**New Jail Planning Initiative**

Local jurisdictions face a wide variety of challenges when deciding whether to build a new jail. If they make a decision to build, they face further challenges in the planning, construction, and operation of a new jail. The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Jails Division provides training, technical assistance, and information related to new jail planning. These services address issues such as factors to consider in making the decision to build a new jail; the crucial importance of owner involvement in all phases of the project; and information related to designing, constructing, and occupying the new facility.

**Jail and Justice System Assessment (JJSA)**

Jurisdictions considering renovating an existing jail or constructing a new one can apply for assistance in evaluating their current facility and the role of their jail in the local criminal justice system. NIC will assess the physical condition of the jail and interview criminal justice stakeholders about policies and practices that affect the jail. The assistance will result in recommendations related to new construction or renovation and observations concerning areas of the local justice system that have an impact on the jail population. The recommendations and observations will be presented at a meeting of local officials, jail practitioners, and community members, and will be documented in a follow-up report.

**Planning of New Institutions (PONI)**

Although criminal justice planners and architectural firms have the technical expertise to plan and design a new jail, it is the jurisdiction that will operate the jail long after the planners and architects are gone. Therefore, it is important that a jail’s design meet the operational and capacity needs of the jurisdiction and agency that will operate it. Owner involvement throughout the planning process is crucial to the success of the planning effort and, ultimately, the successful construction and operation of the new jail. Decisions made at the early stages of the planning process will affect the remainder of the project.

This 32-hour training program teaches the importance of in-depth planning before starting facility design; it does not teach participants how to design a correctional facility. The course teaches concepts through case studies, allowing participants to get "hands-on" experience in planning methods. The course focuses on the critical elements of planning a new facility, including collecting and using data, pre-architectural programming, site evaluation, project management, and determining staffing needs.

This training is designed for four person teams. Team members must have key policymaking and decision making roles in the new jail project. The team must include the sheriff or director of corrections, the jail administrator, a county commissioner or county supervisor, and the county executive or administrator.
**Managing Jail Design and Construction**

Contracting services for the design and construction of a new facility is only one small step in the much larger process of building a new jail. How staff transfer inmates, accept visitors, and create space for special programming are considerations that should be resolved long before construction begins. This program teaches participants to think about the nuances of their operations and how they should translate into design and construction. The course introduces participants to project management and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of those who develop, design, and construct new facilities.

Together, teams learn how to read and interpret facility planning documents, manage changes during construction, and develop a design and construction plan that meets their needs. By the end of the course, teams should be able to take an active role in managing day-to-day activities, resolving problems, and making decisions related to the design and construction process.

Participants work in teams to focus on the skills and abilities they need to manage design and construction. Team members must come from the same facility and have key decision making roles in the building project. They should have a firm commitment to the construction of a new facility and have funding for the project, and they should have completed, or be in the process of completing, a needs assessment and feasibility study. The teams may include up to three participants, including the sheriff, jail administrator, project manager, transition team leader, or other assigned staff member.

**Making the Transition to a New Jail (HONI – How to Open a New Institution)**

Transition assistance helps local officials understand how to plan for the transition to and occupation of the new jail. It is available to jurisdictions at two points in time before the new jail opens:

Before the jurisdiction breaks ground for the new jail, a technical resource provider can work onsite to help local officials understand the major components of transition, develop criteria for selecting transition team members, and begin to create an action plan for the transition process.

After the jurisdiction has broken ground for the new jail, technical resource providers can train the transition team on the function of the jail’s mission statement; development of operational scenarios, policies, procedures, and post orders; move logistics; staff training issues; budgeting for transition; and development of an action plan for transition. If a jurisdiction is within 12 months of opening its new jail, assistance can still be provided but is limited in scope because of time constraints. A technical resource provider can help local officials and agency staff assigned to the project, identify the critical tasks required to open the facility and develop an action plan to complete those tasks.

*There is little or no cost to jurisdictions who request assistance and/or training from NIC. For more information please contact Mike Jackson at 1-800-995-6423 ext. 69565 or direct line 202-616-9565 or by email at mpjackson@bop.gov.*