RESEARCH REPORT

Applying Procedural Justice in Community Supervision

Assessment of Pilot Testing in the Georgia Department of Community Supervision

Jesse Jannetta
URBAN INSTITUTE

Travis Reginal
URBAN INSTITUTE

Daniel S. Lawrence
URBAN INSTITUTE

Caitlin Flood
CENTER FOR
COURT INNOVATION

Emily Gold LaGratta
LAGRATTA CONSULTING

with

Megan Foster
AMERICAN PROBATION
AND PAROLE ASSOCIATION

Nathan Lowe
AMERICAN PROBATION
AND PAROLE ASSOCIATION

Travis Johnson
AMERICAN PROBATION
AND PAROLE ASSOCIATION

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Executive Summary

Procedural justice, a framework for authority figures to treat people with fairness and respect, can improve probation supervision and core supervision outcomes. With support from Arnold Ventures, the Urban Institute, the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), the Center for Court Innovation (CCI), and LaGratta Consulting partnered on an effort to develop and pilot a new procedural justice training curriculum—the Evaluation of Procedural Justice in Probation—outlining new tools and practices for probation officers. Analyses of interactions between supervising officers and people under supervision, survey responses regarding perceptions of supervision, and analyses of administrative data provided mixed findings, with some preliminary indications that participating in the procedural justice training may make probation officers' treatment of people under supervision fairer and more respectful and improve supervision outcomes. However, the conclusions that can be drawn from even those results supportive of intervention impact are subject to significant limitations, given the nonexperimental nature of the design and the small number of observations in some of the data collected.

Developing and Piloting the Intervention

There is still much to learn about how operationalizing procedural justice in different contexts can change authorities' behavior, how much those changes improve perceptions of the legitimacy of how authority is exercised, and how much changes in perceptions improve outcomes. The community supervision field has become more aware in recent years of the procedural justice framework (box 1), but it has not widely operationalized it. Representatives from 74 supervision agencies responded to an APPA survey on the subject fielded as part of this project, and approximately 71 percent of those who answered the question (n=55) indicated they were either somewhat or very familiar with the concept of procedural justice. However, only 24 percent of those respondents indicated that their agency had operationalized procedural justice.

The overarching goals of the Evaluation of Procedural Justice in Probation project are (1) to design, deliver, and reinforce a curriculum to improve supervision practice by incorporating procedural justice, and (2) to determine whether such an intervention would increase procedurally just treatment by

supervision officers, thereby improving supervision outcomes. The curriculum would incorporate practices related to the five components of procedural justice (box 1). The project's pilot phase (described in this report) included development of the curriculum and preliminary assessment of whether it changed supervising officer behavior and supervision outcomes.

BOX 1

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is focused on how people experience authority, which often determines people's satisfaction with and acceptance of encounters with authorities more than the outcomes of such interactions (e.g., arrest, citation, outcome of a court case). Over nearly three decades, research has consistently shown that when authorities act in a procedurally just manner, people view the law and its enforcers as more legitimate and are more likely to comply and cooperate voluntarily (Tyler 1990; Tyler, Goff, and MacCoun 2015). Procedural justice is often articulated by the following five components:

- Voice: providing people with an opportunity to tell their side of the story

- Respect: treating people with dignity and respect

- Understanding: ensuring people understand the decisions being made and the rules and conditions they are bound by

- Neutral decisionmaking: communicating consistent, transparent, and trustworthy reasons for decisions, and the basis for variation or exceptions where they occur

- Helpfulness: assisting people with their individualized needs and goals

The pilot was developed in partnership with the Georgia Department of Community Supervision (DCS) and unfolded in several stages. It began with a six-month leadership engagement effort to understand baseline practices, priorities, and challenges associated with typical interactions between community supervision officers and people under supervision ("supervisees"), including the application of core correctional practices, and to begin to seek feedback on proposed recommended practices. Staff and consultants from CCI developed and led the pilot training in five DCS circuits via a one-day, in-person session with 41 DCS supervision officers (who had mixed parole and probation caseloads) and two supervisors. The training outlined numerous recommended practices to be prioritized during the pilot (summarized in a handout and pocket-sized reference cards), as well as new tools for officers to convey respect for supervisees' rights and invite feedback from supervisees directly (and anonymously)

about their supervision experiences. A month after the pilot training, faculty from CCI facilitated an in-person booster training session, through which they also elicited final feedback from the officers and mid-level management about pilot intervention practices.

Assessment of Pilot Results

The research team observed limited changes in how supervision officers interacted with supervisees. The team assessed interactions between supervision officers in the training cohort and people they supervised in a sample of 102 body camera videos, 54 of which were pretraining (24 supervisees supervised by 15 officers) and 48 of which were posttraining (19 supervisees supervised by 12 officers). Differences in procedural justice component scale scores between the pretraining and posttraining interactions were statistically significant for only one of the five procedural justice components (understanding). Although the increase in the respect scale values from the pre- to posttraining observations was not significant, we observed greater application of two practices in the posttraining interactions: engaging and unscripted officer tone of voice, and use of a respectful manner of address toward the supervisee. Similarly, the small increase in the voice scale was not statistically significant, and the only item that significantly increased between pre- and posttraining observations was that officers were more likely to invite supervisees to ask questions. There were no statistically significant differences between the pre- and posttraining ratings for the helpfulness or neutral decisionmaking scales as a whole, nor for any individual items in either scale.

People supervised by the officers participating in the training reported no substantial changes in their treatment, although there was some evidence of increased satisfaction with supervision in general. We surveyed people supervised by the officers participating in the training to examine whether their perceptions of treatment changed, obtaining 113 responses to the pretraining survey and 97 to the posttraining survey (52 people responded to both). There were no significant changes in the mean values associated with the procedural justice scales. The only item for which we observed significant mean change for both the independent and paired samples was a voice-scale item on whether the community supervision officer (CSO) clearly explained the reasons for their actions ($p < 0.10$ for both samples). In addition, there was a significant mean increase among the independent samples in supervisee satisfaction with their community supervision agency ($p < 0.10$), as well as an increase in agreement among the paired sample with the statement that all laws should be strictly obeyed ($p < 0.01$).

Outcomes for supervisees whose officers participated in the training improved compared with people whose officers in the same offices did not participate. We obtained administrative data from DCS on supervisee characteristics and various supervision outcomes related to compliance with conditions for the six months before and six months after the procedural justice training, for people supervised by the officers in the five pilot circuits who did and did not participate in the training. We conducted difference in differences (DID) analyses at the supervisee and officer levels. The supervisee-level analyses found that supervisees from the training group had significantly fewer arrests, warrants, delinquent reports, and convictions than supervisees from the control group. However, analyses comparing mean outcomes at the level of officer caseload found no significant difference from the pretraining to posttraining period, compared with the control group. There were no significant differences in revocations from the pretraining to posttraining period in either analysis, compared with the control group.

Key Takeaways

The Evaluation of Procedural Justice in Probation project began with a pilot phase to allow for the development, implementation, and refinement of the intervention, as well as preliminary quantitative testing for indications of promise that would support a more rigorous test of the intervention. Key takeaways from the pilot testing include the following:

- The effort secured and maintained support from DCS leadership, who felt that procedural justice was an important and valuable concept to inform supervision and that it fit with and would extend the reach of their core correctional practice work.

- More specifically, the pilot allowed DCS stakeholders to identify several opportunities to adjust and reinforce simple new practices, such as using people-first language (e.g., "supervisee" in place of "offender") in official DCS communications, distributing a one-page listing of supervisee "rights" or reasonable expectations at initial interview, implementing a nine-question survey to give supervisees a chance to voice their supervision experiences and give meaningful feedback to agency leadership about core practices, and providing officers pocket-sized reference cards outlining recommended practices along different supervision touchpoints.

- The initial pilot was conceptualized as a training project where experts would deliver a relatively standardized curriculum locally and assess its impact. However, actual

implementation involved important engagement components before and after the training. Before the training, project faculty worked with DCS leadership to develop specific tools to guide integration of procedural justice with agency practices and priorities. After the training, faculty held booster and feedback sessions with officers participating in the training and their supervisors. Staff engagement was geared toward generating buy-in for the new recommended practices and seeking feedback after the fact; however, the process did little to invite staff input on new practices or needed tools before they were distributed for feedback.

- The analyses of interactions between supervising officers and supervisees, survey responses regarding perceptions of supervision, and analyses of administrative data provide some support that the procedural justice training had the intended effects. However, these results are far from conclusive, and the conclusions that can be drawn have significant limitations given the nonexperimental nature of the design and the small number of observations in some of the data collection. These limitations were inherent in the pilot phase's design, which was focused on developing the intervention, around which data were collected and data collection instruments were piloted.

- The theory of change for the intervention was that it would change officer practices, which would in turn change perceptions of supervisees, leading in turn to improvements in outcomes for people under supervision. We had by far the largest number of observations for the last component in this logical chain, and the fact that the results of the assessment for supervisee outcomes were the most consistently significant and in the direction supportive of the intervention's goals could be the result of having greater statistical power on this component of the analysis. However, it could also mean the theory of the intervention was not correctly specified, or be an artifact owing to differences in the treatment and comparison groups.

- The pilot allowed for the development of innovative new methods, such as using body camera footage to assess interactions against procedurally just practices. Future evaluation efforts can build on such methods to prioritize rigorous designs that would support causal claims about intervention effects.

Next steps for the project include incorporating lessons from the pilot into a revised intervention model and preparing for a more rigorous evaluation of the intervention. In addition, the pilot suggested possibilities for broadening the intervention beyond training. Engagement of agency leadership and direct supervisors at the local office level could be deepened to reinforce and set office-wide expectations for applying procedural justice and strategies to overcome challenges to doing so. The

procedural justice intervention could be fielded as an office-level intervention in which both the planning and implementation processes can be adopted in a coordinated way over time and supported by appropriate policies and tools. Moving from a focus on the officer level to the office-wide level would also allow for exploration of changes to the physical office environment (e.g., improving signage) to complement and reinforce the procedural justice concepts. Lastly, future efforts could realize greater impact if structured to better engage and seek input from a range of staffing levels and from people under supervision throughout planning and intervention.

Applying Procedural Justice in Community Supervision

More than 3.5 million adults are subject to probation supervision in the United States, and another 878,000 are subject to parole supervision (Kaeble and Alper 2020), meaning how probation and parole officers treat their supervisees significantly impacts many Americans. Procedural justice, a framework for treating people subject to authority with fairness and respect, has been advanced in many justice contexts to make fair and equitable treatment more common. Recognizing that procedural justice could improve probation supervision for the many people subject to it, the Urban Institute, the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), and the Center for Court Innovation (CCI), with support from Arnold Ventures, partnered to develop and pilot a new procedural justice training curriculum for probation officers.[1] The training was designed to educate supervision officers about the potential benefits of treating their supervisees in a more procedurally just manner, and to provide them with concrete strategies and tools for doing so. If realized, we hypothesized that these changes in officer behavior would make interactions between officers and supervisees more positive, and ultimately result in greater supervision compliance and success.

This project, which we call the Evaluation of Procedural Justice in Probation, has two overarching goals: (1) to design, deliver, and reinforce a curriculum to improve supervision practice by incorporating procedural justice, and (2) to determine whether such an intervention would make supervision officers' treatment of supervisees more procedurally just, thereby improving supervision outcomes. In this report, we describe the development and piloting of a procedural justice curriculum. We also present results of an assessment of the pilot, using direct observation of interactions between supervision officers and supervisees, surveys of supervisees, and administrative data.

Procedural Justice and Community Supervision

Procedural justice is focused on how people experience authority, which often determines people's satisfaction with encounters with authorities more than the outcomes of such interactions (e.g., arrest, citation, outcome of a court case). Over nearly three decades, research has consistently shown that when authorities act in a procedurally just manner, people view the law and its enforcers as more legitimate and comply and cooperate with them more (Tyler 1990; Tyler, Goff, and MacCoun 2015). Procedural justice consists of the following five components:[2]

- Voice: providing people with an opportunity to tell their side of the story

- Respect: treating people with dignity and respect

- Understanding: ensuring people understand the decisions being made and the rules and conditions they are bound by

- Neutral decisionmaking: communicating consistent, transparent, and trustworthy reasons for decisions, and the basis for variation or exceptions where they occur

- Helpfulness: assisting people with their individualized needs and goals

Research establishing the relationship between procedural justice and legitimacy has prompted many efforts to develop interventions in justice processes that produce more procedurally just treatment. In recent years, police departments across the United States have developed trainings based on the operational tenets of procedural justice (Jannetta et al. 2019). Research on procedural justice training in policing has found that trainings may have short- and long-term impacts on officer attitudes (Skogan, Van Craen, and Hennessy 2015) and help reduce use of force and complaints against officers (Wood, Tyler, and Papachristos 2020). Similarly, one of the first researched procedural justice interventions in court showed that a one-day training produced improvements in 14 of 17 judicial practices associated with procedural justice (Farley, Jensen, and Rempel 2014). Although procedural justice cannot fix the deep and racialized inequities in the US justice system, it could promote foundational principles of fairness and respectful treatment in it. However, much remains to be demonstrated about how operationalizing procedural justice in different contexts can change authorities' behavior, how much those changes improve perceptions of legitimacy, and how much changes in perceptions change outcomes (Nagin and Telep 2017).

Although essentially no research has been done on procedural justice interventions in community supervision, a recent study found that perceptions of procedural justice and compliance in community corrections are correlated for a community supervision population (Blasko and Taxman 2018). High-quality "dual role relationships," firm, fair, and caring relationships that balance therapeutic and enforcement aspects of community supervision work, mitigate recidivism risk (Kennealy et al. 2012). Procedural justice may be a useful technique for achieving this role balance (Manchak , Kennealy, and Skeem 2014). Furthermore, procedural justice research and the nature of community supervision both suggest that procedural justice has enormous potential in this area. Probation and parole officers have significant discretion and ongoing contact with their supervisees, providing regular and frequent opportunities to act (or fail to act) in a procedurally just manner. Every type of contact—from routine calls or text messages, to the signage in probation offices, to initial interviews, to responses to

violations—may contribute to the overall perceived legitimacy of officers and their supervising agencies. That little research and no standardized procedural justice intervention exist for community supervision represents a major gap in knowledge and an opportunity to contribute to the field.

Although a research base for applying procedural justice in probation settings has not been developed, the community supervision field has become more aware of the framework, though it has not widely operationalized it. To ascertain the degree to which this had happened, APPA surveyed probation agencies to gauge their exposure to procedural justice. APPA staff compiled a contact sample of relevant agency members, working from a subset of its membership database, with representation from all state-level corrections agencies that administer adult probation services. The resulting sample comprised 165 agencies, 113 at the local level and 52 at the state level.[3] APPA launched the survey in spring 2019, and representatives from 74 agencies completed surveys (adjusted response rate = 45 percent).[4] Representatives were administrative or support staff who were knowledgeable about their agency's general practices and policies.

Approximately 71 percent of the respondents who answered the question (n=55) indicated they were either somewhat or very familiar with the concept of procedural justice. Another 20 percent were unsure whether they knew the concept, while 9 percent said they were not familiar at all. Respondents who indicated that they were familiar with procedural justice were asked whether they had operationalized it in their agency. Of those who answered the question (n=55), 24 percent indicated that their agency had operationalized procedural justice. This indicates that although many agencies had been exposed to the concept of procedural justice, not many had actually implemented policies or practices to enhance it.

Pilot Design and Implementation

Led by APPA, the project team conducted outreach to find a probation agency to pilot the intervention. The team sought site partners with the right combination of interest in integrating procedural justice principles into supervision, leadership commitment to engage in intervention development, previous experience implementing core correctional practices (CCPs), and data with which to support the pilot assessment. After gathering information on these points from leadership at candidate agencies, the project team selected the Georgia Department of Community Supervision (DCS; box 2).

Led by staff and consultants at CCI, initial work on the training and intervention framework began concurrently with site selection. Development drew from existing procedural justice curricula (e.g., for

courts and police), as well as from training and technical assistance that CCI and others have provided on this topic to probation departments in New York and Pennsylvania, to identify which components of those training and technical assistance engagements should be included in the curriculum. By the time the team had finalized site selection, it had developed a draft version of the curriculum around central goals and learning objectives, refined in collaboration with all project partners. In addition, CCI engaged advisors who are leaders in the probation field or had experience applying procedural justice in other justice agency contexts to elicit their feedback on content and exercises relevant to the training.[5] The advisors provided insight on trends in the field, probation touchpoints that lend themselves to supervisee interaction and application of procedural justice concepts, and common challenges officers face that practicing procedural justice could address.

The pilot unfolded in several stages. Before delivering the training to line supervision officers, CCI engaged DCS leadership to understand the agency's practices, priorities, and challenges associated with typical interactions between community supervision officers and supervisees, including the application of CCPs. In addition to frequent email and phone contact, this engagement included a half-day, in-person training and planning session with upper management (including central executive staff, district directors, and circuit chiefs) on July 30, 2019. This session included an overview of the core procedural justice concepts, recommended practices in other criminal justice settings, a description of exercises focused on practicing procedural justice skills, and a walk-through of the draft resources to be distributed. It was also intended to generate buy-in (and address pushback) for recommended practices, such as by exploring an alternative to the term "offender" for addressing people under supervision.

During a six-month planning period (which the leadership engagement visit occurred in the middle of), CCI project staff facilitated approximately eight planning calls and numerous emails with agency leadership. These calls were used to finalize the pilot intervention, understand DCS practices, and review site-specific materials including training curricula, policies and procedure manuals, and supervision forms. During the planning period, regular engagement ensured that tools and strategies for incorporating procedural justice in supervision interactions focused where opportunities for improving existing practice were greatest, accounted for concepts and language DCS officers were already being trained on, and avoided suggesting changes in language, approach, or practices that were infeasible or that DCS leadership did not support. The team also visited two supervision offices that would participate in the pilot to observe what DCS supervision and officer communication with supervisees looked like in the field and to avoid having to rely solely on the leadership-level engagement and review of written policy.

BOX 2
Pilot Agency: Georgia Department of Community Supervision

As currently constituted, the Georgia Department of Community Supervision was established by 2015 legislation that consolidated adult felony probation supervision, adult parole supervision, select juvenile community supervision, and oversight of (though not authority to conduct the supervision of) private and government misdemeanor probation supervision entities. Supervision officers at DCS with adult caseloads supervise people on parole and probation supervision, meaning that the piloted procedural justice training intervention affected both supervision statuses in participating districts. The department is very large: more than 200,000 adults are supervised by its officers.

Department of Community Supervision field offices are aligned with the established 10 judicial districts, which comprise 49 judicial circuits. Many of the circuits include rural and urban areas, allowing the intervention to occur in different social contexts. Moreover, DCS had not previously used the concept of procedural justice to guide its work, though many aspects of agency policy and practice emphasized related concepts such as respectful communication (and as the survey results discussed later in this report show, baseline levels of treatment consistent with procedural justice reported by supervisee respondents were quite high).

Source: "Agency Operations," Georgia Department of Community Supervision, accessed July 20, 2020, https://dcs.georgia.gov/.

Curriculum development also included a review for points of congruence between procedural justice and CCPs arising from the Risk-Need-Responsivity model, operationalized in DCS as Enhanced Supervision Practices (ESPs). Because CCPs constitute a foundational evidence-based practice for effective community supervision, it is important that the procedural justice intervention complement them. Though the literature on CCPs generally does not discuss procedural justice, some researchers have posited that procedural justice could complement them by helping supervision officers construct high-quality "dual role relationships," whereby officers balance therapeutic and enforcement aspects of their work with supervisees (Kennealy et al. 2012). The curriculum development team developed a "cross-walk" that provided examples of how the five components of procedural justice could be applied to each CCP, and these examples were integrated into the training curriculum.

The Department of Community Supervision worked closely with the project team to select the judicial circuits from which community supervision officers were selected to participate in the pilot training. The department considered whether offices were likely to be open to participating and whether their proximity would make a single-site training feasible. At the project team's request, it only considered offices where training on ESP was complete so that we could test whether the procedural

justice content would be complementary and additive to CCPs.[6] Officers who participated in the pilot training came from five circuits: Chattahoochee (mixed urban/rural circuit), Cherokee (rural), Douglas (mixed), Northeastern (rural), and Tallapoosa (rural).

The Department of Community Supervision identified 103 caseload-carrying officers who had completed ESP training as the participant-eligible population, and it randomly assigned half the officers in each circuit to participate in the training. The participant group experienced attrition after assignment owing to factors including scheduling conflicts, transfers to other offices, departure from the agency, and being out on leave. After attrition, the training cohort consisted of 43 DCS officers (41 of whom attended that training), and 50 officers were in the comparison group (table 1).

TABLE 1

Department of Community Supervision Officer Assignment by Circuit

	Initially assigned to training group	Attended training	Comparison officers
Circuit			
Chattahoochee	13	13	13
Cherokee	10	10	12
Douglas	7	6	10
Northeastern	10	9	10
Tallapoosa	3	3	5
Total	**43**	**41**	**50**

Source: Georgia Department of Community Supervision.

The project training faculty (Caitlin Flood of CCI, Emily LaGratta of LaGratta Consulting, and Adolfo Gonzales, chief of the San Diego County Probation Department) delivered the all-day training to 41 line officers and 2 supervisory officers on September 10, 2019. The goals were to present evidence of the importance of trust-building in community supervision, review the definition of and research basis for procedural justice, and workshop promising community supervision practices aligned with procedural justice that enhance or reinforce CCPs. The annotated agenda for the training was as follows:

- **Introductions**: Introduce faculty, and introduce the pilot as the first in the community supervision field; discuss qualities of high-performing supervision officers; review officers' answers to a pretraining questionnaire about obstacles to building rapport; experience trust-building practices (or lack thereof) in a parallel health care context exercise.

- **Setting the stage**: Discuss the goals of supervision; align procedural justice with the agency's mission statement and goals.

- **Defining procedural justice**: Contrast procedural justice with other types of fairness; define the five components of procedural justice; show research identifying connection to compliance; introduce "recommended practices" tool.

- **Participant and public perceptions**: Share research about perceptions of the justice system; highlight that the limited studies to date show that race and ethnicity affect levels of trust in the system but not the impact of procedural justice.

- **Procedural justice as a maximizer of community supervision goals**: Introduce pilot practices and how they align with and enhance CCPs; lead exercise intended to help officers build trust and enhance understanding during initial meetings by clarifying roles and explaining supervision conditions; discuss how procedural justice practices can address negative perceptions about the pilot site's use of body-worn cameras; role play the use of the pilot site's behavior incentive/sanction matrix using procedural justice components.

- **Engaging supervisees and their communities**: Explore procedural justice practices that can be geared toward supervisees' family members, emphasizing demonstrating respect; introduce two new public-facing tools: the "our commitment to supervisees" document and the "we want to hear from you" feedback tool (described below).

- **Implementation planning**: Consider environmental changes and other written materials that can be modified to reflect procedural justice; review the "recommended practices" tool; discuss upcoming pilot activities and feedback opportunities; outline available references and resources.

During this training, faculty provided the participants the following three tools to support procedurally just engagement with supervisees (these materials are included in the appendix at the end of this report):

- "Our commitment to supervisees" document

  » This one-page listing of supervisee "rights" or reasonable expectations was designed to be distributed at an initial interview to inform the supervisee and set a tone of respect and understanding. It aims to address a noted gap between officers' emphasis on supervisees' obligations and a lack of reference to what commitments officers make to them.

- "We want to hear from you" feedback tool

»   This nine-question survey was designed to give supervisees a voice (anonymously) about their experience under supervision and give meaningful feedback to agency leadership about core practices.

- ▪ "Recommended procedural justice practices" chart

    »   These materials comprise a handout and pocket-sized reference cards outlining recommended practices along different supervision touchpoints.

At the end of the full-day training, officers were invited to provide feedback about its content, format, and facilitation, and to suggest additional edits to the proposed pilot intervention practices and tools. Inviting feedback was key to the pilot intervention because it modeled a core component of procedural justice (voice). Faculty engaged supervision officers throughout the training, including by inviting probing and critical questions pushing back on the procedural justice concepts and their applicability. This engagement was maintained through the booster and feedback sessions the pilot's later stages.

On October 1, 2019—three weeks after the initial training—the CCI training faculty facilitated a second in-person session to elicit additional feedback from the officers and mid-level management about pilot intervention practices. The session also served as a booster training on the recommended practices through an exercise asking officers to rate areas of strength/challenge for each procedural justice "recommended practice." Officers reported how they had incorporated or planned to incorporate each practice into their routine. This session was also an opportunity for officers to ask questions about how the training was rolled out to management and finalize the schedule for implementing the new procedural justice tools in their offices. The intervention's final component was a series of calls through which officers could highlight successes and challenges implementing the training practices and distributed resources. These calls also constituted a final reminder about the anticipated value of the pilot intervention and its broader contribution to the field.

Assessment of the Pilot

In this section, we present the results of the three assessment activities undertaken to gauge the pilot's potential impact. First, we describe observations of interactions between supervision officers who participated in the procedural justice training and their supervisees to see whether practices emphasized in the training became more common. Second, we present results of surveys of supervisees to see whether their experiences with and perceptions of supervision treatment changed. Third, we

present analysis of DCS administrative data intended to surface any indications of changes in supervision outcomes. For more comprehensive details on data sources, analyses, and results, see the technical appendixes associated with this report.

Officer Interactions with People on Supervision

The procedural justice training was intended to provide supervision officers with new skills for engaging their supervisees and their families and friends to make interactions more positive and increase supervisee compliance. A first sign of the training's potential to achieve this involved whether officer behaviors and interactions with supervisees changed in ways reflecting the skills and concepts presented in the training. To ascertain this, the Urban evaluation team took advantage of the fact that DCS officers are all issued body cameras, and that these cameras record (in video and audio) all in-person interactions between supervision officers and supervisees. Although this created a unique opportunity to use recordings of field interactions to collect data on procedurally just treatment of supervisees, data must be interpreted cautiously because we observed a modest subset of officers with a likely selection bias.

Analysis of interactions was restricted to videos for which both the officers and supervisees involved in the interactions provided consent. Roughly half the officers who participated in the training (21 of 41 nonsupervisor participants) agreed to allow researchers to review their body camera footage. Though DCS attempted to have a representative cohort of officers in the training, the fact that only about half of them consented makes this a biased sample, and the results presented here may not generalize to all the officers who received the training. Supervisee consent was obtained through the baseline supervisee survey, and almost all of the 113 supervisees who took the survey consented. We analyzed a sample of 102 video interactions recorded from July 1, 2019, through November 30, 2019, 54 of which were recorded before the training (24 supervisees and 15 officers) and 48 of which were recorded after (19 supervisees and 12 officers).

Urban also developed the data collection instrument concurrently with the sample. An advantage of conducting all the observations retrospectively was that it allowed us to develop items that tracked the skills as emphasized in the final version of the training, as well as the supporting tools provided by the faculty. Response options on the procedural justice items ranged from 1 ("Never or Does not do at any point") to 5 ("Always or Done in a very clear way"), meaning higher scores on the scales indicated greater presence of procedural justice behavior. Scale results are reported in table 2.

TABLE 2
Change in Procedural Justice Scales Pre- and Posttraining

Scale	Pre (n=54) mean (SD)	Post (n=48) mean (SD)	Significance	Items with statistically significant increases
Respect (six items)	2.85 (0.39)	2.99 (0.45)	n.s.	Officer tone of voice sounds engaging and unscripted.‡ Officer uses respectful manner of address in talking with the supervisee. ‡
Helpfulness (six items)	2.29 (0.81)	2.21 (0.74)	n.s.	None
Neutral decisionmaking (four items)	2.40 (0.71)	2.41 (0.66)	n.s.	None
Understanding (six items)	2.27 (0.50)	2.56 (0.52)	$p < 0.05$	Officer tells supervisee that his/her understanding is important and a priority for the officer to answer any questions. ‡ Officer uses plain language and avoids jargon or acronyms throughout the interaction.** At the conclusion of the interaction, the officer summarizes decisions, expectations or next steps for the supervisee and verifies that he/she understands them.* At the conclusion of the interaction, the officer asks what questions or concerns the supervisee has about what they discussed or next steps.*
Voice (eight items)	2.43 (0.61)	2.48 (0.58)	n.s.	Officer invites the supervisee to ask questions. ‡

Source: Urban analysis of Georgia Department of Community Supervision body camera footage.

Notes: n.s. = not significant; SD = standard deviation. Item-level significance ‡$p < 0.10$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.

Differences in the scale scores between the pre- and posttraining interactions were only statistically significant for the understanding scale, which increased from the pre- to posttraining observations ($p < 0.05$). There were statistically significant increases on four of the six understanding scale items: in posttraining interactions, officers were more likely to tell a supervisee that his/her understanding is important ($p < 0.10$); to use plain language and avoid jargon ($p < 0.01$); to summarize decisions, expectations, or next steps for the supervisee and verify their understanding at the conclusion of the interaction ($p < 0.05$); and ask what questions or concerns the supervisee had about what they discussed or next steps at the conclusion of the interaction ($p < 0.05$).

Though the increase in the respect scale values from the pre- to posttraining observations was not significant, we observed greater application of two practices in the posttraining interactions: engaging

and unscripted officer tone of voice, and use of a respectful manner of address in talking to the supervisee. These differences were statistically significant at the $p < 0.10$ level. Similarly, the small increase in the voice scale values was not statistically significant, and the only significant increase between pre- and posttraining observations was that officers were more likely to invite supervisees to ask questions ($p < 0.10$). There were no statistically significant differences between the pre- and posttraining ratings for any individual items on the helpfulness or neutral decisionmaking scales, or for the scales as a whole.

Of the observed significant changes detailed above, all occurred in a positive direction, providing some support that officers exhibited more procedurally just behaviors after the training. Behavioral change manifested most in practices associated with the understanding component of procedural justice. Although these initial findings are not conclusive, the fact that results from a small sample indicate some evidence of positive change in officers' behaviors during interactions in the posttraining compared with the pretraining period is promising.

However, although the availability of body camera footage allowed the research team to observe a substantial number of interactions between officers, supervisees, and other people, several limitations are important to recognize. The analyses were based on fewer than 50 interactions in each period (i.e., pre- and posttraining). With the double consent process, it is possible that the officers who consented and those who did not applied skills and practices associated with procedural justice to different extents. Similarly, the supervisees who responded to the survey and consented may differ from those who did not in ways that would affect the nature of the interactions. Moreover, the video sample may have overrepresented people supervised more intensively (many were supervised as sex offenders), who had more interactions with officers during the observation period. The observed interactions represented a subset of relevant interactions, overwhelmingly consisting of home visits; only one intake meeting was included in the sample. This is significant because the majority of the training intervention and exercises focused on implementing skills related to intake interactions; a theme of the training was that officers should begin implementing procedural justice during the very first supervisee-officer interactions. And although there were instances where officers could have sanctioned supervisees, there was only one case where a formal sanction process occurred. Although the training involved discussions of how officers should behave during intake and when sanctioning supervisees, we could not assess the extent to which procedurally just practices were applied during sanctions because they occurred so rarely. Lastly, some of the posttraining interactions occurred before the booster session on October 1, 2019, and all of them occurred before the two Zoom meetings that the CCI faculty held with the trained officers in December 2019.

Perceptions of People on Supervision

Because research posits that procedurally just practice improves the perceived legitimacy of authorities in different settings, and because supervisees were uniquely positioned to describe how officers treated them, we made surveys of people supervised by officers who participated in the training a core component of the pilot assessment.

A randomly selected sample of 750 people supervised by the 43 officers selected to participate in the training were invited to take a pretraining and posttraining survey. The sample included only people under supervision who were required to be seen by their supervising officer at least monthly, so that sufficient interactions were occurring for the application of procedurally just practices to be noticed. The pretraining survey was conducted in August 2019 and yielded 113 responses, and the posttraining survey was conducted in March 2020, yielding 97 responses. Fifty-two respondents responded to both survey waves.

Although the independent samples are similar on observable demographic and supervision-status variables (see tables B.1 and B.2 in the technical appendixes), the fact that they are independent increases the possibility that unobserved differences between the people who elected to take the survey could be driving any observed differences in perceptions. This possibility is lower for the paired sample (i.e., people who responded to both waves), but because the paired sampled was smaller, differences in perceptions need to be larger in order to be statistically significant than differences for the independent sample. Given the different limitations of analyzing results for the independent and paired samples, we present them both.

The survey instrument included 52 questions, covering the five procedural justice domains (i.e., neutral decisionmaking, understanding, voice, helpfulness, and respect), as well as general satisfaction with the community supervision officers and agency, and willingness to obey the law. Response options across all items used a five-point Likert scale. We assessed change in the items and domains through independent and paired-sample two-tailed t-tests of the mean difference across waves, as well as of the proportion of item responses of "4" and "5," which corresponded with greater agreement or satisfaction (the technical appendixes provide survey results in greater detail).

A striking finding is the consistency with which respondents reported high levels of procedurally just practices from supervision officers, as well as their consistently high satisfaction with their supervision officers and with DCS (tables 3 and 4). This was a challenge to detecting evidence of positive changes in the perception of supervisees if the intervention worked as intended, as on most items there was little room for improvement. Furthermore, there were no significant changes in the

mean values associated with the procedural justice scales for either sample, and the only item for which we observed a significant mean change in the independent and paired samples was a voice scale item on whether the supervision officer clearly explained the reasons for his or her actions ($p < 0.10$ for both samples). Moreover, there was a significant mean increase in supervisee satisfaction with their community supervision agency among the independent samples ($p < 0.10$), and an increase in agreement with the statement that all laws should be strictly obeyed among the paired sample ($p < 0.01$).

TABLE 3
Survey Results, Independent Samples (Pre n=113, Post n=97)

	Wave 1 mean	Wave 2 mean	% 4 or 5 values, wave 1	% 4 or 5 values, wave 2
Survey question				
How satisfied are you with the way you were treated by your community supervision officer (CSO)? [b]	4.43	4.62	87.3	92.5
How satisfied have you been with your experiences with the staff overall?[b]	4.28	4.56‡	82.1	90.2
Decisionmaking scale[c]	4.34	4.34		
CSO made decisions based on the facts	4.21	4.33	83.0	86.6
CSO made fair decisions about what to do	4.34	4.38	86.6	91.7
CSO held you to the right standards for supervision conditions	4.40	4.32	87.5	90.5
CSO was fair and impartial	4.40	4.33	87.4	91.8
Understanding scale[c]	4.15	4.23		
CSO gave me the opportunity to describe my situation before decisions were made	4.14	4.18	79.5	83.5
CSO provided a summary of what will happen during the meeting	3.96	4.09	69.4	80.4‡
CSO explained what would happen next in the process	4.13	4.29	77.3	89.6*
CSO confirmed that I understood what was going on with my case and expectations	4.36	4.35	88.3	92.8
Voice scale[c]	4.13	4.24		
CSO asked more open-ended questions instead of yes/no questions	3.90	3.97	72.1	75.8
CSO seemed to believe what I was saying.	4.18	4.28	79.5	87.5
CSO clearly explained the reasons for his or her actions	4.17	4.41‡	78.8	93.8**
CSO allowed me to share my point of view before a decision was made	4.26	4.28	82.3	88.4
Helpfulness scale[c]	4.12	4.17		
CSO explained the conditions of my supervision	4.39	4.40	85.8	91.7
CSO provided reminders about future appointment dates and requirements	4.09	4.12	76.4	80.0
CSO provided materials to help me	4.01	4.10	70.5	78.4
CSO referred me to people or agencies that might be helpful	3.98	4.06	68.8	73.2

	Wave 1 mean	Wave 2 mean	% 4 or 5 values, wave 1	% 4 or 5 values, wave 2
Respect scale[c]	4.37	4.37		
CSO listened to what I had to say	4.32	4.40	84.1	89.7
CSO treated me the same way as others would be treated in a similar situation	4.28	4.29	82.6	88.5
CSO treated me with dignity and respect	4.42	4.41	89.4	94.8
CSO treated me politely	4.46	4.41	89.3	93.8
CSO—Legitimacy scale	4.24	4.26		
How would you say your CSO is doing at their job?[c]	4.50	4.67	88.1	93.8
CSO usually acts in ways consistent with my ideas about what is right and wrong[c]	4.07	4.14	71.4	79.8
My CSO is a legitimate authority figure[c]	4.44	4.42	90.1	89.5
My CSO stands up for values that are important to me[c]	4.22	4.12	80.4	77.7
The values of my CSO are similar to my own[c]	3.95	3.93	66.4	67.4
Agency legitimacy scale[c]	4.05	4.09		
CSOs stand up for values that are important to me	4.01	4.12	72.0	79.0
The staff in my community supervision agency talk down to me[a]	2.19	1.95	18.5	11.7
CSOs are legitimate authorities	4.35	4.19	84.9	86.0
The staff in my community supervision agency treat me with respect.	4.19	4.23	79.8	88.4‡
CSOs often give violations to supervisees for no good reason[a]	2.34	2.16	18.9	10.4‡
CSOs sincerely try to help people like myself	4.18	4.23	78.0	84.4
There is a good reason to believe the person did something wrong when sanctioned	3.95	3.86	70.8	70.2
CSOs and I want the same thing for my community.	4.06	4.11	75.2	76.0
The rules that CSOs enforce the moral values of people like myself	4.18	4.02	78.7	76.3
Views of the law scale[c]	4.21	4.15		
Obeying the law ultimately benefits everyone in the community	4.62	4.51	94.5	92.4
It is hard to break the law and keep your self-respect	4.06	3.87	74.8	68.1
People should do what the law says	4.51	4.41	91.7	85.7
A person who disobeys laws is a danger to others in the community	4.04	4.02	70.8	70.7
All laws should be strictly obeyed	4.11	4.18	76.4	76.7
Laws are generally consistent with my own thoughts about what is right and just	4.07	3.96	74.1	72.0
Laws are consistent with views of my community about what is right / just	4.06	4.02	74.1	76.9

Notes: CSO = community supervision officer. Change in expected direction. Change not in expected direction.; ‡$p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

[a] Items reverse coded for scale creation.

[b] Response options: 1 = Very dissatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied .

[c] Response options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

[d] Response options: 1 = Poor job, 5 = Excellent job.

We noted more items with significant change when examining how the proportion of agree (4) and strongly agree (5) values changed from the pretraining to posttraining periods. Specific to the independent sample analyses, we found a greater proportion of respondents agreeing that the CSO provided a summary of what will happen during the meeting ($p < 0.10$), that they explained what will happen next in the process ($p < 0.05$), that they clearly explained the reasons for his or her actions ($p < 0.01$), and that staff in their community supervision agency treat them with respect ($p < 0.10$). We also observed a smaller proportion of respondents among the independent samples agreeing that CSOs often give violations to supervisees for no good reason ($p < 0.10$). Specific to the paired sample analyses, we found a greater proportion of respondents agreeing that the CSO clearly explained the reasons for his or her actions ($p < 0.01$) and that they explained the conditions of their supervision ($p < 0.10$). We also observed a smaller proportion of respondents among the paired sample agreeing with the statements that it is hard to break the law and keep your self-respect ($p < 0.05$) and that people should do what the law says ($p < 0.05$), although these two items did not change in the expected direction.

TABLE 4
Survey Results, Paired Sample (n=52)

	Wave 1 mean	Wave 2 mean	% 4 or 5 values, wave 1	% 4 or 5 values, wave 2
Survey question				
How satisfied are you with the way you were treated by your CSO? [b]	4.67	4.59	93.9	91.8
How satisfied have you been with your experiences with the staff overall? [b]	4.40	4.49	86.1	90.7
Decisionmaking scale [c]	4.39	4.33		
CSO made decisions based on the facts	4.24	4.35	88.2	88.2
CSO made fair decisions about what to do	4.42	4.38	94.2	90.4
CSO held you to the right standards for supervision conditions	4.41	4.27	92.2	88.2
CSO was fair and impartial	4.47	4.29	94.1	90.2
Understanding scale [c]	4.19	4.23		
CSO gave me the opportunity to describe my situation before decisions were made	4.15	4.17	80.8	84.6
CSO provided a summary of what will happen during the meeting	4.02	4.06	72.0	80.0
CSO explained what would happen next in the process	4.14	4.24	82.0	88.8
CSO confirmed that I understood what was going on with my case and expectations	4.37	4.41	94.1	96.1
Voice scale [c]	4.17	4.25		
CSO asked more open-ended questions instead of yes/no questions	3.92	3.84	74.5	70.6
CSO seemed to believe what I was saying.	4.25	4.37	86.5	92.3

Survey question	Wave 1 mean	Wave 2 mean	% 4 or 5 values, wave 1	% 4 or 5 values, wave 2
CSO clearly explained the reasons for his or her actions	4.19	4.46‡	80.8	94.2‡
CSO allowed me to share my point of view before a decision was made	4.33	4.33	86.5	88.5
Helpfulness scale [c]	4.15	4.14		
CSO explained the conditions of my supervision	4.35	4.37	80.8	92.3 ‡
CSO provided reminders about future appointment dates and requirements	4.14	4.14	83.7	81.6
CSO provided materials to help me	4.08	4.04	78.9	73.1
CSO referred me to people or agencies that might be helpful	4.04	4.00	75.0	73.1
Respect scale [c]	4.39	4.38		
CSO listened to what I had to say	4.33	4.42	88.5	92.3
CSO treated me the same way as others would be treated in a similar situation	4.31	4.31	88.2	88.2
CSO treated me with dignity and respect	4.46	4.44	94.2	94.2
CSO treated me politely	4.48	4.37	96.2	94.2
CSO—legitimacy	4.32	4.26		
How would you say your CSO is doing at their job?[d]	4.62	4.66	94.0	94.0
CSO usually acts in ways consistent with my ideas about what is right and wrong[2]	4.14	4.14	76.5	78.4
My CSO is a legitimate authority figure[2]	4.48	4.38	92.0	86.0
My CSO stands up for values that are important to me[2]	4.33	4.08	86.5	78.9
The values of my CSO are similar to my own[2]	4.02	4.00	68.6	70.6
Agency legitimacy scale [c]	4.11	4.12		
CSOs stand up for values that are important to me	4.12	4.01	76.5	82.4
The staff in my community supervision agency talk down to me[a]	2.04	1.94	14.0	14.0
CSOs are legitimate authorities	4.32	4.26	86.0	86.0
The staff in my community supervision agency treat me with respect.	4.21	4.27	82.7	92.3
CSOs often give violations to supervisees for no good reason[a]	2.14	2.20	14.3	16.3
CSOs sincerely try to help people like myself	4.29	4.25	82.7	88.5
There is a good reason to believe the person did something wrong when sanctioned	4.04	4.08	74.0	80.0
CSOs and I want the same thing for my community.	4.00	4.23	73.1	84.6
The rules that CSOs enforce the moral values of people like myself	4.22	4.08	80.4	80.4
Views of the law scale [c]	4.16	4.16		
Obeying the law ultimately benefits everyone in the community	4.66	4.50	98.0	92.0
It is hard to break the law and keep your self-respect	3.98	3.79	79.2	62.5*

	Wave 1 mean	Wave 2 mean	% 4 or 5 values, wave 1	% 4 or 5 values, wave 2
Survey question				
People should do what the law says	4.37	4.35	89.8	79.6*
A person who disobeys laws is a danger to others in the community	4.10	4.17	79.2	75.0
All laws should be strictly obeyed	4.00	4.28**	74.0	76.0
Laws are generally consistent with my own thoughts about what is right and just	4.14	4.12	82.0	74.0
Laws are consistent with views of my community about what is right / just	3.96	3.94	75.0	70.8

Notes: CSO = community supervision officer. Change in expected direction. Change not in expected direction.

‡$p < 0.10$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.

[a] Items reverse coded for scale creation.

[b] Response options: 1 = Very dissatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied .

[c] Response options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

[d] Response options: 1 = Poor job, 5 = Excellent job.

Supervision Outcomes

The final component of the pilot assessment was an analysis of supervision success and compliance outcomes. Past research suggests that treatment that is more procedurally just can result in greater cooperation with authorities and compliance with laws and rules. In the community supervision context, this would likely mean fewer violations of supervision conditions and fewer indicators of further justice involvement, such as arrests. We used administrative data provided by DCS to examine whether any evidence suggested such an effect.

Supervision officers participating in the pilot training were drawn from five circuits, and DCS selected half the officers in each circuit to participate, allowing the research team to treat the officers who were not selected for the training to act as a control group in our administrative outcome analyses. Although DCS did not use a formal randomization process to select officers to participate in the training, it did split each circuit's officers into participant and nonparticipant groups of equal size (table 1), and made the assignments as close to randomly as it could to provide our team with a control group of officers and supervisees.

We obtained administrative data from DCS on supervisee characteristics and various supervision outcomes related to compliance with conditions for the six months before and six months after the procedural justice training, for people supervised by the officers in the five pilot circuits who did and did not participate in the training (n=16,904 people supervised by officers who participated, n=21,760 people supervised by comparison officers). We explored the counts of arrests, delinquent reports,
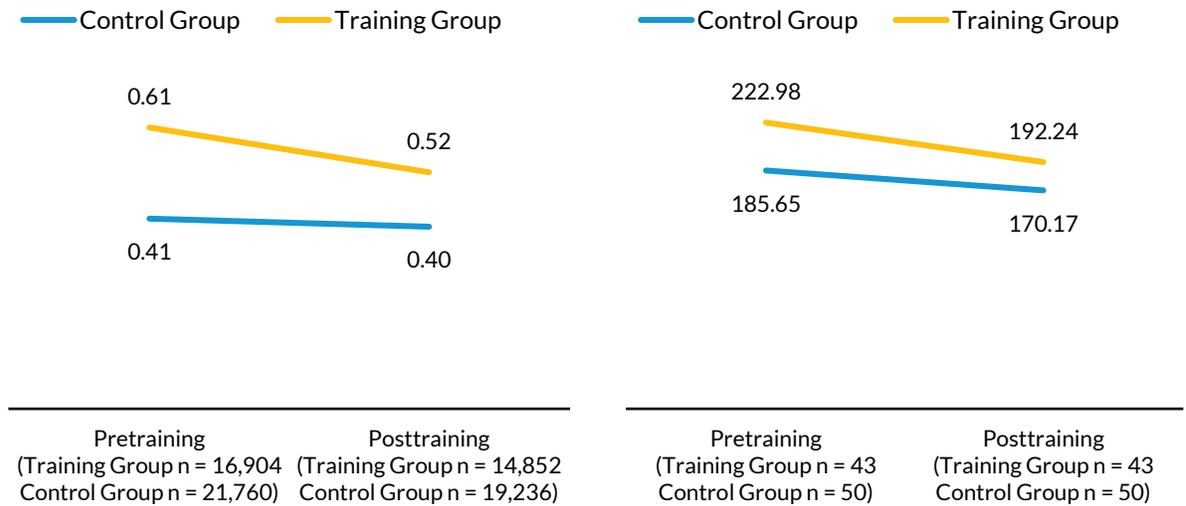
warrants, revocations, and convictions, conducting negative binomial regressions that included a DID estimator at both the supervisee- and officer-level units of analysis. The DID estimator allowed us to estimate the difference between the training group's posttraining and pretraining outcomes, relative to the same difference for the control group. The supervisee-level analyses compare the mean count values of the outcomes for the supervisees (e.g., the average count of pretraining arrests for supervisees in the training group was 0.61), whereas the officer-level analyses use values of the supervisee outcomes summated to the officer level, and therefore compare the mean count values of the outcomes for an officer's caseload (e.g., the average count of pretraining arrests for a training group officer's caseload was 222.98).

The officer-level analyses found no significant difference from the pretraining to posttraining periods, compared with the control group; however, there were promising findings from the supervisee-level analyses. It is important to note that the balance between treatment and control groups is weak (see technical appendix table C.1), and is better for the officer-level groupings than for the supervisee-level groupings. This is not unexpected because randomization was not used to create the groups, limiting our ability to make causal claims about the results. The results of the supervisee analyses are significant in large part because there is a much larger sample associated with them, and the reason that the officer analyses are not significant is because of the small number of officers involved in the analyses. The patterns of outcomes are consistent across the models, giving us greater confidence in deeming the supervisee-level results meaningful.

From the pretraining to the posttraining periods, supervisees from the training group had significantly fewer *arrests* compared with supervisees from the control group ($p < 0.01$; figure 1). The supervisee-level analysis on arrests found that the average number of arrests for the supervisees in the control group changed from 0.41 before the training to 0.40 after the training, but average arrests for the supervisees whose officers received the training fell from 0.61 to 0.52. Although the average number of arrests among people supervised by officers who did not receive the training declined from 185.65 to 170.17 pre- to posttraining, and a greater reduction was noted among those supervised by the trained officers (from 228.98 to 192.24), these differences were not statistically significant.

FIGURE 1

**DID Results: Predictive Margins for Total Arrests at the Supervisee Level (Left) and Officer Level (Right)**

	Pretraining	Posttraining
	(Training Group n = 16,904	(Training Group n = 14,852
	Control Group n = 21,760)	Control Group n = 19,236)

|	Pretraining	Posttraining
	(Training Group n = 43	(Training Group n = 43
	Control Group n = 50)	Control Group n = 50)

Source: Urban analysis of administrative data provided by the Georgia Department of Community Supervision.
Note: DID = Difference in Differences.

From the pretraining period to the posttraining period, supervisees from the training group had significantly fewer *delinquent reports* compared with supervisees from the control group ($p < 0.05$; figure 2). The average number of delinquent reports for the supervisees in the control group remained constant at 0.10 both before and after the training, but average delinquent reports for the supervisees whose officers went through the training were reduced from 0.16 to 0.14. As with arrests, officer-level analyses found a greater reduction in delinquent reports for the treatment group, but the difference was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 2

**DID Results: Predictive Margins for Total Delinquent Reports at the Supervisee Level (Left) and Officer Level (Right)**
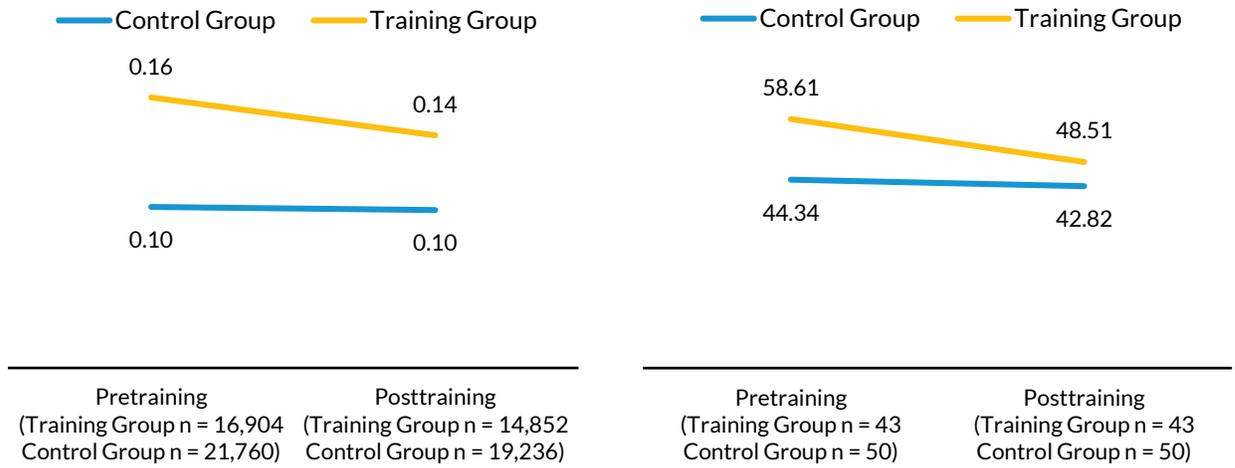
Source: Urban analysis of administrative data provided by the Georgia Department of Community Supervision.
Note: DID = Difference in Differences.

From the pretraining period to the posttraining period, supervisees from the training group had significantly fewer *warrants* and *convictions* compared with supervisees from the control group ($p < 0.01$ for each; figures 3 and 4). In both cases, results of the officer-level analyses were not significant. For *revocations* there were no significant differences from the pretraining to posttraining periods in either analysis, compared with the control group. More detailed regression results are included in the technical appendix tables C.1–C.15.

FIGURE 3

DID Results: Predictive Margins for Total Warrants at the Supervisee Level (Left) and Officer Level (Right)
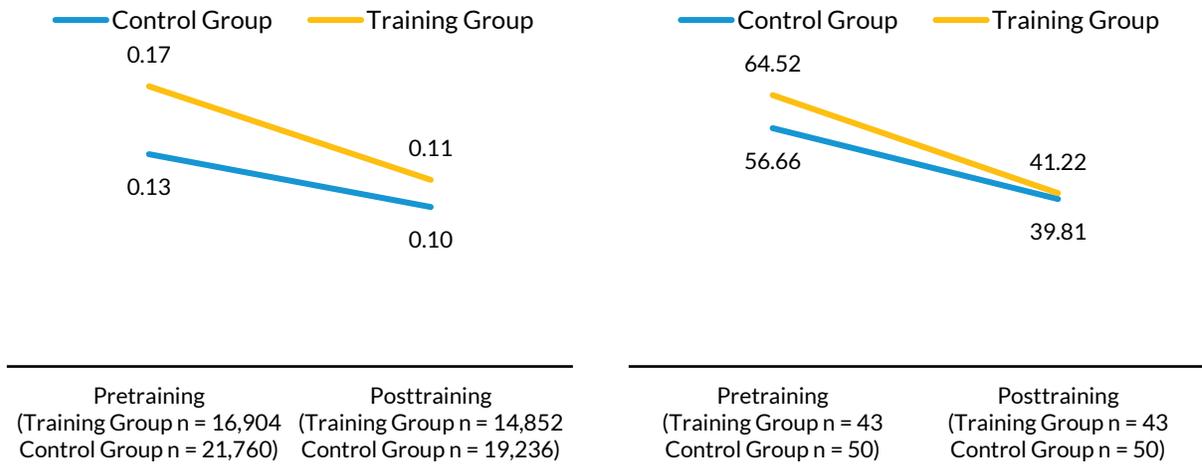
Source: Urban analysis of administrative data provided by the Georgia Department of Community Supervision.
Note: DID = Difference in Differences.

FIGURE 4

DID Results: Predictive Margins for Total Convictions at the Supervisee Level (Left) and Officer Level (Right)
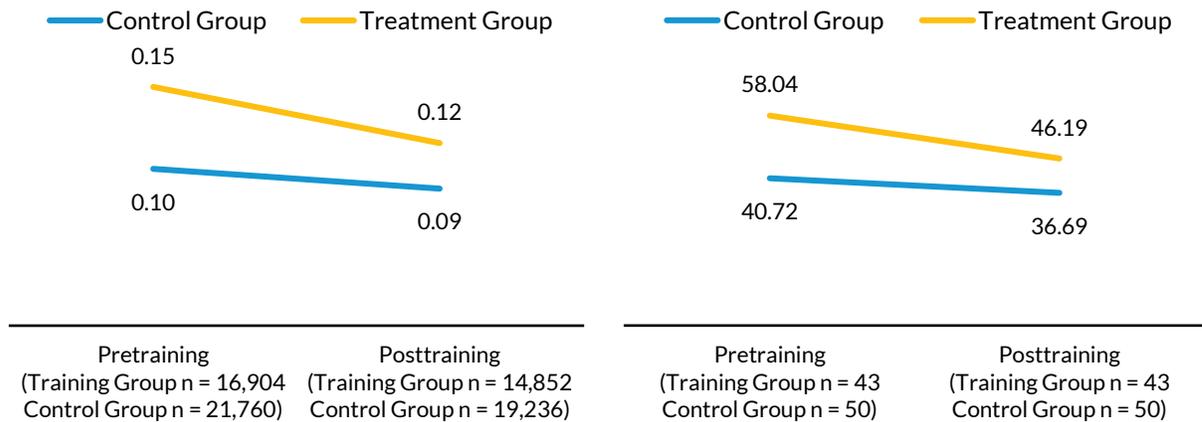
Source: Urban analysis of administrative data provided by the Georgia Department of Community Supervision.
Note: DID = Difference in Differences.

Takeaways and Conclusion

This project began with a pilot phase to develop, implement, and refine a training intervention that integrated procedural justice principles with community supervision practices, and to test for preliminary indications of the training's impact. Key takeaways include the following:

- The effort secured and maintained support from DCS leadership, who expressed that procedural justice is an important and valuable concept to inform supervision practice and that it fits with and would extend the reach of their core correctional practices.

- More specifically, pilot implementation surfaced several opportunities to adjust and reinforce basic practices, such as moving toward people-first language (e.g., using the term "supervisee" rather than "offender") in official DCS communications, the distribution of a one-page listing of supervisee "rights" or reasonable expectations at initial interviews, the implementation of a nine-question survey to give supervisees a voice about their supervision experiences and give meaningful feedback to agency leadership about core practices, and the provision of pocket-sized reference cards outlining recommended practices along different supervision touchpoints to officers.

- The initial pilot was conceptualized as a training project where experts would deliver a relatively standardized curriculum locally and assess its impact. However, actual implementation involved important engagement components before and after the training. Before the training, project faculty worked with DCS leadership to develop specific tools to guide integration of procedural justice with agency practices and priorities. After the training, faculty held booster and feedback sessions with officers participating in the training and their supervisors. Staff engagement was geared toward generating buy-in for the new recommended practices and seeking feedback after the fact; however, the process did little to invite staff input on new practices or needed tools before they were distributed for feedback.

- Analyses of officer-supervisee interactions, survey responses regarding perceptions of supervision, and analyses of administrative data provide some support that the procedural justice training had its intended effects. However, these results are far from conclusive, and there are significant limitations to the conclusions that can be drawn given the nonexperimental nature of the design and the small number of observations in some of the data collection. These limitations were inherent in the design of the pilot, which was focused on developing the intervention, around which data were collected and data collection instruments were piloted.

- The theory of change for the intervention was that it would change officer practices, which would in turn change supervisees' perceptions, leading in turn to improvements in outcomes for people under supervision. We had by far the largest number of observations for the last component in this logical chain, and the fact that the results of the assessment for supervisee outcomes were the most consistently significant and in the direction supportive of the intervention's goals could be the result of having greater statistical power on this component of the analysis. However, it could also mean the theory of the intervention was not correctly specified, or be an artifact owing to differences in the treatment and comparison groups.

- Future evaluations can build on the data collection tools developed through the pilot, innovative new methods (which include using body camera footage to assess interactions against procedurally just practices) to prioritize rigorous designs that would support causal claims about intervention effects.

Next steps for the project include incorporating lessons from the pilot into a revised intervention model and preparing for a more rigorous evaluation of the intervention. In addition, the pilot suggested possibilities for broadening the intervention beyond training. Engagement of agency leadership and direct supervisors at the local office level could be deepened to reinforce and set office-wide expectations for applying procedural justice and strategies to overcome challenges to doing so. For instance, DCS reinforces ESP training by reviewing body camera video for application of ESPs, and provides coaching and reinforcement around those practices. This could be a model for reinforcing procedurally just treatment as well, should the intervention move from a pilot to a supported practice in DCS or other agencies.

Conceptualizing the procedural justice intervention more broadly than as just a training would also allow for it to be fielded as an office-level intervention—as opposed to an officer-level one—where both the planning and implementation processes can be adopted in a coordinated way over time and supported by appropriate policies and tools. This would create an environment where staff of all levels are incentivized to discuss practices and tools with one another using a common language and set of expectations, thus supporting broader culture change at an office-wide level. Moving from a focus on the officer level to the office-wide level would also allow for exploration of changes to the physical office environment (e.g., improving signage) to complement and reinforce the procedural justice concepts. Lastly, future efforts could realize greater impact if structured to better engage and seek input from a range of staffing levels and from people under supervision throughout the planning and intervention.

Assessment of this pilot concluded during a time of great uncertainty in community supervision, as agencies across the United States modified their practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes make many of the principles of procedural justice all the more important, as virtual communication with supervisees becomes more the norm and unpredictable changes in supervision create new opportunities for clear and respectful explanation of modifications. The community supervision field's response to the pilot suggests that it considers procedural justice important and valuable. Techniques to work more effectively with supervisees may be more important than ever given the emerging challenges to their safety and success.

Appendix. Draft Procedural Justice Tools Developed for Pilot

Department Commitment to Supervisees

Our Commitments to Supervisees

- While working with the Department of Community Supervision, officers commit to being fair and effective, including in how they enforce the conditions of supervision.

- In most instances, an individualized initial interview will take place within 72 hours of release if in custody.

- You will be given a copy of your case plan and any updates that are made to the case plan in a timely manner.

- You are allowed to report for supervision at the office in the county where you live.

- You are invited to have family present at the initial interview and at future meetings.

- You will have conditions of supervision read/explained to you and receive a signed copy of the conditions.

- You can file a complaint or grievance about your assigned community supervision officer with a supervising officer.

- Officers will wear body-worn cameras for almost all interactions with supervisees. Body-worn cameras will typically be turned off for: privileged conversations (with your attorney, spouse, treatment providers), interactions in treatment settings, or interactions during drug testing.

- You can be eligible for unsupervised probation at a certain point so long as your officer has determined you have complied with conditions of supervision.

- In the event your officer alleges violations of conditions of community supervision and a petition for revocation is filed, you have the right to be informed of alleged violations included in a petition, the right to an attorney, and time to prepare a defense against the alleged violations. Your attorney will be notified of the date and time of the revocation hearing. If you cannot afford an attorney, you have the right to apply to have an attorney appointed by the Public Defender's office or Parole Board.

- Your attorney can request body worn camera footage so long as it is requested at least 5 days before the revocation hearing.

- Your right to vote will be automatically restored upon completion of your sentence and registration with your local voting registrar.

Procedural Justice Practice Reference Cards for Community Supervision Officers

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<u>Recommended Practices:</u> *Understanding, Voice, Respect, and Neutral Decision-making*

General considerations for ALL touchpoints:

- What about this interaction might be perceived as unfair?
- How can I enhance each element of procedural justice in every interaction? How else can I assert my commitment to fairness? (*e.g.* Commitment document)
- If family members are present, how can you extend these principles and practices to enhance trust-building?

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INITIAL MEETING & ORIENTATION

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UNDERSTANDING

- Key decisions or procedures to explain: *e.g.*, body worn camera policy, general conditions, fines/fees
- Jargon or acronyms to avoid or explain; forms to walk through: _____
- Invite questions: "What questions do you have about my role or your supervision at this stage?"

VOICE

- Remind supervisee his/her input and side of the story is important and valued
- Let supervisee know when they'll have time to talk and ask questions
- Invite supervisees' voice: "What else is important for me to hear from you at this point?"
- Explain grievance policy and invite anonymous feedback via "We want to hear from you" feedback tool
- Show respect for family and other support systems: *e.g,*. "Is there anyone else you'd like to have present at our check-ins? If so, we can discuss appropriate ways for them to be involved while also respecting your privacy."

RESPECT

- Address by preferred name; Word choice when speaking to and about supervisees; avoid "offender"
- Show respect for their time: *e.g.*, "Thank you for being on time" or "I'm sorry we're starting a little late."

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	- Discuss sensitive issues in private: *e.g.*, "We'll talk one-on-one about any food or clothing needs you may have." - Acknowledge possible distrust and prior bad experiences: *e.g.* "I can understand your concerns about supervision based on your past experiences" **NEUTRAL DECISION-MAKING** - Explain that most conditions/rules apply to all similarly-situated supervisees: *e.g.*, "I want to explain how I came to my decision so you understand my thought process." - Explain reasoning for any add-on, individualized conditions whenever possible: *e.g.* "I'm going to require an additional check-in this month. I do this for any individual who is difficult to contact through other means. **HELPFULNESS** - Acknowledge individuality: *e.g.*, "Your individual needs and strengths are unique to you. What else would you like me to understand about you?" - Show that assistance is tailored to each individual: *e.g.*, "I may not always be able to help, but what else do you need support with?"
HOME VISITS	**UNDERSTANDING** - Explain to all present your process/goals of home visit; Other decisions or procedures to explain? - Jargon or acronyms to avoid or explain; forms to walk through: _____ - Invite questions: *e.g.*, "What questions do you have about today's home visit or your supervision at this stage?" **VOICE** - Remind supervisee his/her input is important - Invite supervisees' voice: "Please let me know if you have concerns or questions during my visit." or "What else would you like to discuss today?" - Explain grievance policy to all present and invite anonymous feedback via "We want to hear from you" feedback tool **RESPECT** - Address all present by preferred names - Show respect for their time: *e.g.*, "I know this visit was unannounced and may be inconvenient. I'll be done as soon as I can so you can return to what you need to do." **NEUTRAL DECISION-MAKING** - Reminder that most conditions/rules apply to all similarly-situated supervisees

	- "What would you like me to know before we discuss the next steps?" - "I want to explain how I came to my decision so you understand my thought process." **HELPFULNESS** - Acknowledge individuality: *e.g.*, "Your individual needs and strengths are unique to you. What else would you like me to understand about you?" - Show that assistance is tailored to each individual: *e.g.*, "I may not always be able to help, but what else do you need support with?"
SUPERVISION MEETINGS	**UNDERSTANDING** - Key decisions or procedures to explain? - Jargon or acronyms to avoid or explain; forms to walk through: _____ - "What questions do you have about your supervision at this stage?" **VOICE** - Remind supervisee his/her input is important - Invite supervisees' voice: ""What questions or concerns do you have about how I track your progress?" or "What else would you like to discuss today?" - Remind of grievance policy and invite anonymous feedback via "We want to hear from you" feedback tool - Show how their input on PROACT Matrix guides the supervision plan **RESPECT** - Address by preferred name_____ - Timeliness: "Thank you for being on time." // "I'm sorry we're starting a little late." **NEUTRAL DECISION-MAKING** - Reminder that most conditions/rules apply to all similarly-situated supervisees - "What would you like me to know before we discuss the next steps?" - Explain decision, including referral to decision matrices: *e.g.* "I want to explain how I came to my decision so you understand and can ask questions." **HELPFULNESS** - Acknowledge individuality: *e.g.*, "Your individual needs and strengths are unique to you. What else would you like me to understand about you?" - Show that assistance is tailored to each individual: *e.g.*, "I may not always be able to help, but what else do you need support with?"

ADDRESSING AND FILING VIOLATIONS	**UNDERSTANDING** - Key decisions or procedures to explain today? - Jargon or acronyms to avoid or explain; forms to walk through: _____ - "What questions do you have about your supervision at this stage?" **VOICE** - Remind supervisee his/her input is important - Invite supervisees' voice: "I want to hear your side of the story about this" or "What else is important for me to hear from you at this point?" **RESPECT** - Address by preferred name_____ - Acknowledge severity of any sanctions/response and hardships it will pose: *e.g.* "I know this is a difficult outcome for you. I wish we had had a different one." - Offer additional support, as appropriate, if individual is going into custody: *e.g.*, "Is there someone I can call to notify them that you're in custody?" **NEUTRAL DECISION-MAKING** - Reminder that most conditions/rules apply to all similarly-situated supervisees - "What would you like me to know before we discuss the next steps?" - Explain decision, including referral to decision matrices: *e.g.* "I want to explain how I came to my decision so you understand and can ask questions." **HELPFULNESS** - Acknowledge individuality: *e.g.*, "Is there specific assistance you may need going forward that I might have information about?"

Supervisee Survey

1. I am given the opportunity to explain my side of the story when I miss an appointment, have a positive drug test or any other problem with conditions of supervision.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

2. I have the opportunity to give input on my case plan.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

3. I understand the Department of Community Supervision's guidelines for giving a reward or sanction.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

4. There is time and space during meetings to make sure I understand what the next steps are.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

5. I understand the decision-making process about violations or revocations.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

6. I feel that I am treated the same way as other individuals under supervision.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

7. DCS provides referrals that are tailored to my needs or interests.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

8. I am shown respect by individuals from DCS (how they speak with me, make eye contact, etc).

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

9. Meetings at the office and in the field are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Notes

[1] This project was originally scoped to be specific to probation supervision, but because the supervision caseloads in the pilot site included people on probation and parole supervision, and because we assume the procedural justice concepts are equally applicable to both types of supervision, we use the combined term "community supervision" throughout this report.

[2] Some conceptualizations of procedural justice include just four components, omitting helpfulness or reframing the components as "voice," "trustworthiness," "fairness," and "transparency." See COPS and National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice (2015) and Tyler (2004).

[3] "Local level" refers to county or municipal probation departments.

[4] Respondents from 89 agencies began the survey, but not all of them completed enough of it to provide usable data.

[5] The project advisors were Ana Bermudez (commissioner, New York City Department of Probation), Adolfo Gonzales (chief, San Diego County Probation Department), Tracy Grunenfelder (residential services manager, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services), Mary Kay Hudson (problem-solving court administrator, Indiana Judicial Center), Brian Lovins (former assistant director, Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Department), and Scott Meadors (former captain, Stockton Police Department).

[6] At the time of pilot site selection, 61 percent of DCS officers had received ESP training, but at least 92 percent of officers in the circuits participating in the training had completed it.

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About the Authors

Jesse Jannetta is a senior policy fellow in the Justice Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where he leads projects on prison and jail reentry, community antiviolence initiatives, police-community relations, parole and probation supervision, and risk prediction.

Travis Reginal is a research associate in the Justice Policy Center. He provides project management and employs mixed-methods research for projects related to prison and jail reentry, community supervision, behavioral health, and education. He is the project manager for the Evaluation of Procedural Justice Principles in Probation project.

Daniel S. Lawrence is a principal research associate in the Justice Policy Center. His research focuses on police legitimacy and procedural justice, police technology, police screening and hiring practices, and community policing. Lawrence holds a BS in criminal justice from Northeastern University and an MA and PhD in criminology, law, and justice from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Caitlin Flood is a senior program manager on the Center for Court Innovation's training and technical assistance team. In this role, she provides consulting and training services to jurisdictions on the topics of procedural justice and problem-solving justice, including support of the 2018 Community Court Grant Program. She holds a BA in Government & Law and Philosophy from Lafayette College and a JD from the New York University School of Law.

Emily Gold LaGratta, principal at LaGratta Consulting, works with local and national justice agencies to design and implement innovative programming, engage impacted individuals and utilize their feedback, and develop practitioner resources and training tools. Prior to starting LaGratta Consulting in 2019, she was the director of procedural justice initiatives at the Center for Court Innovation. She is a former public defender and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School.

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500 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20024

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