



Sarah Schirmer

Managing Director

PFM Group Consulting LLC

Sarah Schirmer is a Managing Director with PFM's Management and Budget Consulting practice and Executive Director of PFM's Center for Justice & Safety Finance (CJSF). Sarah brings to CJSF more than 15 years of experience working in the criminal justice field, with a focus on policy, data analysis and research.

Sarah supports local government clients with criminal justice and public safety priorities that bridge policy, finance, and operations including organizational and operational assessments, performance management, and policy improvements.

Sarah managed PFM's criminal justice-related projects in Harris County, Texas, the third largest county in the country. She managed a review of the operations, policies, resources, and performance of the Harris County criminal justice system and developed a series of recommendations for enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of the system to promote just outcomes and safer communities. Sarah led a first-of-its-kind assessment of prosecutorial workload to inform the Harris County District Attorney's Office's staffing decisions and managed an analysis of the policies and costs of the criminal justice system's responses to poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorder.

Sarah also leads PFM's work to assess the role of fines and fees in the criminal justice system and develop plans that allow governments to reduce their reliance on them as a source of revenue. She managed CJSF's project to reduce or eliminate criminal justice fines and fees in Dallas County, Texas, Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee and Ramsey County, Minnesota.



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Specialties

State & Local Governments

Consulting, Specialized
Services

Education

B.A. in Political Science
Temple University

M.P.A.
Cornell Institute for Public
Affairs
Cornell University

Started with PFM: 2018

Started in the Field: 2006



Sarah has led presentations for the National Association of Counties and Government Finance Officers Association and has authored or co-authored articles appearing in the Chicago Tribune and the Syracuse Post Standard.

Prior to joining PFM, Sarah was the Criminal Justice Policy Advisor to New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, where she was responsible for strategic planning, policy research and cross-agency coordination of the mayor's priorities for the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

In this role, Sarah led the city's initial application and implementation of a \$1.65 million award from the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge, a national initiative to reduce overuse of jail. She managed the delivery of more than 15 initiatives across all criminal justice agencies that contributed to a 21% reduction in New Orleans' jail population within two years that has been sustained.

Sarah was one of the inaugural members of the New Orleans Innovation Delivery Team, joining the team as the Performance Management Lead. She was responsible for all performance management and measurement of the city's initiatives pertaining to its murder reduction, permitting and licensing, and economic opportunity strategies. In this role, Sarah launched two "stat" programs to provide a monthly forum for executive leadership to review initiative implementation and progress against metrics and developed comprehensive measurement and accountability systems for more than 30 city initiatives.

Sarah has also evaluated problem-solving courts in Maryland, provided research assistance to The Sentencing Project and Center for Employment Opportunities, and, early in her career, was an assistant budget analyst at the New York City Office of Management and Budget, liaising with the five borough District Attorneys and New York Police Department.