

For Immediate Release

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**Measures for Justice and the Criminal Justice Administrative Records System
at the University of Michigan Join Forces to Improve
the Processing of Criminal Justice Data**

Rochester, NY – July 21, 2020— [Measures for Justice](#) (MFJ) and the [Criminal Justice Administrative Records System](#) (CJARS) announced a new partnership to make it easier and faster to process criminal justice data. This collaborative effort will help generate a quick way to standardize data, which comes at a moment when the national clamor for data and transparency is at an all-time high.

As experts in accessible data infrastructure, CJARS is developing automated techniques to help standardize how criminal justice data gets processed. MFJ is using its vast repository of criminal justice data to help “train” machine-learning algorithms that CJARS is developing to predict and classify offense descriptions in administrative records into MFJ’s offense classification scheme. This will speed up the time it takes researchers to plow through extensive lists of offense descriptions, and avoid coding them by hand, one at a time. This work will save researchers hundreds of hours and make data sets, in general, much easier to use and comparable across jurisdictions and over time.

“We are very excited to be working with MFJ on a project that breaks down barriers to research on the justice system and makes high-quality data available to researchers. This is especially important now as citizens call for reform in the justice system.” **said Michael Mueller-Smith, Directors of CJARS.**

This effort is part of Measures for Justice’s bigger project to spur reform by improving the country’s criminal justice data infrastructure, and CJARS’s goal of producing a data infrastructure that will support the next generation of criminal justice research.

“We are thrilled at the opportunity to work with CJARS because we share an interest in making sure criminal justice data can be easily accessed by everyone,” **said Amy Bach, Founder and Executive Director of Measures for Justice.** “Now, more than ever, we need to be able to really see what the criminal justice system is doing--from the police, to prosecutors, to courts, to re-entry.”

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About MFJ: [Measures for Justice](#) is a nonpartisan nonprofit with a mission to make accurate criminal justice data available to spur reform. The organization does this by collecting existing criminal justice data from counties, running them through a set of comparative performance measures spanning arrest to post-conviction, and publishing them on a free, online Data Portal.

About CJARS: [CJARS](#) is a joint project between the University of Michigan and the U.S. Census Bureau to create a nationally integrated, individual-level data infrastructure of harmonized and linked arrest, criminal court, and corrections records. These records will also be linkable, at the individual-level, to a vast array of social and economic administrative data held by the U.S. Census Bureau. The CJARS data infrastructure will be available for use by qualified researchers through the U.S. Census Bureau's Federal Statistical Research Data Center network.