

News Release



New Jersey Courts

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For immediate release:
April 13, 2018

Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage to Sponsor Seminar on Criminal Justice Reform

The Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage will sponsor a free seminar on Criminal Justice Reform on Thursday, April 19 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset County Courthouse, 20 N. Bridge St., Somerville.

The seminar, organized by the vicinage's Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns, will provide information about changes to the criminal justice system that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2017. Under the changes, New Jersey's criminal justice system was transformed from one that relies principally on monetary bail as a condition of pretrial release to a risk-based system that bases pretrial release decisions on an examination of objective factors.

The new system allows defendants who pose a low risk of violence or flight to be released under certain levels of monitoring while awaiting trial. Prosecutors can also seek to detain dangerous defendants until trial. Defendants who are detained are subject to speedy trial rules that set deadlines for the disposition of criminal charges.

The program also will address the roles of the court, prosecutor and public defender; the impact of the risk assessment on pretrial decisions and an explanation of the speedy trial rule.

Speakers will include Assistant Division Manager Brian Rother of the vicinage's Pretrial Services Unit, Chief Assistant Somerset County Prosecutor W. Brian Stack and Public Defenders Dee Stroup and Marcia Muñoz.

Seating for this seminar is limited. Participants should RSVP to V13VACMC.Mailbox@njcourts.gov.

For attorneys, application for Continuing Legal Education program accreditation is pending for this event.

Requests for interpreting services and ADA accommodations, questions about facility logistics, and inquiries about professional development credits can be directed to Denise Paternoster at 908-231-7624.

The Minority Concerns Committee, which develops programs enabling the court to better serve the community, includes Superior Court employees and community representatives.

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