VETERANS JUSTICE
OUTREACH

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Crisis mitigation through timely outreach.
The VJO Mission

• To avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible *justice-involved* Veterans have timely access to VHA services as clinically indicated.

• VJO Specialists are responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved Veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local justice system partners.
Who we serve

• *Justice-Involved Veterans*
  – A Veteran in contact with local law enforcement.
  – A Veteran in a local jail
  – A Veteran in adjudication
History

• 1995 - The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) partnered with the Center for Mental Health Services’ National GAINS Center.
  – Began an implementation and evaluation program of jail diversion initiatives.
  – Early identification and outreach found to be key.
History

• **2003** - The President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health called for mental health treatment to be readily available in Communities so that mental health consumers no longer faced unemployment, homelessness, or *incarceration* because of untreated mental illness.

  – Identified policies to maximize the utility of existing resources.
  – Improve coordination of treatments and services.
  – Promote successful community integration of Veterans.
History

• 2008 – SAMHSA and the National GAINS Center funded state and local pilot initiatives to connect justice-involved Veterans with needed mental health and substance abuse services.
Sequential Intercept Model

- Used as a roadmap by the VJO
- Indicates that people move through the justice system in predictable ways.
- Allows for multiple opportunities of intercept.
- Looks to identify Veterans in need and move them away from avoidable contact with the justice system and into the appropriate treatment.
Sequential Intercept Model - Intercepts

Intercept Point 1
Law enforcement and emergency services

Intercept Point 2
Post arrest: Internal detention and initial hearing

Intercept Point 3
Post-initial hearings: jail and courts

Intercept Point 4
Reentry from jails, state prisons & forensic hospitalization

Intercept Point 5
Community corrections & support (Probation and Parole)
Sequential Intercept Model

VA

VJO

JAIL

COURT

LAW ENFORCEMENT
What the VJO Can and Cannot do.

Can…
- Reach out to law enforcement, jails, and courts;
- Provide comprehensive healthcare services;
- With Veteran consent, communicate essentials (attendance, progress, tx testing, d/c plan);
- Serve all veteran eras;
- Function as court team member;
- Assess veteran’s healthcare needs, identify appropriate VA and non-VA services;
- Refer and link veteran to services;
- Provide EBT for court-monitored veterans.

Cannot…
- Accept Custody
- Guarantee program acceptance
- Advocate for legislation
- Perform forensic psychiatric or psychological evaluation for the court;
- Do Diversion Programming, accept custody;
- Serve VHA ineligible Veterans.
Questions?