-line telephone systems, such as schools and businesses, to have the location of the phone register at 911.
- Legislation that requires telecommunication providers to report funding collected from 911 surcharges levied on all telecommunication devices annually, including the location where those charges originate
- Policy changes to better reflect the location of telecommunication devices, not just where they originate, so that it better reflects where 911 services are being used.
- Legislation that enables counties to audit 911 surcharge collections by telecommunications providers that mirrors the current ability to audit lodging tax collections by hotels and motels.

MAC opposes:

- The mandated consolidation of 911 dispatch.
- State intervention in the lowering of surcharge costs.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER (shared with Health and Human Services)

MAC supports:

- Legislative and regulatory changes that advance research and provide technical assistance for data collection and analysis that chart a pathway for enhancing statewide training and standards for county offices of the medical examiner.
- Medical examiner accreditation(s) or certification of non-forensic pathologists and medicolegal death investigators to enhance the proficiency of medicolegal death investigations.
- Reimbursement from the state for costs associated with unclaimed bodies.

MAC opposes:

- Mandated regionalization of medical examiner services and/or offices.
- Statutory caps on fees or costs associated with medical examiner services.