

Gathering data and managing data: The how and why

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Research Associate, Reshaping Prosecution program, Vera Institute of Justice

Agenda

- Why we are here: Vera's Reshaping Prosecution program and the role of data
- The Four Considerations for Data Practices
- Action Steps

Who we are



Jamila Hodge



Sarah Darwiche



Seleeke Flingai



Izzy Gibson



Akhi Johnson



Nicholas MacDonald



Meghan Nayak



Adureh Onyekwere



Jaclyn Quiles-Nohar



Stephen Roberts



Erin Ross



Maria Starzmann



Eric Sutton III



Andrew Taylor

What goals underpin our work

Reshaping Prosecution is committed to



Ending mass
incarceration



Addressing racial
disparities & pursuing
equal justice

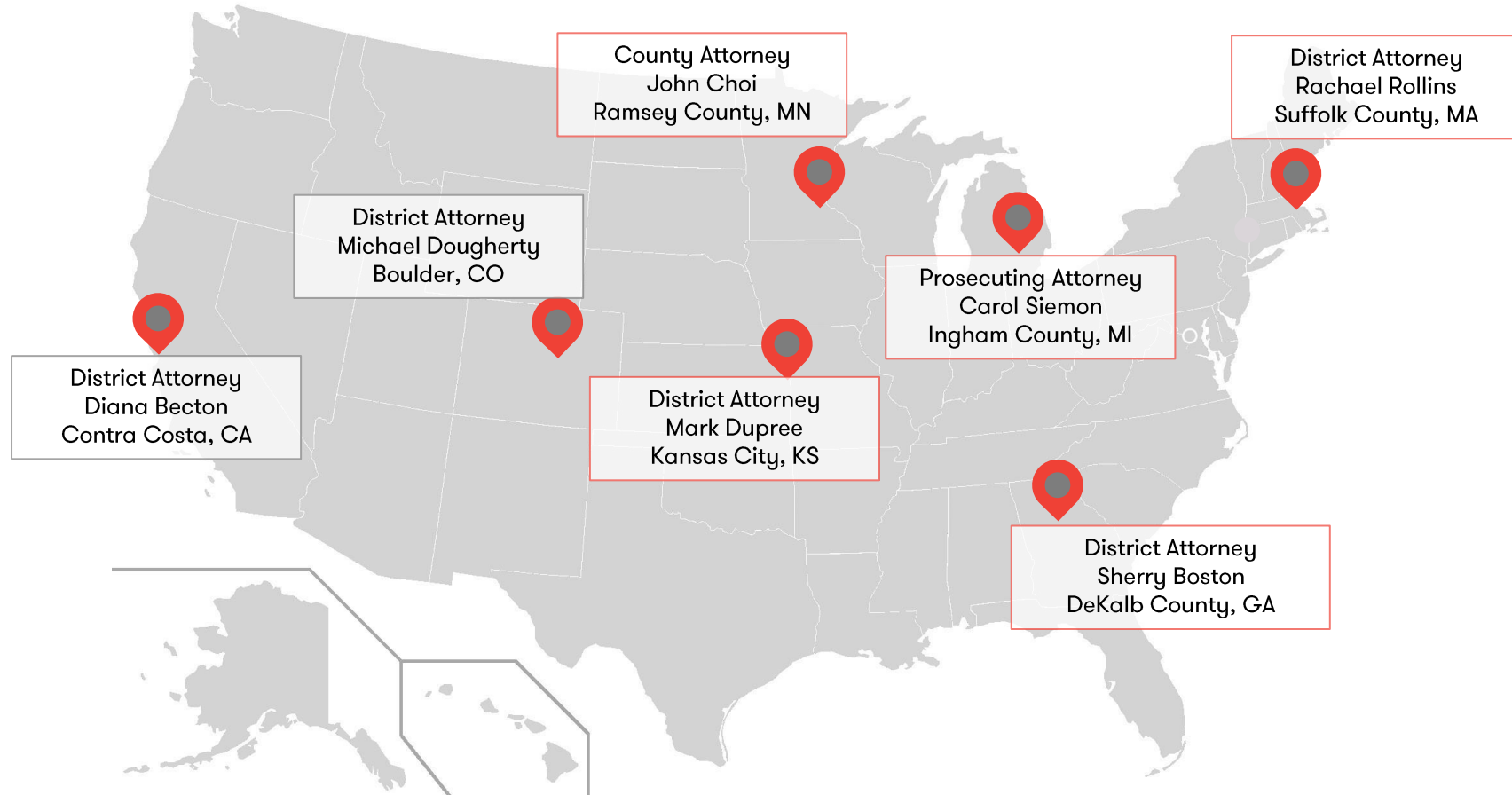


Increasing transparency
& accountability to
communities

What we do

- Offering examples, resources, relationships from a national perspective of offices & communities organizing around prosecutor accountability
- Supporting building relationships with local organizers and programs that work with directly-impacted community members
- Facilitating policy co-creation with directly-impacted community advocates and organizers
- Analyzing office's data to identify and implement reforms, evaluate impact, and develop/build data capacity for ongoing data transparency with community

Active partner offices



The role of data

“We hear so often of the need for good data, of the need for proven programs...The way that you prove that a program is working or understand the scope of a problem is to measure it. **You can't have a solution without measuring the scope of the problem.**”

Joshua Rovner,
The Sentencing Project

The role of data

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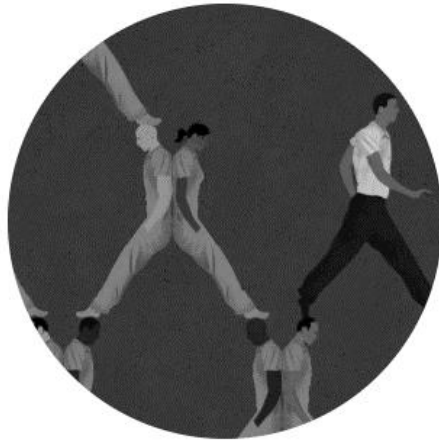


Increasing transparency
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communities

Using data to help contextualize the problem of mass incarceration
within the jurisdictions of our site partners

The role of data

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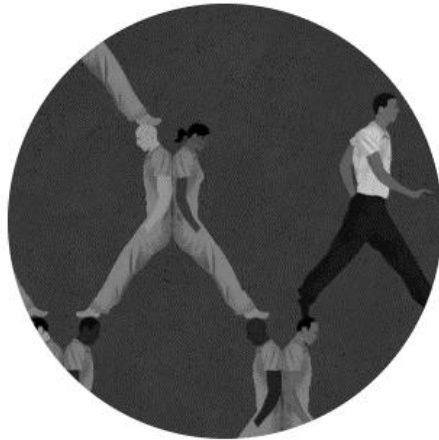


Increasing transparency
& accountability to
communities

Using data to measure the racialized impacts of the prosecutorial system, informing racially equitable policy change

The role of data

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Increasing transparency
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communities

Explore the potential of public-facing data to increase the office's
transparency and accountability to the community

Data can help shine a light on the disparities and harms caused by the system – a key step in bringing about change and addressing racial disparities.

The Four Considerations for Data Practices

The four considerations for data practices

1. Where Are You Now?
2. Building Relationships to Build the System
3. Trust the Process
4. Start Small, Think Holistic

Step 1: Where Are You Now?

- **Be honest about the purpose of collecting and sharing data**
 - What framework are you using to interpret your data? Is racial equity at the center of the framework, or simply tangential?
 - What data are you prioritizing for collection and sharing? Which data are you not sharing, and why?
 - Who are you collecting and sharing data for? Which stakeholders do you hope gain valuable insight from your data collection and sharing? Are the most impacted communities also considered key stakeholders?
 - If someone used your data to critique office impacts on the community, how would you receive that information? How will you ensure continued transparency?

Step 1: Where Are You Now?

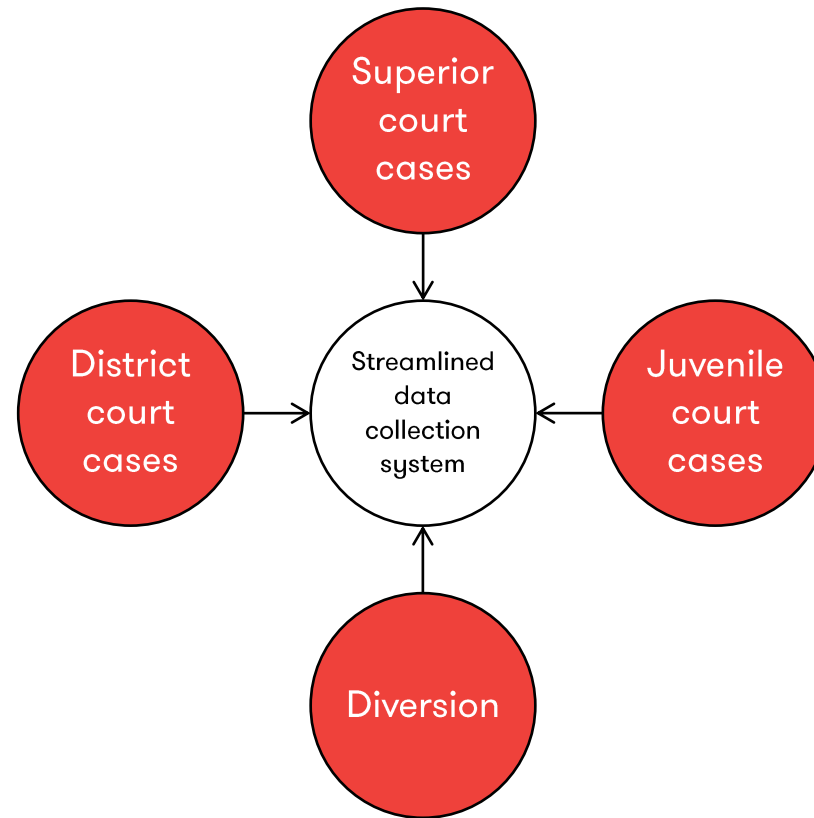
- **Spend time assessing the current state of your data infrastructure**
 - What data vendor(s) are being used? What data does the office collect? Where does it come from, who inputs the information, and are there processes in place to assure data quality?
 - What information is collected via paper but not electronically? What data is collected in Excel spreadsheets instead of the case management system? Does this differ by department?
 - Who else is collecting the identical data? Where are there redundancies? Can these systems speak to one another to ensure consistent data across systems?

Step 1: Where Are You Now?

- **Spend time assessing the current state of your data capacity**
 - What personnel may you need to bolster your data work? And what data literacy skills can existing staff learn to improve the utility of data in the office's ecosystem?
 - Primary data workers: Analysts/researchers; IT staff
 - Data facilitators: Community engagement staff; communications staff
 - What existing or new relationships can you tap into to do some of this work without necessarily expanding the office?
 - Academic partnerships
 - Community groups and community research specialists

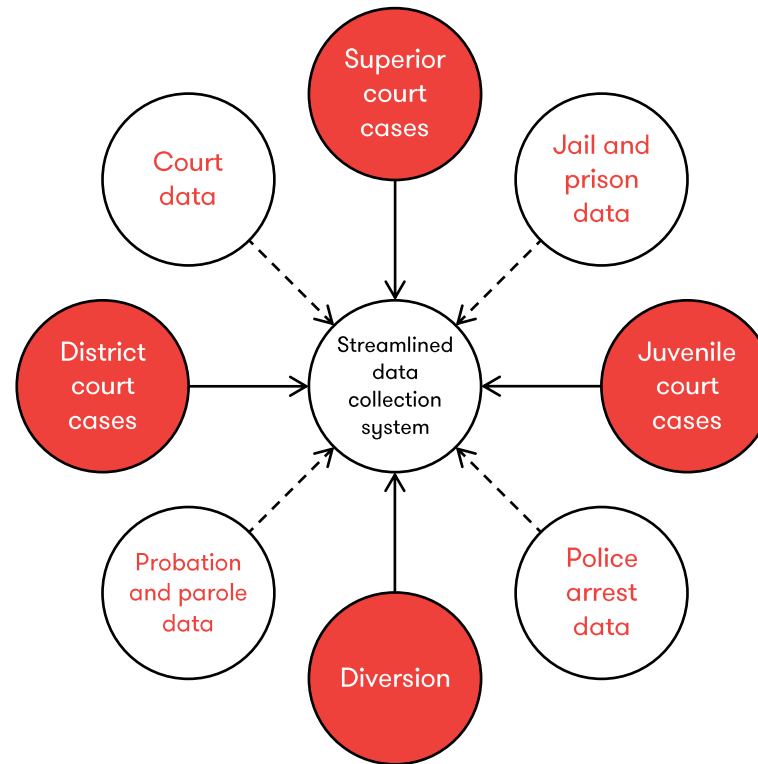
Step 2: Building Relationships to Build the System

- **Get the whole office involved in a streamlined system**



Step 2: Building Relationships to Build the System

- **Building relationships with other law enforcement stakeholders around data sharing and streamlining**



Step 2: Building Relationships to Build the System

- **Build authentic relationships with communities, especially with the most impacted, who have every reason to be skeptical**
 - Building trust with community members will require listening and accountability. Listen and address their grievances, then listen to what information they would want to know.
 - This can all inform the data you collect and the ways it is shared to maximize transparency and community accountability.

Step 2: Building Relationships to Build the System

- Find community partners who use data

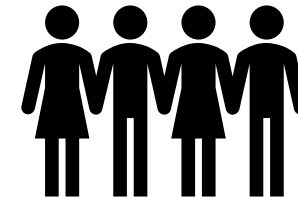
Academic
institutions



Civic data
organizations

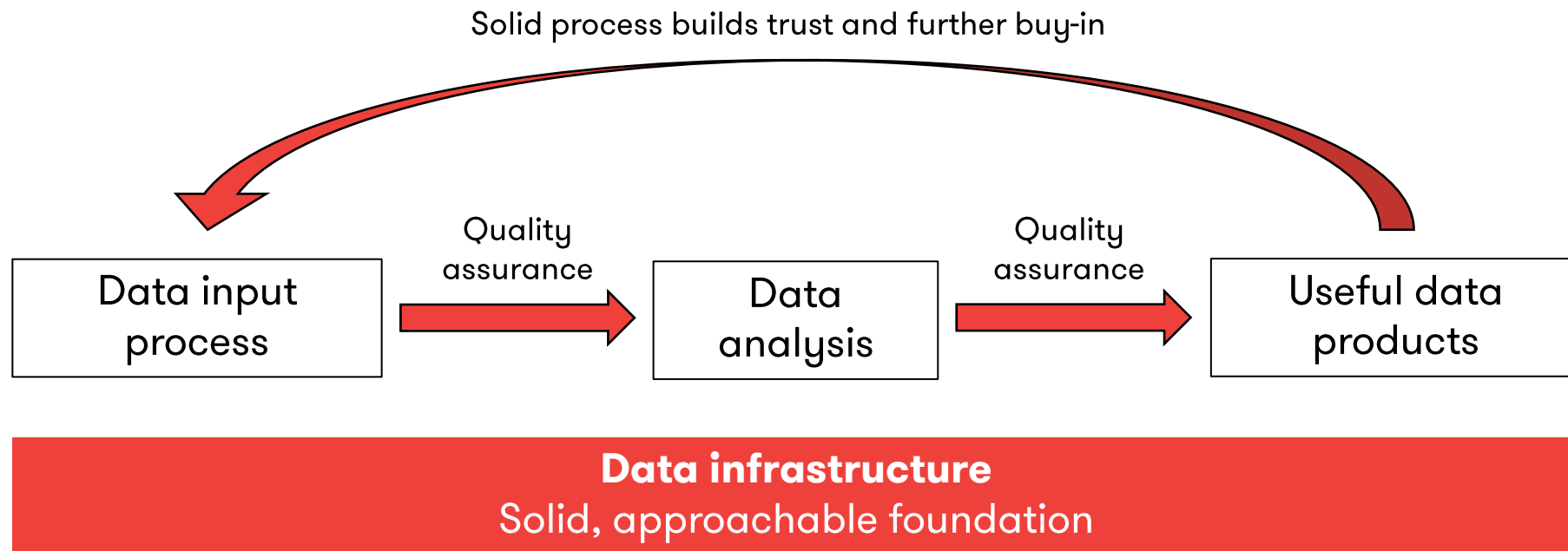


Community
organizations with data
capacity



Step 3: Trust the Process

- **Don't strive for perfection. Strive for building infrastructure and processes that people can trust**



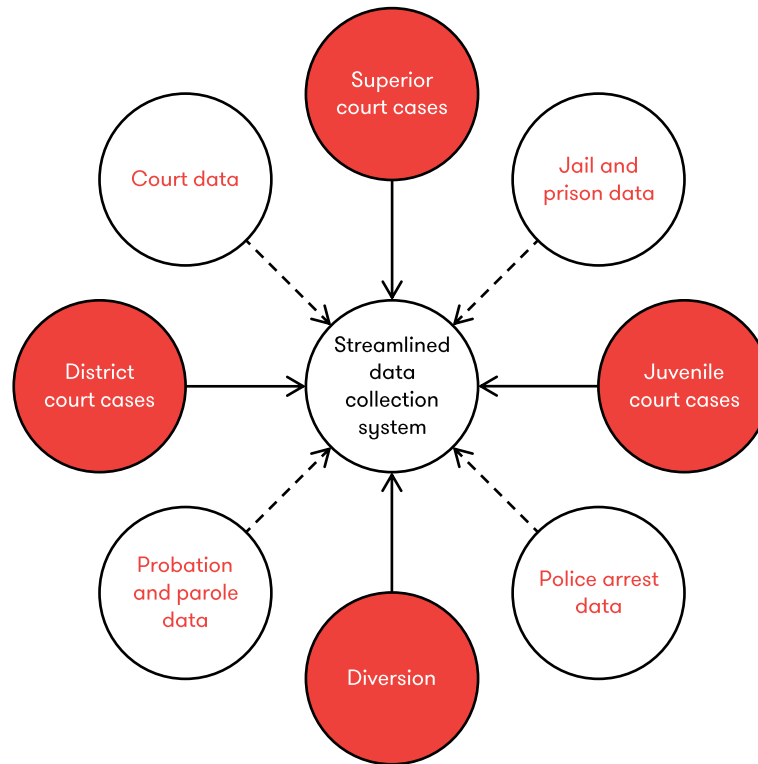
Step 4: Start Small, Think Holistic

- **For data analysis, start small**
 - Can you reliably determine the number of cases arraigned each year? By race/ethnicity, gender, age? What's the lead charge? What's the disposition of each charge? What's the imposed sentence length for a given convicted case?
 - Before thinking about dashboards, open data, or large research collaborations, solidify the basic data infrastructure first. This foundation will serve everyone well!

Step 4: Start Small, Think Holistic

- **Nothing in isolation -- provide historical and local context**

Historical context through data (e.g., redlining maps) and local history



Socioeconomic data for present context (e.g., economic distress, housing, public health data)

Step 4: Start Small, Think Holistic

- **There are many ways to share data that have various levels of transparency and complexity**

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Open data
and
dashboards



Download Data Summary data from each report may be downloaded for further analysis.
dated through 06/06/2021

Dataset	Daily Citywide	Daily by Police District	Daily by ZIP Code (ZCTA)	Weekly by Census Tract	Quarterly by Census Tract
Incident Data	OpenDataPhilly				
Arrests Data	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV
Charges Data	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV
Case Outcome Data	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV
Bail Data	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV	CSV

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MISDEMEANOR PROSECUTION

Amanda Y. Agan
Jennifer L. Doleac
Anna Harvey

Working Paper 28600
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w28600>

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH
1050 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
March 2021

Academic
collaborations

We thank Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office for their cooperation, and especially thank Bobby Constantino for his tireless efforts in helping us access and understand the data.

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SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JUSTICE DRIVEN DATA
From the San Francisco District Attorney's Office

An Epidemic Inside a Pandemic
 Authored By Dylan Yep, Tara Anderson, and Todd Faulkenberry
 Edited By Rachel Marshall and Robyn Burke
 November 30, 2020

**In-house
topical data
reports**

Step 4: Start Small, Think Holistic

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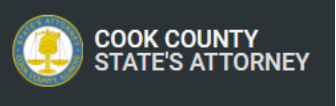
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**Hacking
4
Justice**

Community
data trainings

Hacking Justice
Beginner Workshop: February 22-23, 2020

Action Steps

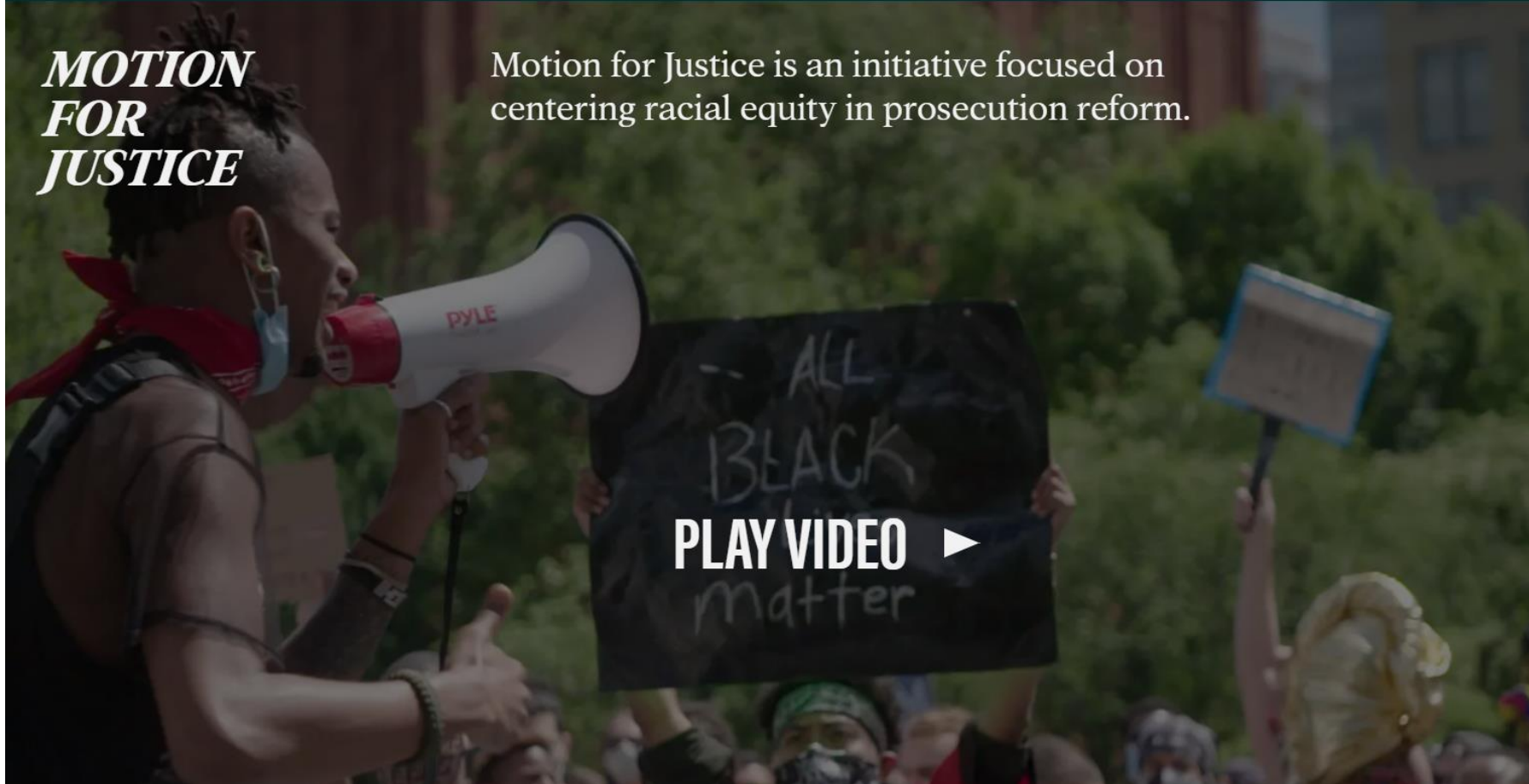
Motion for Justice: centering racial equity in prosecutorial reform

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE **VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE** AND **INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION IN PROSECUTION**

***MOTION
FOR
JUSTICE***











Motion for Justice is an initiative focused on centering racial equity in prosecution reform.

PLAY VIDEO ▶

A photograph of a person at a protest, wearing a red scarf and a blue face mask, shouting into a white and red megaphone. In the background, a person holds a black sign with white text that reads "ALL BLACK matter". The scene is outdoors with green foliage in the background.

motionforjustice.vera.org

Motion for Justice action steps

MOTION FOR JUSTICE		History	Values	Action Steps	Strategies
 Engage Be accountable to the most impacted communities.	 Analyze Collect data on disparities and understand their systemic causes.	 Educate Teach racial justice principles to future lawyers to sustain reforms.			
 Train Instill prosecutors with core values and practices.	 Decline Reduce the reach of the criminal legal system.	 Divert Pursue restorative responses to harm.			
 Refrain Treat convictions and incarceration as a last resort.	 Remedy Repair past harms from reliance on convictions and incarceration.	 Advocate Seek sustainable change through legislative reforms.			
 Divest Cede power and resources to impacted communities.					

Data-centered action steps

- **Analyze and publicly share findings on the racial demographics** of people charged compared to the racial demographics of the jurisdiction.

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- Due to data reporting mechanisms and protocols, **criminal justice data frequently undercounts people in Latinx and indigenous communities. Prosecutorial data collection should address this shortcoming.**

Data-centered action steps

- **Analyze and publicly share findings on the racial demographics** of people charged compared to the racial demographics of the jurisdiction.
- **Share the underlying data with the public** so that community members can explore the data and conduct their own analyses.
- Due to data reporting mechanisms and protocols, **criminal justice data frequently undercounts people in Latinx and indigenous communities**. Prosecutorial data collection should address this shortcoming.
- **Capture demographic data on populations that are often overlooked but significantly impacted** by incarceration such as people in the LGBTQ+ community and those with disabilities.

Thank you!
