



# Our Experience with Engagement and Diversion

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# Los Angeles County Office of Diversion and Reentry

*The Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) was created in September 2015 by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Its mission is to develop and implement county-wide criminal justice diversion for persons with mental and/or substance use disorders, to provide reentry support services based on an individual's needs, and to reduce youth involvement with the justice system.*



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# Who does the ODR clinical team we serve?

- Persons with serious mental disorders
- Persons with significant physical illnesses
- Persons who are without housing
- Majority also with substance use disorders

Holliday, Stephanie Brooks, et al. Estimating the Size of the Los Angeles County Jail Mental Health Population Appropriate for Release into Community Services. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020.



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OFFICE OF DIVERSION  
AND REENTRY



### ODR Housing

- Began August 2016
- Permanent supportive housing, intensive case management, formal probation

Persons currently active: 2,071  
Persons in permanent supportive housing: 913

Total Released:  
**3,637**



### MIST-CBR

- Began October 2015
- Misdemeanor Incompetent to Stand Trial Community-Based Restoration

Persons being restored in community on active court order: 113

Total Released:  
**1,949**



### FIST-CBR & Off-Ramp

- Began July 2018
- Felony Incompetent to Stand Trial Community-Based Restoration
- Off-Ramp, competency findings & services under PC 1370 (a)(1)(g)

Persons being restored in community on active court order: 418  
Persons found competent while in jail, avoiding State Hospital: 377

Total Released:  
**785**



### Maternal Health

- Began March 2018
- Diversion of pregnant women from custody

Persons currently active: 113

Total Released:  
**197**



### DSH Diversion

- Began March 2019
- Specialized use of PC 1001.36

Total people diverted: 281

Total Released:  
**281**

Grand Total Released from Jail into Community Services:  
**6,849**

September, 2021

# Felony Incompetent to Stand Trial in L.A.

- In Los Angeles County there are approximately 500 persons found felony IST at any given time in LA Sheriff's Department custody, and 1,100 persons found felony IST in LA County per year.
- The FIST-CBR program diverts individuals facing felony charges who are found incompetent to stand trial into community-based settings to be restored to competency.



# Felony Incompetent to Stand Trial in L.A.

- LA has current funding for 415 beds and are expanding to 515 beds (with an additional 40 from DSH Diversion funds for a grand total of 555 beds for felony IST).
- We also use PC 1370(a)(1)(G) to "Off-Ramp" persons who have become competent while waiting for State hospital placement.



# We Take a Person-Centered Approach

## Person-centered, big-picture.

- Clients' circumstances and contact with the criminal system primarily reflect a lack of housing and mental health care, and less so traditional criminogenic factors.
- Clients' lives reflect social determinants of health, not blameworthy personal traits.
- The path to recovery is not linear, relapse and setbacks are normal, and multiple opportunities to succeed are necessary.
- An orientation that relies only on coercion, compliance, and control is not effective.



# We Take a Person-Centered Approach

Person-centered at the program level.

- We build relationships through time spent and a collaborative approach.
- When people struggle, we increase support and resources, not punishment.
- When a program challenge seems intractable, we go back to first principles, and we keep at it until we find the solution tailored to the client.



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# Our Pre-Release Preparation

- Clinicians review cases of all individuals with felony charges who are declared IST
- Individuals whose symptoms of mental illness may interfere with community-based treatment are referred to psychiatrists for further evaluation



# Our Pre-Release Preparation

- Psychiatrists see referrals to address potential barriers to successful community-based treatment (e.g., symptomatic despite current treatment)
- Encourage medication adherence/transition to long-acting injectable medications, if appropriate
- Emphasis on building rapport



# Our Pre-Release Preparation

- Psychiatrists and clinicians continue to work closely after an individual is referred
- Case consultation during weekly team meetings
- Collaboration between treatment team while incarcerated and post-release care providers



# Rethinking Restoration: Community Based

- *We can* safely house defendants with SMI charged with violent felonies
- Primary goal is mental health treatment and decarceration
- Providing support to community providers through ODR clinical oversight



# Community Based Restoration

Open residential setting --> 95% of patients

- Housing
- Case Management
- Competency restoration
- Medication management
- Individual and group therapy
- Recreational activities



# Select Program Data

- 418 persons currently in FIST-CBR
- 785 persons released since program inception (July 2018)

## Rates of Re-arrest for New Offense(s)

April 2021 "Pretrial Reform Data Collection" - County of Los Angeles Chief Information Office | Analytics Center of Excellence (ACE)

FIST-CBR: 17%

Other County Supervised Release Program: 39%

LA County felony pre-trial releases: 44%

LA County persons with serious mental disorders: 49%



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For more information, please visit  
<https://dhs.lacounty.gov/office-of-diversion-and-reentry/>

## Office of Diversion & Reentry

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> [Learn More](#)



Jail-  
Based/Clinical  
Diversion



Harm  
Reduction  
And  
Community-  
Based  
Diversion



Reentry



Youth  
Diversion And  
Development



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