



# National Prosecutors' Consortium

## Survey Highlights

### *Nevada*



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# NEVADA REPORT Acknowledgements

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background.....	1	Specialty Courts.....	10
Methodology.....	1	Alternatives to Incarceration.....	12
The Current State: Nevada.....	2	Specialized Programs.....	13
Overview: Types of Cases.....	2	Community Programs.....	14
Chief Prosecutor.....	4	Technology.....	15
Office Budget.....	4	Body-Worn Cameras.....	15
Starting Salaries.....	6	Websites.....	17
Case Processing .....	6	Research.....	17
Number of Employees.....	8	Conclusions.....	18
Prosecutor Initiatives.....	10		



# BACKGROUND

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The National Prosecutors' Consortium (NPC), a collaboration between Justice & Security Strategies (JSS) and the Prosecutors' Center for Excellence (PCE), is designed to collect information on innovative programs employed by prosecutors' offices, to assist prosecutors in developing and deploying new programs, and to expand the research capacities of prosecutors' offices. The team developed a survey that is being administered at the county level across the United States on a state-by-state basis. This survey seeks to accomplish two objectives to support prosecution needs: 1) collection of a thorough baseline of information on the operation of county prosecutors' offices across the country, and 2) identification of those offices that have adopted innovative programs.



# METHODOLOGY

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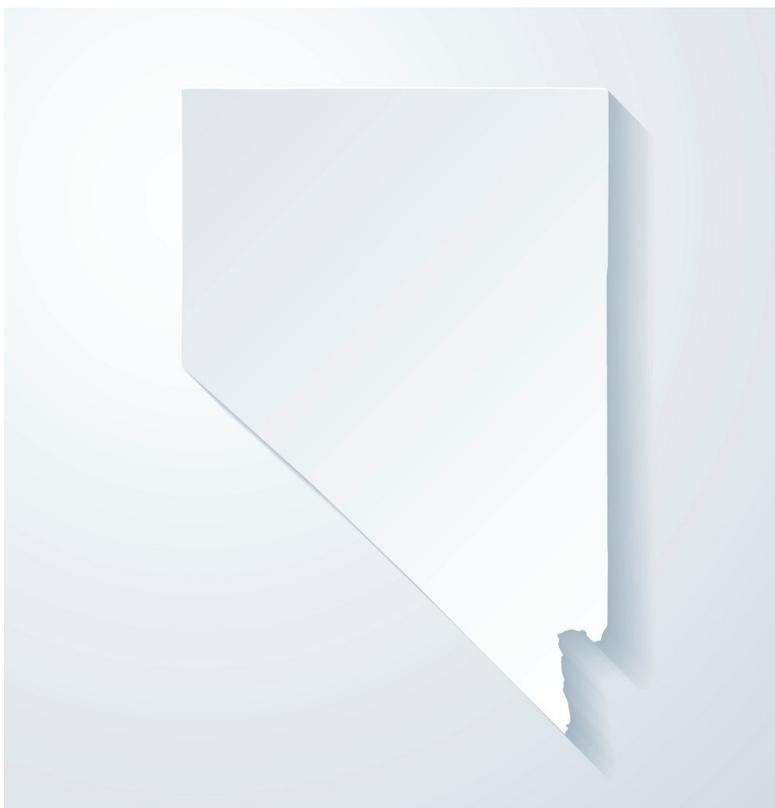
NPC conducted focus groups with prosecutors and prosecutor coordinating offices. As part of this effort, NPC identified the desired topic areas and reviewed survey questions. The survey is designed as an agency-based questionnaire intended to collect data on the characteristics and operations within each prosecutor's office. The survey is delivered through an online, secure, cloud-based service using the Qualtrics survey platform. States are being offered this survey on a rolling basis.

As part of the data quality assurance process, we have identified a battery of 84 questions that provide the core information requested by the survey. To minimize the proportion of missing data, the weighted number of completed responses is compared to a threshold. Offices in counties where the responses did not pass this threshold will be contacted and additional responses will be requested. This report discusses responses from all partially complete surveys, but there may be changes in the number of valid cases for some questions as follow-ups with agencies continue.

# THE CURRENT STATE - NEVADA

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The statewide Nevada survey provides many insights into the day-to-day functioning of prosecutors' offices. This report discusses preliminary results from the survey. Out of the 17 prosecutors' offices that were contacted, 11 counties (65%) submitted responses as of June 25, 2019.



## TYPES OF CASES

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**Figure 1** depicts the percentage of prosecutors' offices handling specific types of cases. All offices reported handling all or at least some felonies, misdemeanors, infractions, and juvenile cases. All of the responding offices (N = 11) reported handling civil matters. **Figure 2** highlights the percentage of prosecutors' offices involved in various types of civil matters. All offices reported handling child protection matters. Mental health commitments and FOIA or other public information requests were reported by 10 offices. Nine offices reported handling civil forfeitures and nuisance abatement. Six offices reported handling adult protection cases and child support cases.

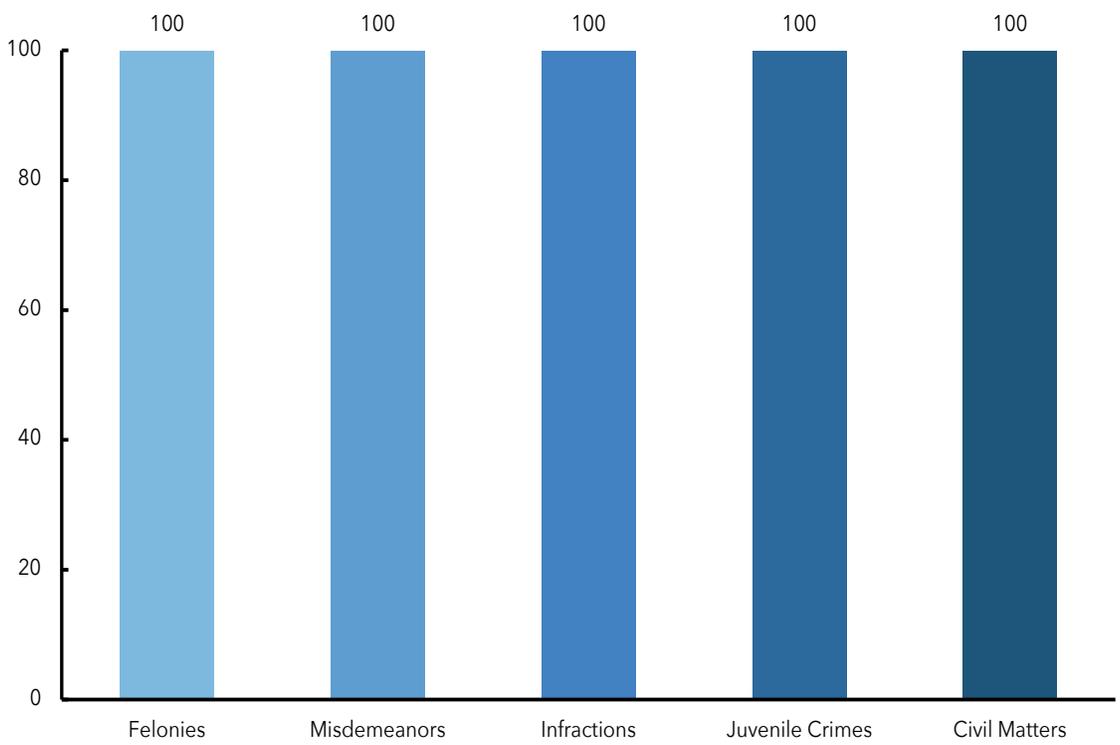


Figure 1. Percentage of Prosecutors' Offices with Jurisdiction over Cases by Type (N = 11).

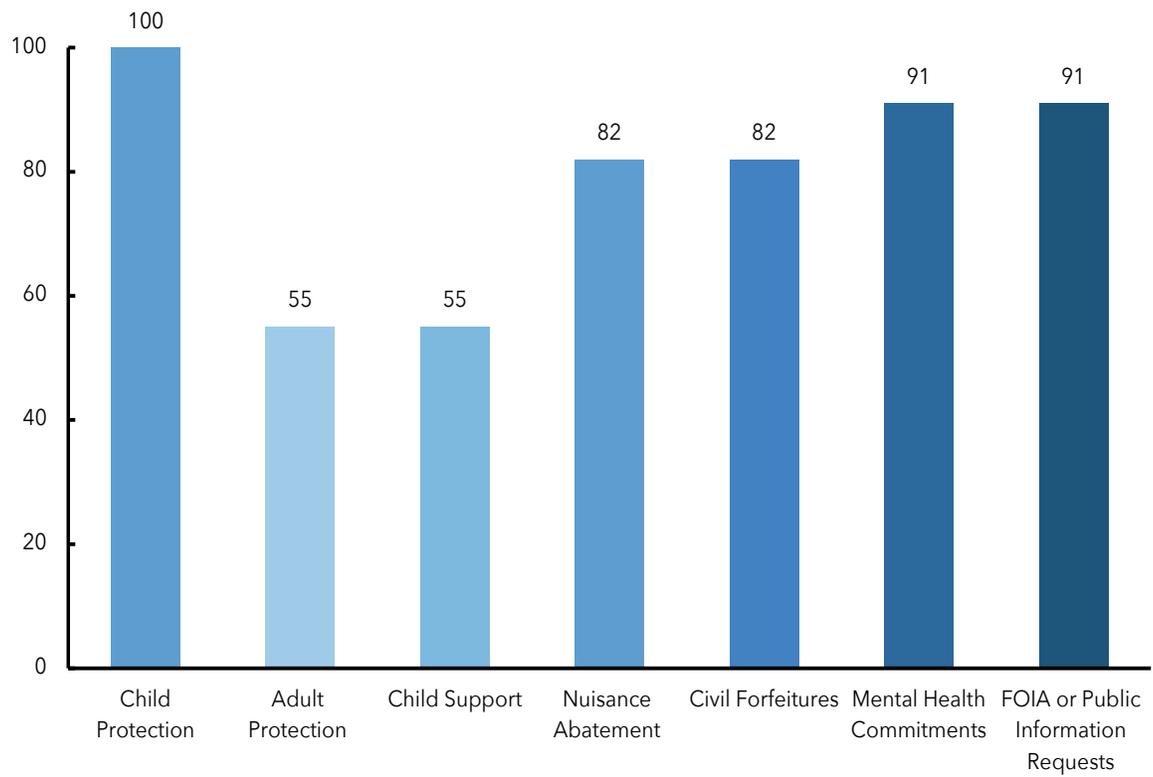


Figure 2. Percentage of Prosecutors' Offices with Jurisdiction over Civil Matters by Type (N = 11).

# CHIEF PROSECUTOR

Of the 11 counties that responded to the survey, all indicated that their Chief Prosecutor was elected. On average, the Chief Prosecutor had been in office for about nine years. The tenure of the Chief Prosecutor ranged from one year to 21 years. As seen in **Figure 3**, 55% of prosecutors had been in office for 1-5 years, 9% for 6-10 years, 18% between 11 and 15 years, and 18% over 15 years.

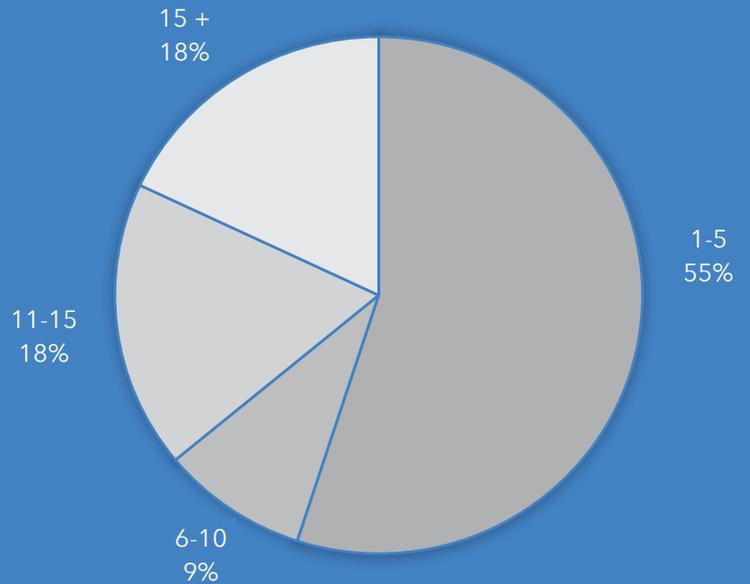


Figure 3. Chief Prosecutor Years in Office (N = 11).

# OFFICE BUDGET

The 2018 average budget for prosecutors' offices was approximately \$10,823,841, with a low value of \$388,917 and a high value of \$77,858,829. **Figure 4** depicts that 45% of the offices had a budget under \$2,000,000, 36% had budgets between \$2,000,000 and about \$4,999,999, and 18% had budgets over \$5,000,000.

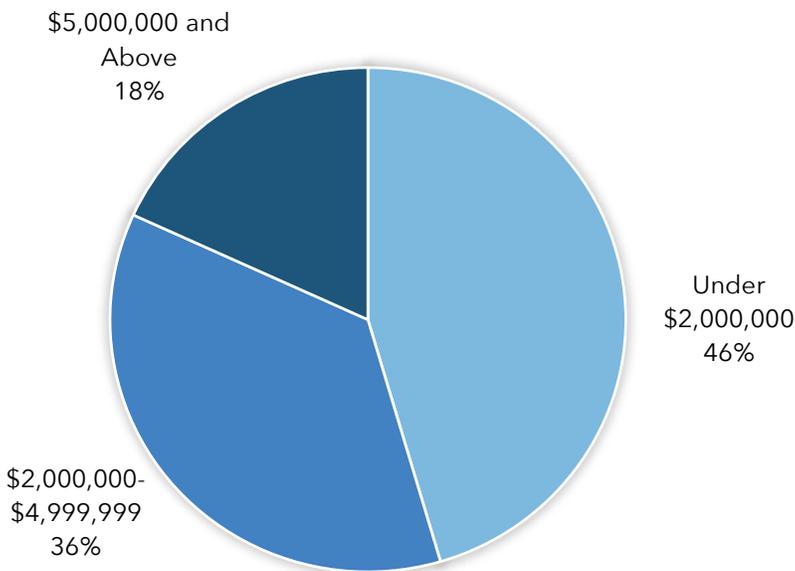


Figure 4. Ranges of 2018 Total Budgets (N = 11).

The average 2018 personnel budget for Nevada prosecutors' offices was \$9,478,960. Responses ranged from \$340,000 to \$67,473,236. **Figure 5** presents the ranges of personnel budgets. Approximately 45% of the offices had a personnel budget under \$2,000,000, 36% had a personnel budget of \$2,000,000 but less than about \$4,999,999, and 18% had budgets over \$5,000,000.

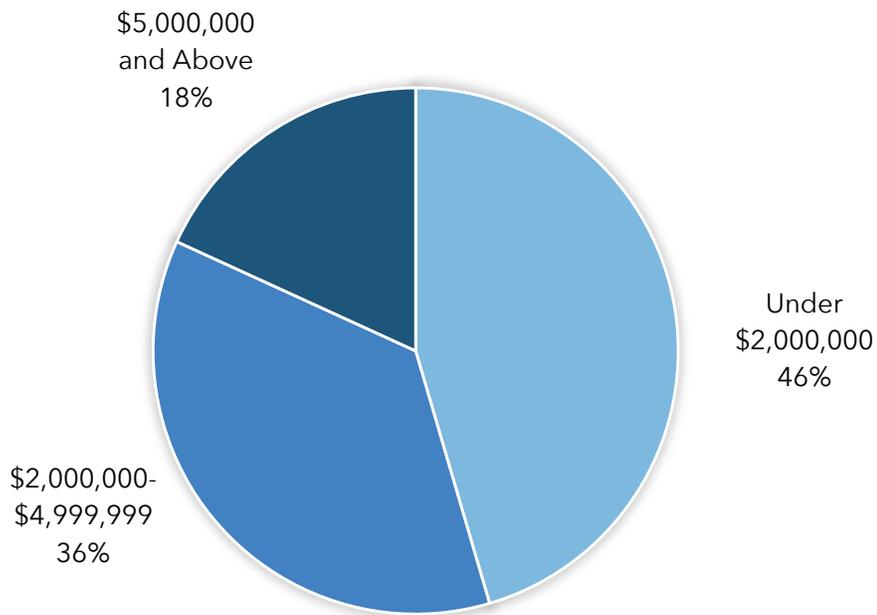


Figure 5. Ranges of 2018 Personnel Budgets (N = 11).

The average percentage of personnel to total budget by budget category is displayed in **Figure 6**. This graph provides a method to determine whether agencies with large budgets spend a disproportionate amount of their budget on personnel costs. From this graph it appears that average percentage of personnel to total budget is constant across budget categories with agencies spending an average of 90% of their total budgets on personnel costs.

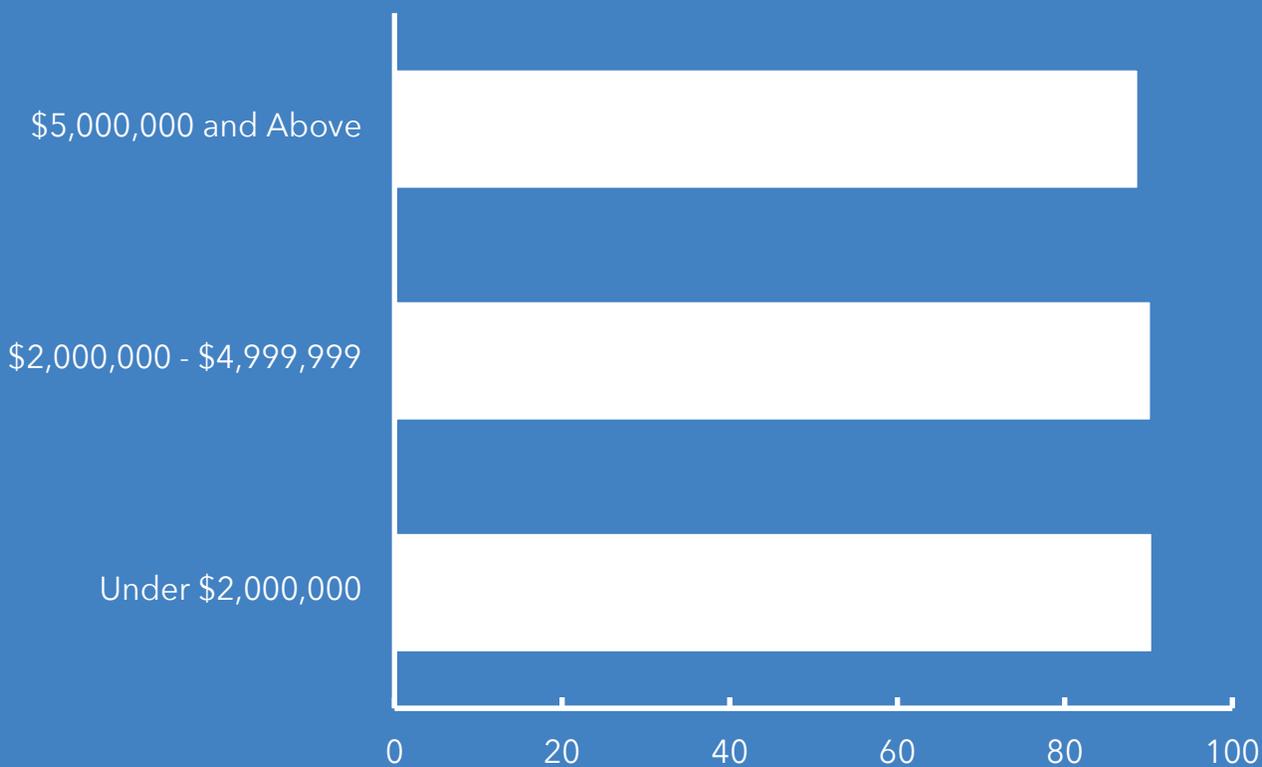


Figure 6. Average Percentage Personnel to Total Budget by Budget Category (N = 11).

# STARTING SALARIES

The 2018 starting salaries of recently graduated law students hired as prosecutors in Nevada ranged from a minimum of \$53,651 to a maximum of \$76,253. The average of the 11 responding offices was \$68,046.

# CASE PROCESSING

Excluding Clark County, in 2018, the offices surveyed reviewed on average 773 felony cases, resulting in 529 cases charged, 518 cases with at least one conviction, and 55 cases diverted. Further, on average, the offices reported reviewing 1,230 misdemeanor cases, resulting in 831 cases charged, 775 cases with at least one conviction, and 85 cases diverted. Finally, on average, the offices also reviewed 294 juvenile cases, resulting in 204 cases being charged, 190 cases with at least one conviction, and 58 cases diverted.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Clark County was severely distorting the state averages due the dramatic difference between their numbers and the next highest county. The numbers including Clark County will not be presented as this would violate confidentiality agreements.

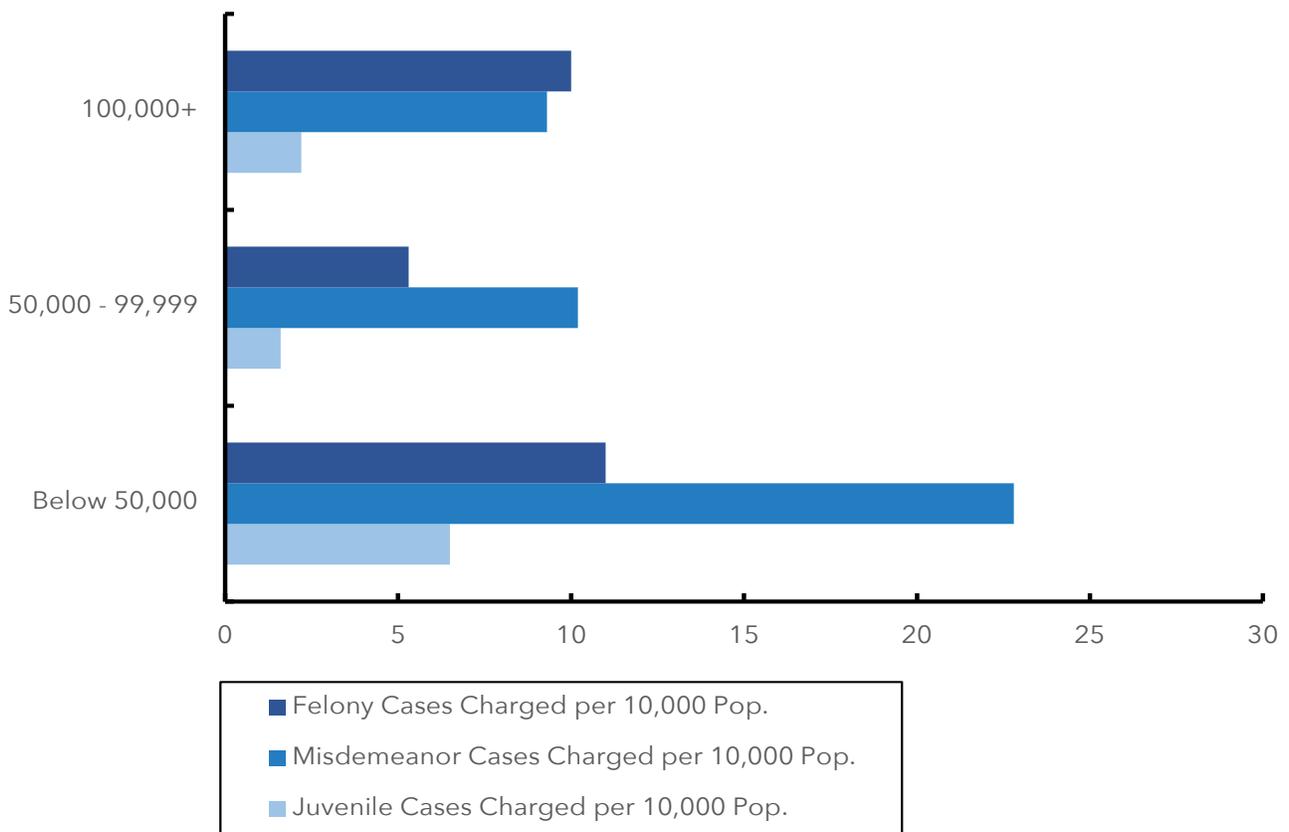


Figure 7. Cases Charged per 10,000 Population by Population Category (N = 11).

**Figure 7** depicts the number of felonies, misdemeanors, and juvenile cases charged by county population category. The smallest offices charge more felony, misdemeanor, and juvenile cases per capita than the mid-sized and largest offices. Offices with fewer than 50,000 residents charge more than twice as many misdemeanors and juvenile cases per capita than the larger offices.

**Figure 8** presents the average number of charged cases per full-time attorney for felonies, misdemeanors, and both felonies and misdemeanors combined. While these data are limited, the estimated workloads can provide a useful benchmark for agencies. Across reporting offices, there are an average of 69 charged felony cases per full-time attorney and 122 charged misdemeanor cases per full-time attorney. Overall, this resulted in an average of 190 charged misdemeanor and felony cases per full-time attorney.

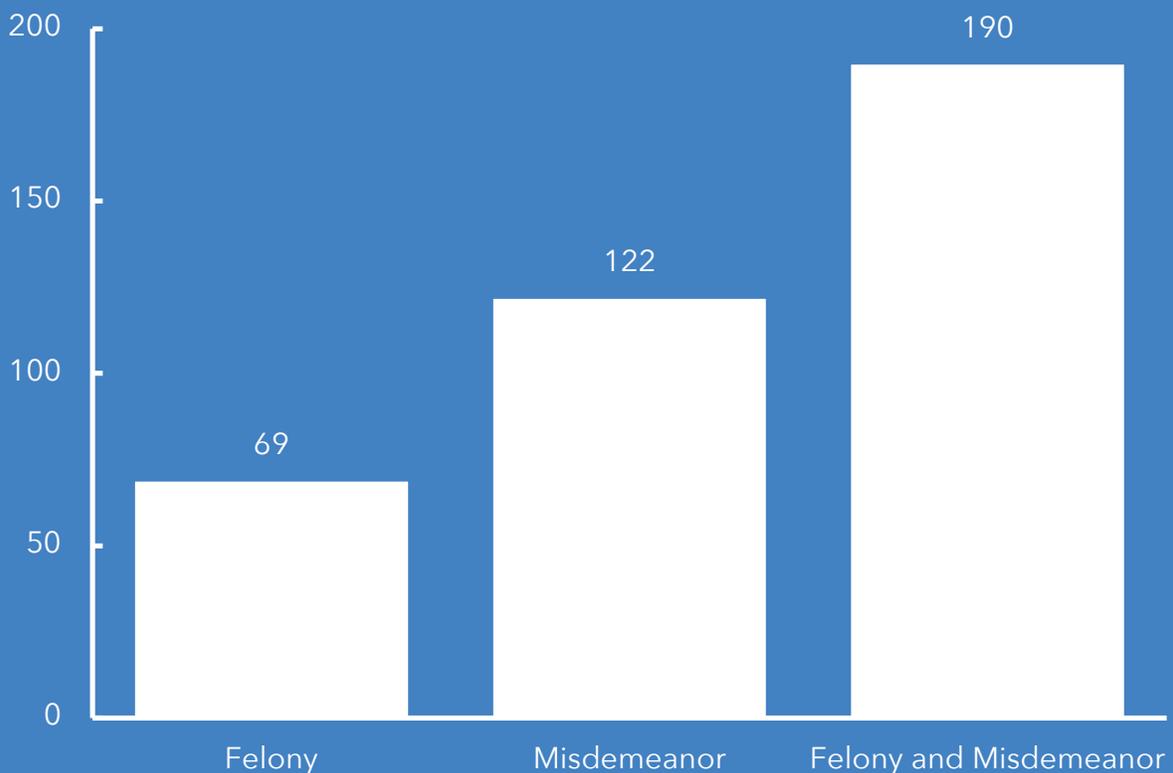


Figure 8. Average Number of Cases per Full-Time Attorney by Type of Case (N =11).



# NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

On average, prosecutors' offices in Nevada reported employing 27 full-time and no part-time attorneys. These offices also reported employing 62 full-time and 7 part-time non-attorneys.

**Figure 9** presents the number of full-time employees per 10,000 population by population category. Offices covering more than 100,000 residents had the highest number of full-time attorneys, non-attorneys, and total employees per 10,000 residents. Offices covering fewer than 50,000 residents had the lowest number of full-time attorneys, non-attorneys, and total employees per 10,000 residents.

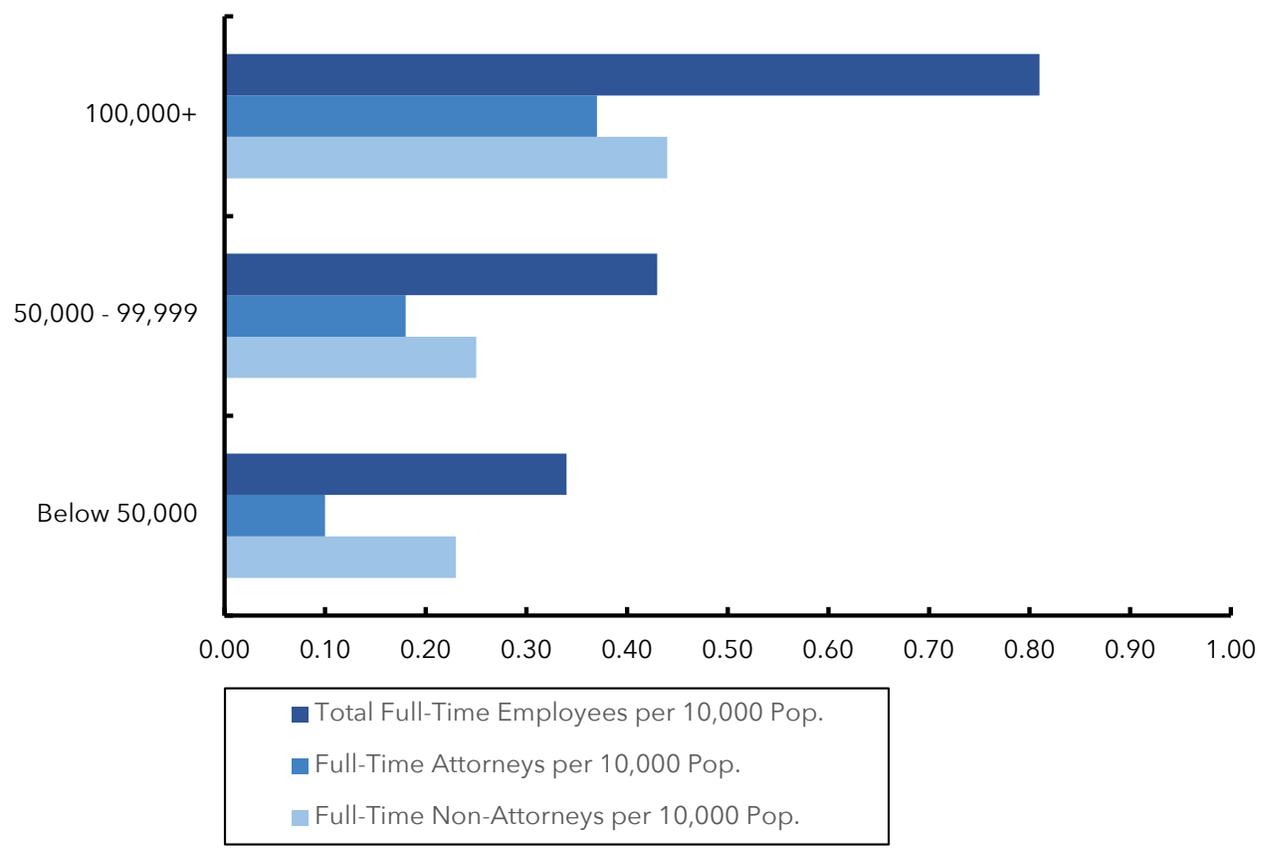


Figure 9. Number of Full-Time Employees per 10,000 Population by Population Category (N = 11).

A different strategy for examining staffing information is to consider the ratio of staff to a measure of workload. **Figure 10** presents the average number of full-time employees per 1,000 felony and misdemeanor cases charged. Counties covering 50,000 to 99,999 residents and counties covering fewer than 50,000 residents had about the same number of full-time staff members per 1,000 cases. Counties with more than 100,000 residents had the lowest number of full-time attorneys, non-attorneys, and total employees per 1,000 cases charged.

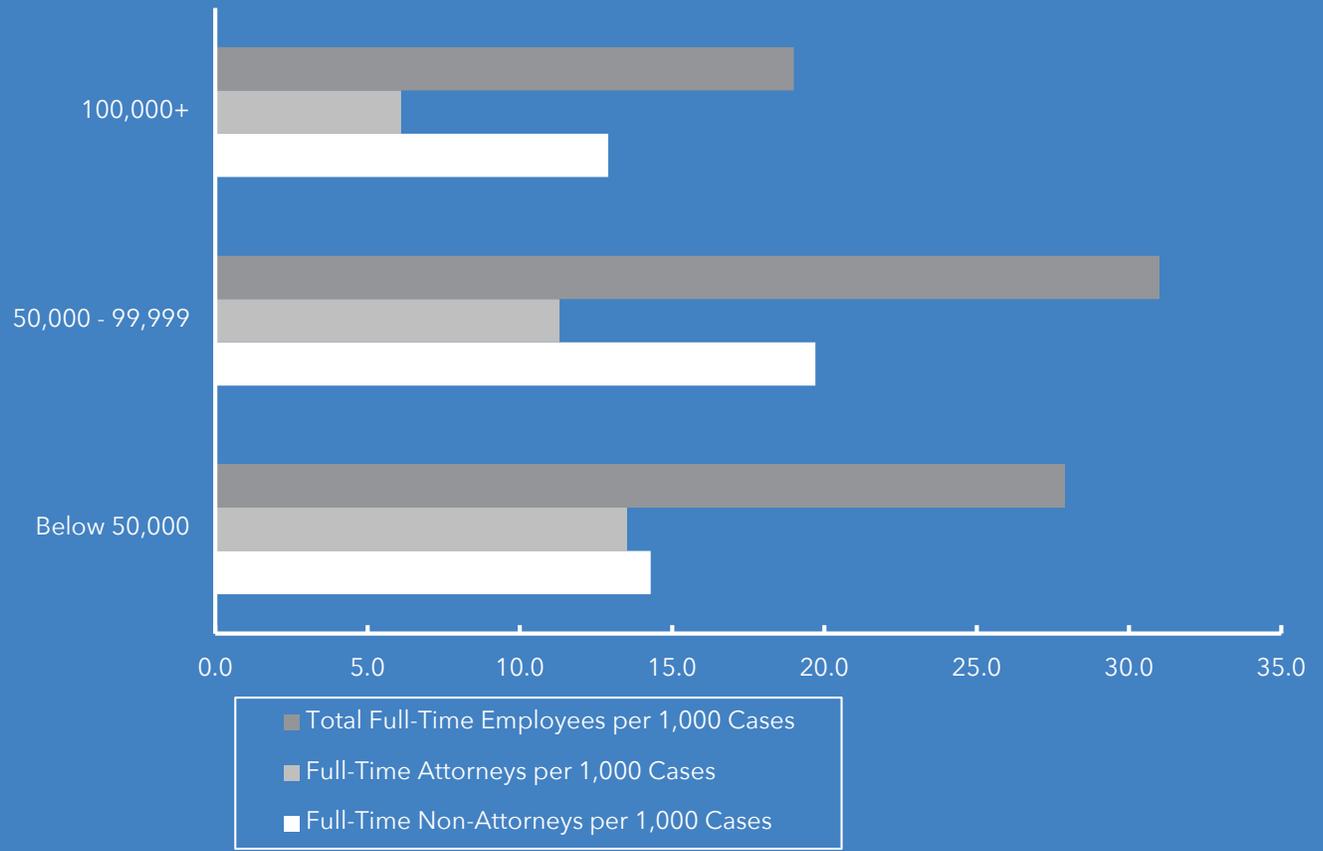


Figure 10. Average Number of Employees per 1,000 Felony and Misdemeanor Cases by Population (N = 11).



# PROSECUTOR INITIATIVES

A total of 91% of offices reported engaging in problem solving courts or other programs that offered alternatives to incarceration in 2018. The majority of offices reported that individuals with offenses involving low-level felonies (90%) and non-violent felonies (90%) are eligible for participation in these programs. A smaller number of offices reported that misdemeanor offenders (50%) and offenders with violent felonies (20%) are eligible for these programs.

# SPECIALTY COURTS

We asked respondents about nine different types of specialty courts: Drug courts, Veterans' courts, Mental Health courts, Human Trafficking courts, Homeless courts, Alcohol/Driving Sobriety courts, Domestic Violence courts, Community courts, and Re-entry courts. **Figure 11** provides the frequency of counties with each type of specialized court in 2018. While the majority of offices reported Drug courts (91%), Alcohol/Driving Sobriety courts (73%), and Mental Health courts (55%), fewer than half of respondents reported specialized Veterans' (36%), Domestic Violence (18%), Human Trafficking (18%), Homeless (9%), Re-entry (9%), and Community (9%) courts.

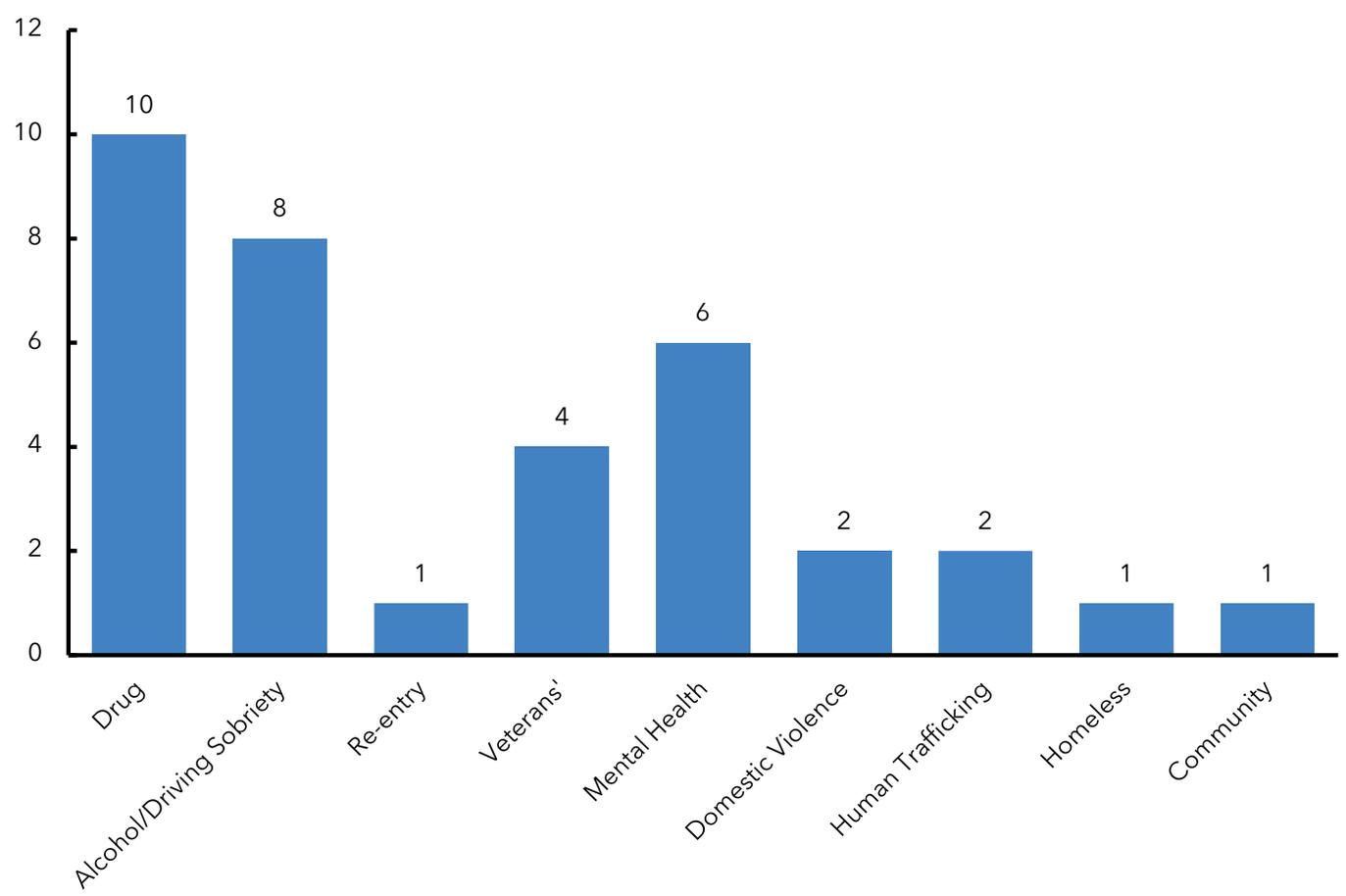


Figure 11. Number of Counties Reporting Specialized Courts by Type (N = 11).

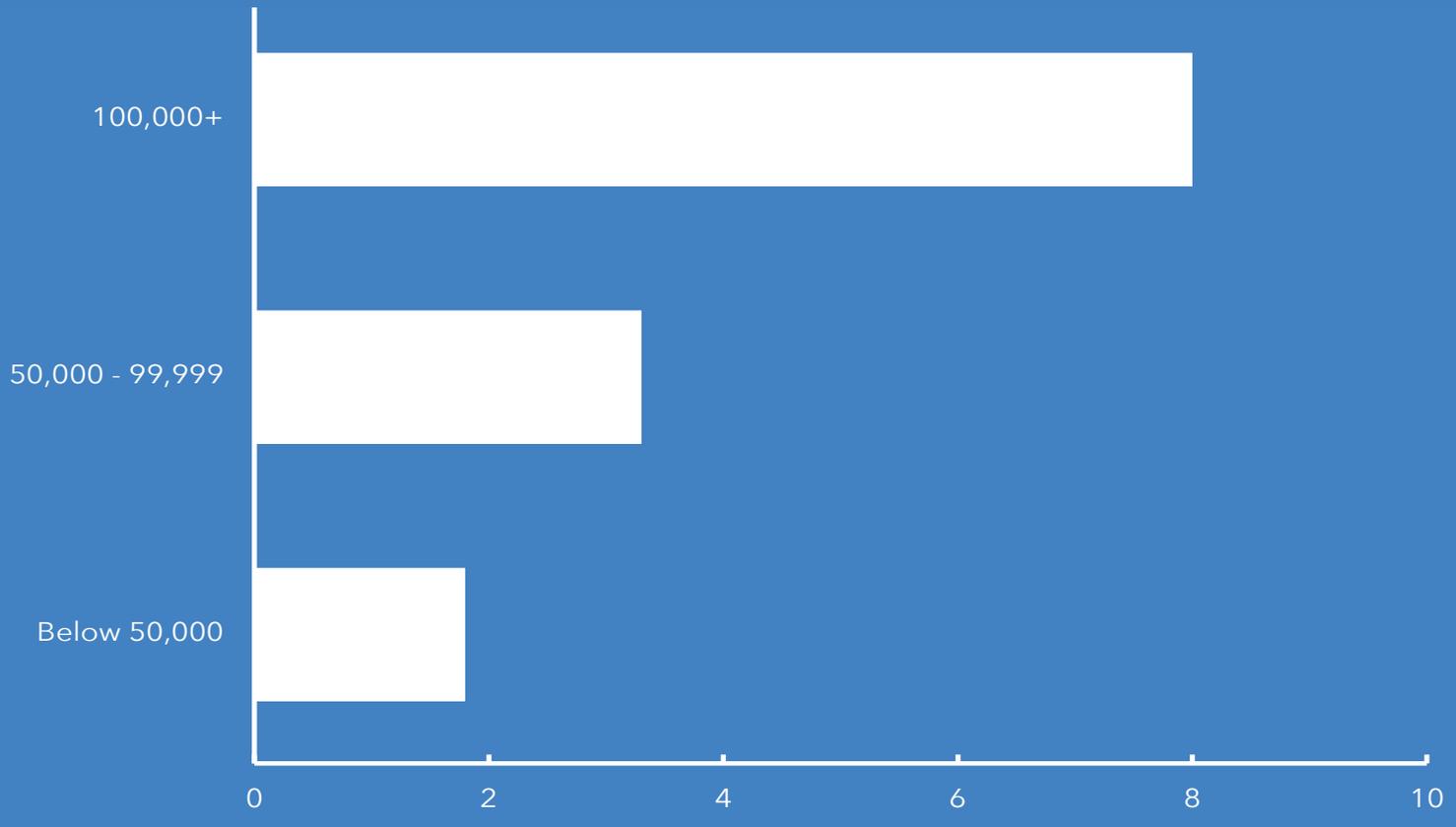
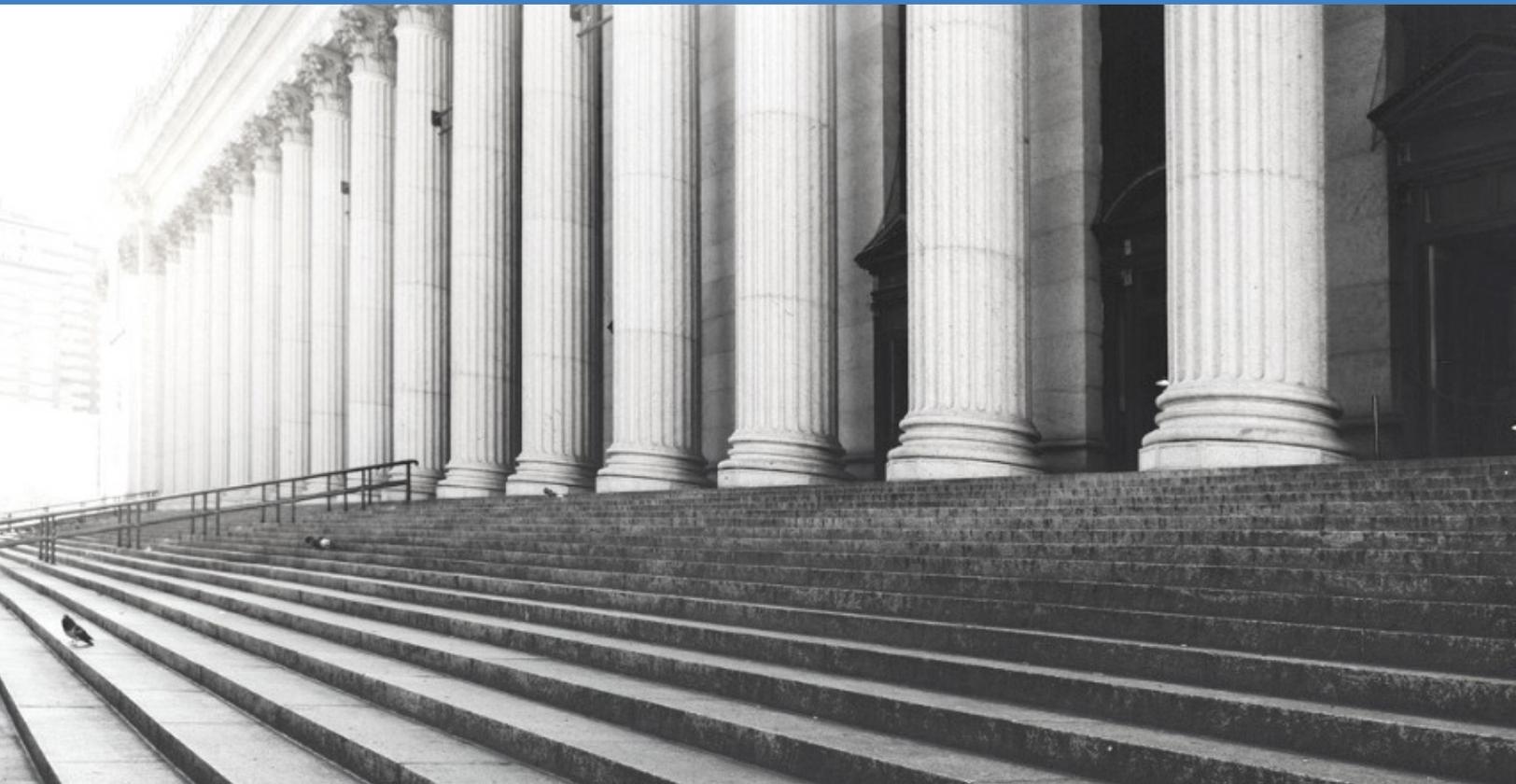


Figure 12. Average Number of Special Court Types by Population Category (N = 11).

**Figure 12** shows the number of special court types compared to county population category. Counties with more than 100,000 residents have on average 8 special court types compared to about 2 to 3 types for the other categories.





# ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

We also asked whether the offices in each county offered alternatives to incarceration in 2018, as shown in **Figure 13**. Drug treatment (55%) and mental health services (45%) were the most common offerings. Anger management and community service were offered in 36% of counties. Less often were training/education programs (27%), restorative justice (9%), and deflection programs (9%) offered as alternatives to incarceration.

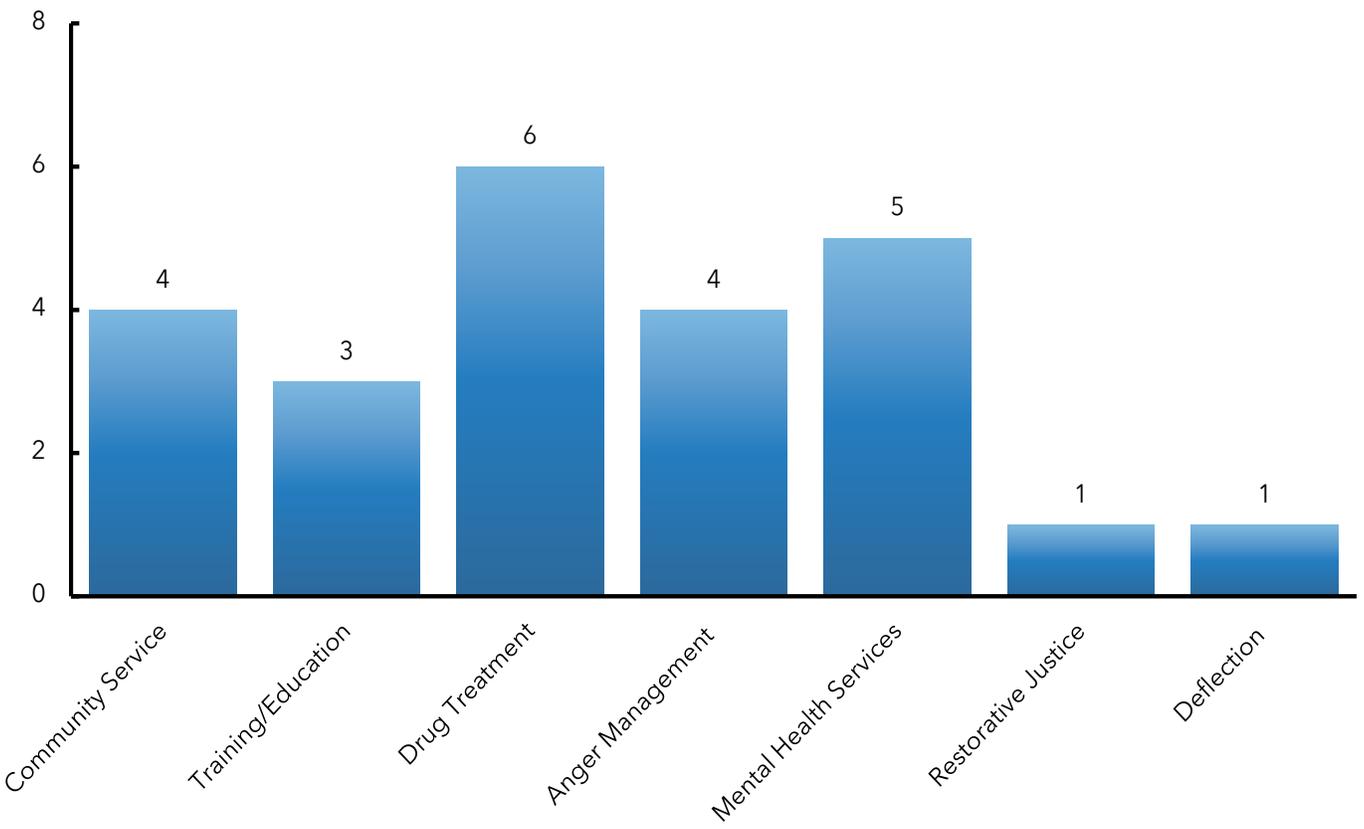


Figure 13. Number of Counties Reporting Alternatives to Incarceration by Type (N = 11).

## SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

**Figure 14** presents the number of prosecutors' offices that reported operating specialized programs. The most common type of program was Victim Services without Arrest, which was reported by 64% of offices. Less common were Victim Assistance programs (55%), Witness Assistance programs (45%), and Conviction Review Units (36%). Rarely did prosecutors' offices report running Restitution programs (27%), Victim/Witness Relocation (18%), Community Affairs Units (18%), or Community Prosecutors programs (18%). No offices reported running Crime Strategies Units.

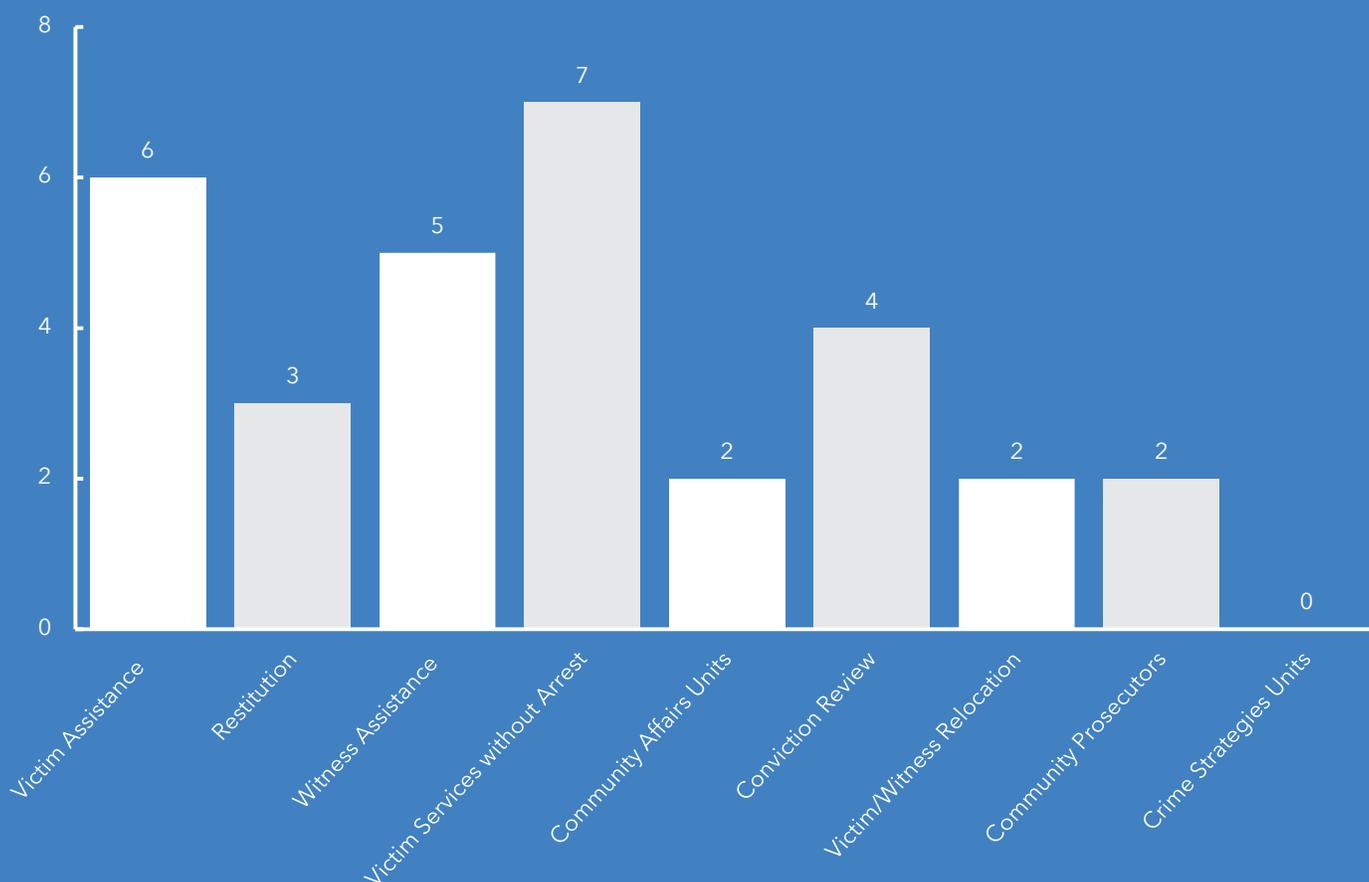
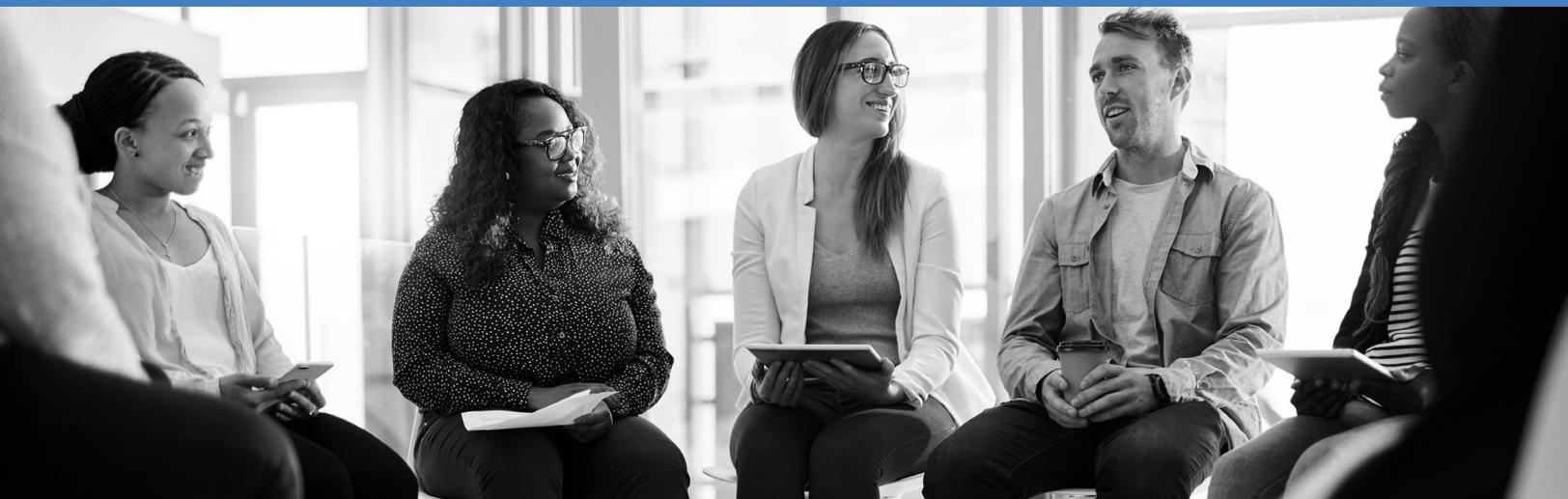


Figure 14. Counties Reporting Specialized Programs by Type (N = 11).





# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Finally, we asked whether the prosecutors' offices ran or participated in several different community programs. These results are presented in **Figure 15**. Just over half of offices reported participating in Community Engagement programs (55%). Slightly fewer offices reported participating in Co-located Child Abuse programs (45%), Adult Education programs (36%), and Youth Education programs (36%). Considerably fewer offices reported participating in Violence Reduction programs (27%), Co-located Domestic Violence programs (27%), Truancy programs (27%), Neighborhood courts (11%), Re-entry (18%), and Children of Inmates programs (18%). No offices reported participating in Neighborhood Clean-Up or Sports programs.

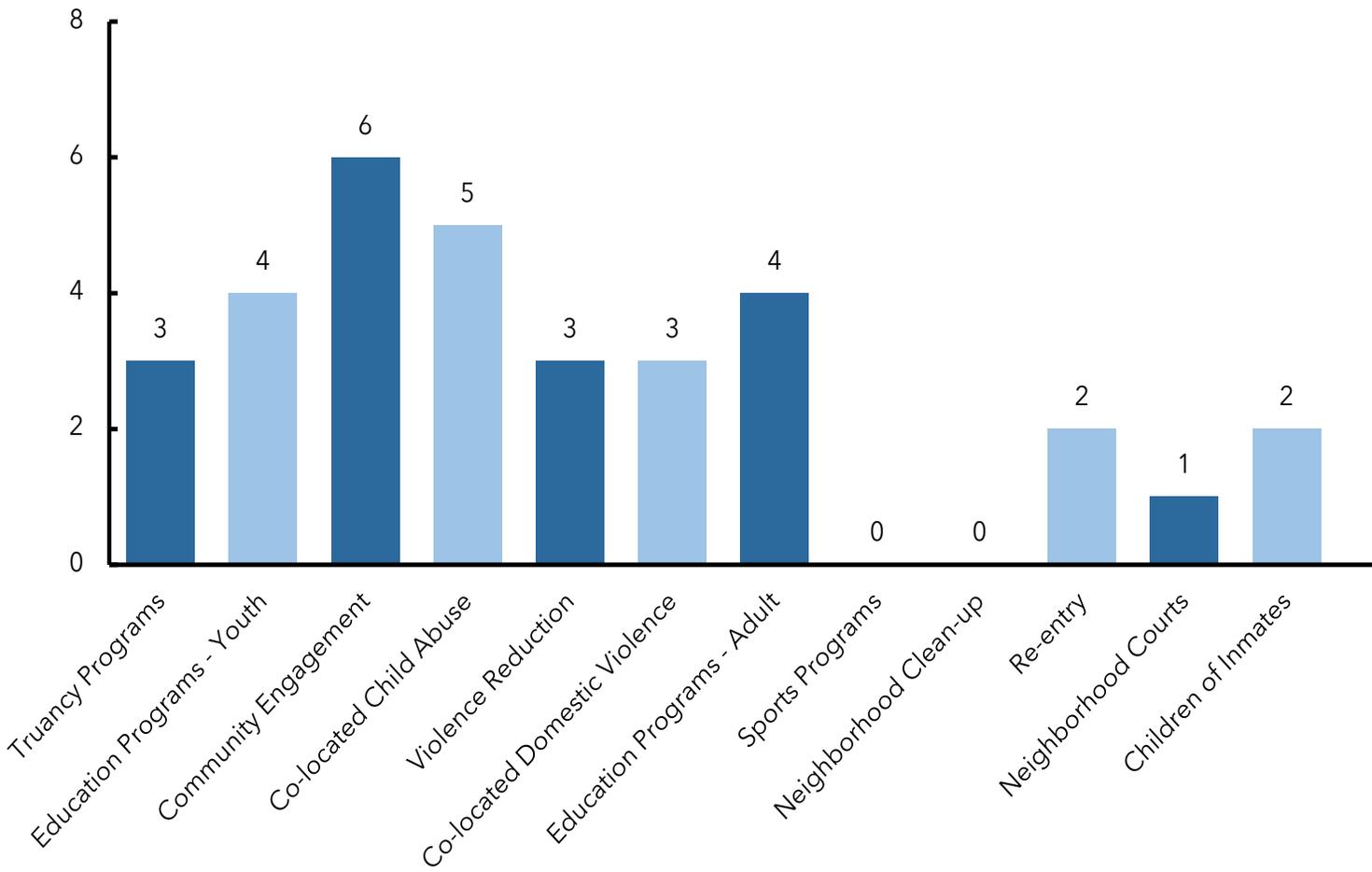


Figure 15. Participation in Community Programs by Type (N = 11).

## TECHNOLOGY

In the following section, we asked respondents about the use of technology within their offices. **Figure 16** illustrates the use of technology in prosecutors' offices. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the offices responded that they have a technology unit responsible for the computers, data, software, and hardware functioning within their offices. All offices responded that they are using an electronic case management system, and 55% of the offices currently use electronic discovery. Ninety-one percent (91%) reported using technology in their courtrooms, and 40% reported having staff to support them with the use of this technology.

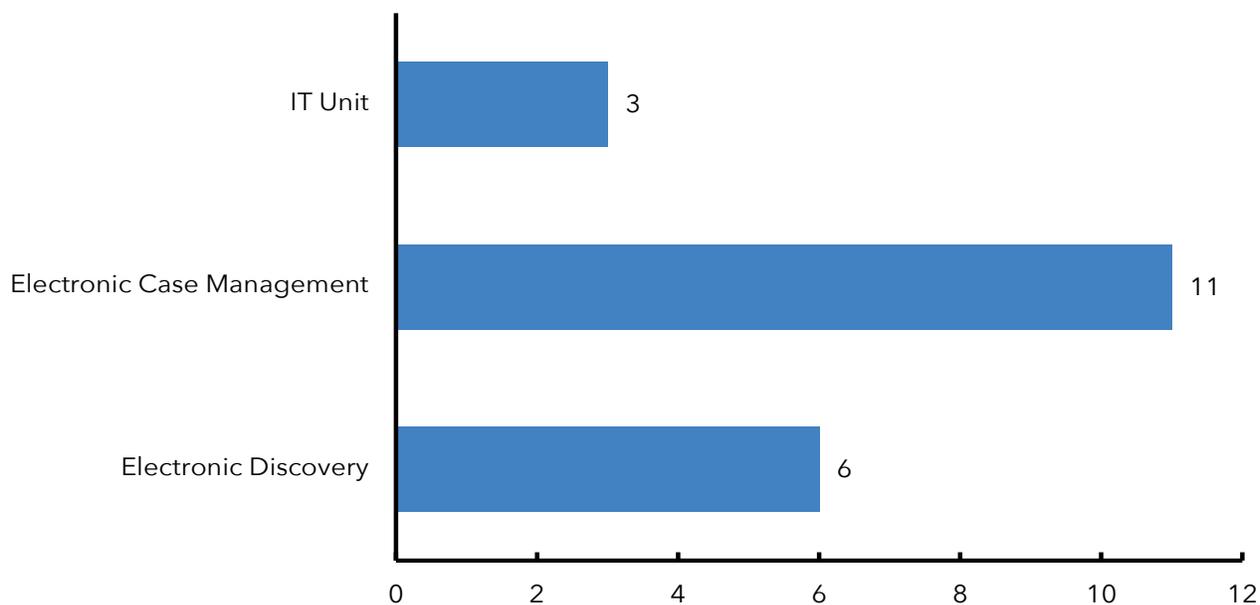


Figure 16. Technology Use within Prosecutors' Offices by Type (N = 11).



## BODY-WORN CAMERAS

In addition, all of the respondents (100%) reported having at least one police agency within their jurisdiction that has implemented a body-worn camera (BWC) program. **Figure 17** presents the method of delivery for BWC video. Of those receiving BWC video, 27% are using DVDs, 27% are using both cloud and DVD interfaces, and 45% are using cloud-based interfaces. Over 72% of respondents reported needing additional staff to view and manage the evidence collected by BWCs.

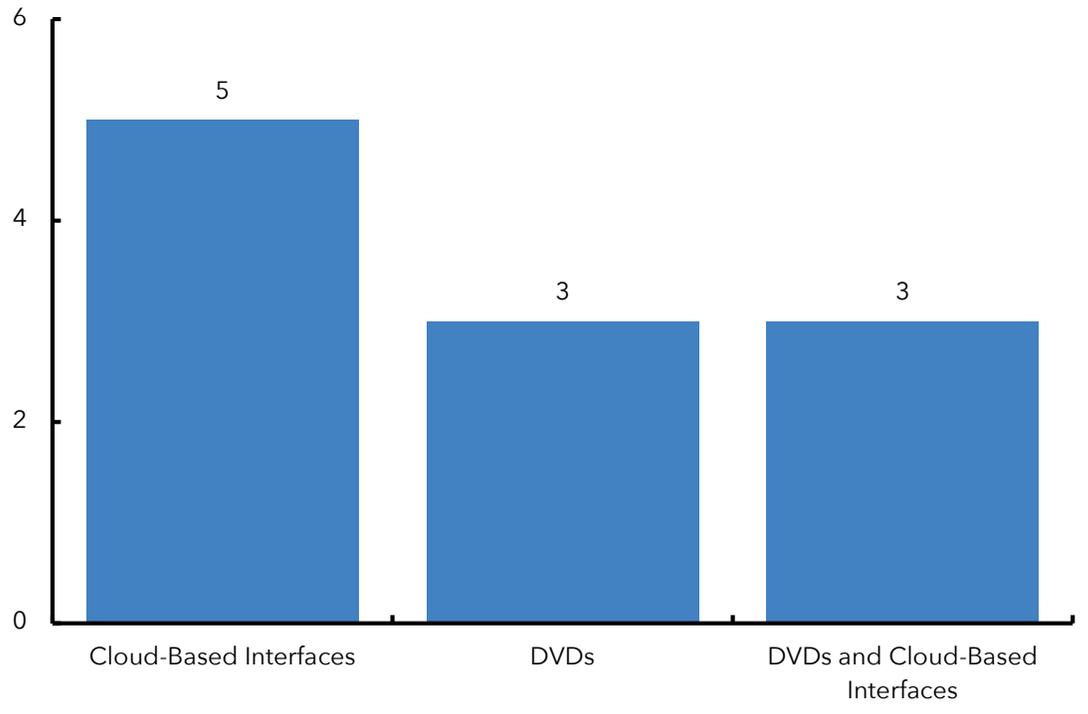


Figure 17. BWC Recordings Received by Prosecutors' Offices by Type (N = 11).

**Figure 18** below shows the percentage of offices by jurisdiction size that reported needing additional resources to review BWC footage. Both of the jurisdictions with more than 100,000 residents stated that they needed additional resources. Two-thirds of the other offices with fewer than 99,999 residents (n=9) reported needing additional resources for reviewing BWC footage.

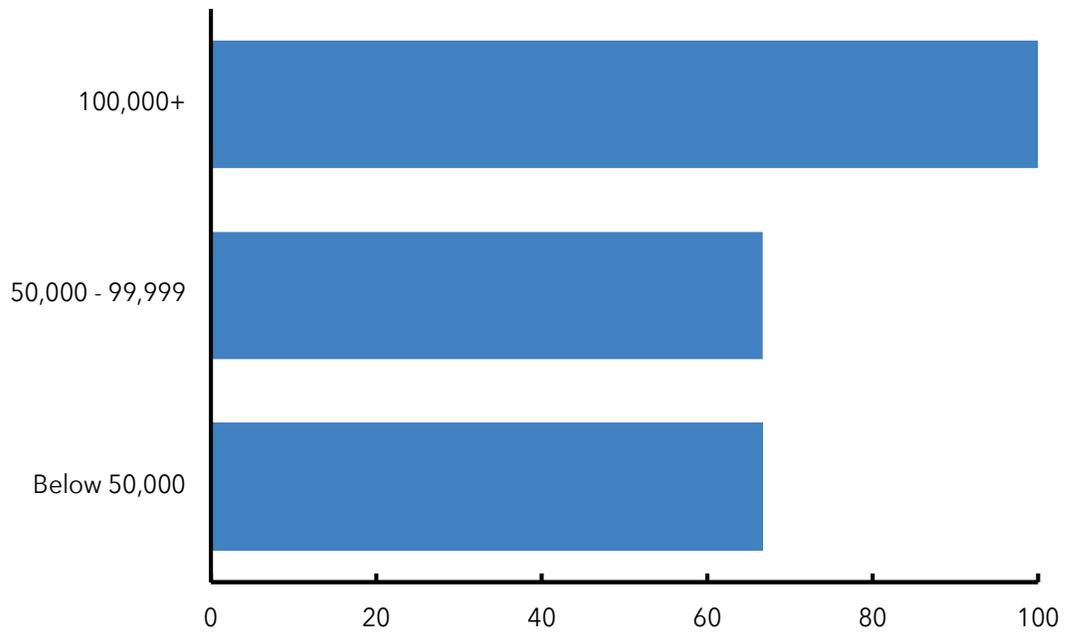


Figure 18. Need for Additional Staff to Review BWC Footage by Jurisdiction Size (N = 11).



## WEBSITES

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Asked what they share with the public online, 82% of survey respondents reported having office websites and 78% reported updating their websites routinely (monthly, quarterly, or annually).

## RESEARCH

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A minority of the responding offices reported engaging in research and analysis. Eighteen percent (18%) of offices reported involvement in a research project in the last two years with a university, college, consultant, or independent research firm.

Fifty-five percent (55%) reported analyzing crime data, caseloads, or other types of information routinely on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. Eighteen percent (18%) of responding offices provide an annual report to the public on the work of the office.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the responding counties have participated in major U.S. Department of Justice grant-based programs. Eighteen percent (18%) of offices have participated in Project Safe Neighborhoods programs, and 64% have participated in Violence Against Women Act programs. No offices have participated in Federal Victims of Crimes Act programs or in a Smart Prosecution Initiative or Innovative Prosecution Solutions program.



# CONCLUSIONS

The statewide survey administered by JSS and PCE provides many insights into the day-to-day functioning of Nevada prosecutors' offices. From the wide range of submissions from Nevada counties thus far, there are a number of trends emerging.

From the survey, we can determine that all responding Nevada prosecutors' offices handle felonies, misdemeanors, juvenile cases, infractions, and civil matters.

All of the responding prosecutors' offices have elected Chief Prosecutors serving an average of 9 years. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the offices have budgets under \$5 million, and 81% have personnel budgets under \$5 million. The number of full-time employees per 10,000 population is highest for the largest counties.

The per capita rates of felony and juvenile cases charged are very similar for districts in the smallest two population categories. The largest population category (above 100,000 residents) had the highest number of employees (attorney, non-attorney, and total) per capita.

It is apparent that nearly all offices offer specialized or problem-solving courts and some courts are significantly more common than others. While a majority of offices reported running Drug courts, Alcohol/Driving Sobriety courts, and Mental Health courts, fewer offices reported

running Veterans', Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, Homeless, Re-entry, and Community courts.

Most offices reported running specialized programs. The most common specialized programs offered fell under the headings of Victim services without Arrest and Victim Assistance programs. On the other hand, only a few offices offered Community Prosecutors, Victim/Witness Relocation, and Community Affairs Units, and no offices offered Crime Strategies Units.

The majority of respondents reported providing specific community programs to the areas they serve. The most common offerings were Community Engagement, Co-located Child Abuse, Youth Education, and Adult Education programs.

This research has provided great insight into the basic needs of prosecutors' offices. Further research based on these findings should focus on prosecutors' caseloads. Specifically, researchers should continue to investigate ideal caseloads for prosecutors and evaluate proper resource management.

All in all, the Nevada offices that completed the statewide prosecutor survey have provided vital data that have increased the knowledge base on the functioning of Nevada prosecutors' offices as well as on the role of Nevada prosecutors.