



Mental Health Diversion Program (MHDP)

Program Description

To address the incarceration of persons with untreated mental health problems, the MHDP strives to reduce criminal behavior through access to mental health treatment. The MHDP is a post-arrest pre-plea diversion pilot program for lower level non-Victim Rights Act offenses. Mental health screening and assessment upon or soon after arrest identify MHDP participants, who will divert from routine criminal case processing and court involvement to mental health and/or psychiatric treatment in the community. Participants who obtain treatment and commit no other criminal offense during the six months of diversion may avoid criminal conviction and its collateral consequences on employment, housing and family stability. MHDP benefits may include reduction of jail overcrowding, incarceration and prosecution cost savings, increased community safety and better outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

Program Services

- Mental health screening and assessment
- Mental health treatment (individual and/or group sessions)
- Psychiatric treatment
- Case management

Pilot Sites

6th Judicial District (Archuleta, La Plata and San Juan Counties)
8th Judicial District (Jackson and Larimer Counties)
16th Judicial District (Bent, Crowley and Otero Counties)
20th Judicial District (Boulder County)

Program Contact

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Population Served

Adult arrestees in county jails who need mental health treatment and are alleged to have committed lower level, non-VRA criminal offenses

Authorizing Legislation

SB 18-249, codified at CRS §18-1.3-101.5, creates the Mental Health Criminal Justice Diversion Grand Program in the Office of the State Court Administrator and establishes mental health diversion programs in four pilot sites. The repeal date is December 1, 2021.

Funding and Staff Allocation

FY 2019 \$750,000
FY 2020 \$750,000, including \$50,000 disbursed annually to each pilot District Attorney Office, and funding to staff the MHDP Grant Program in the Office of the State Court Administrator.

Funding Guideline Priorities

- Mental health assessment
- Mental health and psychiatric treatment

Other Permissible Expenses

- Training of MHDP partners
- Program outreach
- Ancillary services (e.g., bus passes)
- Program evaluation
- Personnel
- Consultants / contractors
- Operational expenses