



STATE OF DELAWARE  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL**  
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**For Immediate Release**

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**DECLARATION OF LEADING PRACTICES TO PROTECT CIVIL RIGHTS AND  
PROMOTE RACIAL AND ETHNIC FAIRNESS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
SYSTEM**

**WILMINGTON, DELAWARE-APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> 2010:** The Delaware Criminal Justice Council, an independent body committed to leading the Delaware criminal justice system through a collaborative approach that calls upon the experience and creativity of the Council, all components of the system, and the community, formally adopted on April 19, 2010 a Declaration of Leading Practices to Protect Civil Rights and Promote Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Criminal Justice System. The Declaration, which can be found on the Criminal Justice Council website <http://cjc.delaware.gov/default.shtml> , promotes the protection of civil rights and racial and ethnic fairness through nine leading practices. The first is a fundamental and complete leadership commitment to racial and ethnic fairness in the criminal justice system. Additional leading practices addressed in the Declaration are early intervention strategies, civilian and internal complaint processes, managing the use of force by law enforcement, clear and unequivocal policies promoting bias-free decision making, personnel management to promote a representative work force, data management to measure compliance with the leading practices identified and community outreach. The Declaration provides that effective January 1, 2011; a preference shall be given to any grant applicant that certifies compliance with the leading practices over any applicant that does not so certify. The Delaware Criminal Justice Council allocates among the criminal justice agencies and courts in Delaware all federal funds for the improvement of the state criminal justice system and awards, with the approval of the Delaware State Clearinghouse Committee, more than \$8,000.000 in federal grants each year.

The Declaration was adopted upon the recommendation of the Criminal Justice Council's Racial and Ethnic Fairness Committee which is Co-Chaired by Justice Henry duPont Ridgely of the Delaware Supreme Court and Chief Judge Alex J. Smalls of the Delaware Court of Common Pleas. Justice Ridgely said: "Fairness is the hallmark of any justice system which has the public's

trust and confidence. Our criminal justice community shares the responsibility to promote fairness, bias-free behavior, and public trust in the criminal justice system. This Declaration of Leading Practices is the first of its kind collaboration by a state-wide criminal justice community to promote racial and ethnic fairness across the entire system. The guidance the Declaration provides and the commitment of the Criminal Justice Council to the practices within it will help ensure the success of our ongoing strategies to maximize fairness for all and thereby improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Delaware.”

Chief Judge Alex Smalls for the Court of Common Pleas stated, “For any Criminal Justice System to be accepted by the community, that community must share the belief that the system is fair and free of racial and ethnic bias. These principles move toward that goal.”

Marc Mauer, Executive Director of The Sentencing Project, a non-governmental agency committed to working nationally for a fair and effective criminal justice system with offices in Washington, D.C., added: “The Delaware Criminal Justice Council has taken an important step in developing a roadmap for ensuring that the criminal justice system is free of racial and ethnic bias. If the criminal justice system is to function effectively, it needs to both be fair in its practice and be perceived as fair by the larger community.”

Christian Kervick, Acting Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Council stated: “This Declaration is just the latest example of the collective leadership displayed by our full Council. This will help our office and the criminal justice system work together to improve racial and ethnic fairness throughout the system.”

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