

DIVERSION & DEFLECTION

FACT SHEET



PROGRAM BENEFITS

- ↓ **Reduce loss of life** by better understanding the substance use disorder community and develop effective initiatives
- ↓ **Reduce and divert calls for service** from law enforcement to social and public health services
- ↓ **Reduce jail capacity** being consumed by individuals with mental health or substance use disorders
- ↑ **Increase understanding and awareness** about clients with substance use disorder, to successfully increase intake into treatment and services

- Successful interaction with subjects struggling with mental health and/or substance use disorder starts with **understanding the nature of the disease**
- Attendees must **reframe the judgment** of subjects from frustrating repeated calls for service interactions to the reality of substance use disorder
- Trainers must be selected on their basis of **professional and reputational credibility** as well as skill providing instruction
- Given recent research on the nature of training perishability this **awareness must be consistently reinforced**
- Training must contain both **persuasive data** to underscore the success of the program as well as **personal stories** of clients who may be in similar occupations and share similar background



TRAINING

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PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- **Executive-level commitment** to the program from all participating agencies is a must. Undertaking mindset change can be lengthy and difficult and without organizational champions the effort may wither
- While some Diversion and Deflection programs are **designed with established organizational structures**, sometimes they are not or **may not be possible given the size of the agencies and resources**. This may especially be true in rural regions.
- A recommended structure includes an **executive-level committee** of decision makers able to overcome organization hesitancy and then **smaller functional committees** reporting to the executive committee
- **Early successes should be celebrated** to build program credibility to include traditional media and social media amplification
- Program participants **should not hesitate to seek out appropriate committee partners** if those assigned may not be the right fit

- Ample resources exist to support the planning and implementation of these programs. Some examples are as follows:
 - The Bureau of Justice Assistance Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP)
 - <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/cossap/overview>
 - First Responder Deflection Resource Library
 - <https://www.cossapresources.org/DeflectionLibrary>
 - Police Treatment and Community Collaborative (PTACC)
 - <https://ptaccollaborative.org/>
 - The National Sheriffs' Association
 - <https://www.sheriffs.org/programs/opioid-epidemic>
 - The International Association of Chiefs of Police
 - <https://www.theiacp.org/projects/law-enforcement-opioid-resources>
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/od2a/index.html>



RESOURCES