

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2026-04
ESTABLISHING A SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT WORKING GROUP
ON CRIMINAL PRETRIAL SERVICES

Section 16-1-106(1), C.R.S., provides the Chief Judge of each judicial district the discretion to adopt pretrial services programs which may “advise the court if [a criminal defendant] is bond eligible, may provide information that enables the court to make an appropriate decision on bond and conditions of release, and may recommend conditions of release....”

The Seventh Judicial District has formerly adopted and employed a variety of adult criminal pretrial services.¹ Unfortunately, none of these initiatives has resulted in a sustainable program for the District.

For example, Administrative Order 21-07 authorized a third-party to screen criminal defendants in Montrose and Gunnison County jails using an empirically developed risk assessment tool to assist the Court in making decisions on bond and conditions of release. That screening is not currently occurring.

Administrative Order 21-08 adopted a comprehensive pretrial services program for Delta County. That program is suspended because its source of funding expired.

Administrative Order 25-03 adopted a comprehensive pretrial services program for Montrose County. The program was unable to secure funding.

The Court has periodically convened county and District-wide community advisory boards pursuant to 16-4-106(3). Board members have made dedicated efforts, but have also expressed frustration with statutory ambiguity, philosophical disagreement, and other challenges.

Recent proposals by third-parties to provide pretrial services reflect those difficulties. For example, Delta County has developed and proposes that the Court adopt Delta County’s own successor to the program formerly established by Administrative Order 21-08. Stakeholders in the criminal justice community report disagreement with the County’s proposal. Delta County asserts that its program is nevertheless available for use if the Court deems it “qualified” pursuant to §16-4-105(8), C.R.S.

¹ Adult criminal pretrial services are distinguished from pretrial bond conditions required by §16-4-105(6)(a), C.R.S., for example, or from juvenile services required by §19-2.5-305, C.R.S., also for example. The adult criminal pretrial services contemplated by this order include those addressed at §16-4-106, C.R.S., and similar services.

Concurrently, a separate third-party referred to as The Pathways Project has created a competing pretrial services project that has also stoked objections from important stakeholders. It also crafted a program and received funding before any community advisory board, where they even exist and meet, met to consider community-appropriate program provisions.

The difficult history of pretrial services in the Seventh Judicial District implies that fundamental issues must be resolved before further consideration or adoption of specific adult criminal pretrial services. The recent development of competing proposals further reflects basic disparities in philosophy, intended outcomes, and service priorities.

Among these issues are the scope of services offered, the balance between district-wide standards and individual community values and service availability, the selection and oversight of third-parties who may provide pretrial services, and the funding of pretrial services.

Order

This Administrative Order therefore establishes a Seventh Judicial District Criminal Pretrial Services Working Group.

The Working Group shall make recommendations to the Chief Judge concerning appropriate principals, goals, standards, structure, and other concepts concerning adult criminal pretrial services for the Seventh Judicial District. The Working Group's recommendations shall serve to encourage fair, transparent, effective, legal, and sustainable pretrial services programs that serve with the trust of the communities of the District.

The Court may appoint individuals to the Working Group by separate supplement to this Administrative Order.

The Court may require the Working Group to provide specific recommendations provided in a separate supplement to this Administrative Order.

The Working Group shall convene as it deems necessary to fulfill these responsibilities.

This Administrative Order will expire upon return of the Working Group's final recommendations to the Chief Judge.

Dated and Effective this 27th day of July, 2026.

BY THE COURT:



D. Cory Jackson
Chief Judge