

Improving Policing and the Criminal Justice System

These DC-based organizations were featured in the August 25 James Forman, Jr. webinar.

1. COUNCIL FOR COURT EXCELLENCE

Founded in 1982, the Council for Court Excellence (CCE) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic organization that envisions a justice system in the District of Columbia that equitably serves its people and continues to be a model for creating stronger and more prosperous communities. CCE identifies and proposes solutions by collaborating with diverse stakeholders to conduct research, advance policy, educate the public, and increase civic engagement. CCE engages volunteers in several ways on its projects and it also invites active volunteers to get involved in governance of the organization.



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2. JUSTICE POLICY INSTITUTE

Justice Policy Institute is a national nonprofit organization that changes the conversation around justice reform and advances policies that promote well-being and justice for all people and communities. Their research and analyses identify effective programs and policies which they share with the media, policymakers and advocates. They need volunteers to help with local advocacy efforts in the District of Columbia. To find more information or get involved click “Find Out More” below. JPI is also co-hosting a webinar on Sept 2 with the DC Attorney General's office focused on criminal justice issues in DC. To register for this webinar go to registration@justicepolicy.org



[FIND OUT MORE](#)

3. THE SENTENCING PROJECT

For 34 years the Sentencing Project has worked for a fair and effective U.S. criminal justice system by producing groundbreaking research to promote reforms in sentencing policy, address unjust racial disparities and practices, and to advocate for alternatives to incarceration. Their website has lots of information about mass incarceration and what needs to be done to address it. They recommend several ways to help and also have links to local organizations they work with around the country.



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4. EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW

Equal Justice Under Law is a nonprofit law organization that uses class action impact litigation to set legal precedent and change cultural norms so that our justice system treats rich and poor equally. Since their founding in 2014, they have developed special expertise to fight the use of pretrial bail, wealth-based driver's license suspension, debtor's prisons, and other areas of wealth-based inequality in our justice system. They need donors to support their work and also use volunteers on some of their projects.



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5. DC JUSTICE LAB

DC Justice Lab is a new project that aims to transform the criminal legal system in the District of Columbia. They promote decarceration, compassion, and providing people with the tools and resources they need to thrive. They are community organizers and public policy analysts who work with and transfer power to DC residents most impacted by criminal laws. Volunteers help with every aspect of the work including research, drafting materials and helping to educate the public about key issues. To learn more, click "Find Out More" below or send an email to patrice@dcjusticelab.org.



FIND OUT MORE

6. WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Washington Lawyers Committee has been on the front line of civil rights work for more than 50 years. Since the criminal justice system is a prime driver of inequality, they are involved in litigation, advocacy and direct services to reduce the impact of our discriminatory system. They are also the local Washington, DC, affiliate of The Sentencing Project. There are many ways to be involved and support their work and you can fill out a volunteer form on their website (click "find out more" below). One current need they have is to find pro-bono lawyers who can help incarcerated individuals currently seeking compassionate release. If you are a lawyer who can help, please contact their executive director Jonathan Smith at jonathan.smith@washlaw.org



FIND OUT MORE

7. RETHINK JUSTICE COALITION

The ReThink Justice DC Coalition is comprised of individuals committed to reshaping the criminal justice system in the District of Columbia. ReThink Justice is a participant-driven organization, meaning that individual participants engage, or not, based on their level of interest. There are monthly meetings where all interested people are welcome. Use the "Contact Us" form on their website to get on the mailing list and/ or volunteer to get involved.



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