



## UNITED PROBATION OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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Mr. Speaker, Chairpersons, and Council members,

My name is Dalvanie K. Powell, proud President of the more than 800 majority African-American, female members of the United Probation Officers Association (UPOA). For more than 33 years, I worked in adult and family court services as a Probation Officer and Supervising Probation Officer.

Probation Officers—prior to appointment—must minimally have a four-year college degree with related experience, or a master’s degree. As peace officers, we carry firearms, and undergo eight weeks of training.

We are community corrections supervision, the best incarceration alternative. We provide services to adults and to youth who have been convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony. Youth can be placed on Probation from six months to two years, while an adult can be sentenced to Probation for as long as ten years. Probation Officers enforce the conditions of probation.

Officer teams interview potential clients and supervise probationers/clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week. After court findings and convictions, officers complete mandated pre-sentence investigations. These critical documents include recommendations for community supervision, or incarceration. Officers make sure services are provided to those under our supervision. The objective is to keep people out of jail.

Every probationer is an individual. We do not believe in “one size fits all”. We prepare supervision plans to meet the needs of our clients/probationers. These plans are adjusted accordingly as each goal is met. Probation’s primary objective is community safety and to assist those we serve to become law-abiding citizens as well have new and meaningful lives. Probation is a second chance.

Covid-19 has not changed our work. Probation Officers and Supervising Probation Officers are required to make home visits. We are on the streets, essential personnel protecting our city.

Electronic monitoring is now an important tool for many reasons. It allows keeping more people out of City prisons while providing additional safety for the community at large.

Whether an adult or youth should be incarcerated or placed in a juvenile facility during the Covid-19 pandemic must be contingent upon public safety risks. Who can effectively provide this oversight? Trained, experienced probation officers can and will. To the extent that we have to come in direct contact, for their safety and the safety of my members, we must take all recommended safety precautions. Therefore, to keep us on the street, we need proper equipment. PPEs are a beginning. We also will require larger vehicles, continuous cleaning of our offices and reception areas, and the installation of plexiglass in our offices.

To repeat, Covid-19 has not changed our mission. Probation Officers and Supervising Probation Officers are working remotely, continuing to make home visits. Covid-19 has only made our job more dangerous. Thank you.

Dalvanie K. Powell  
President  
United Probation Officers Association