

# Attachment D

## **Santa Barbara County Alternative Sentencing Program (ASP)**

### **Overview**

To enhance services within the local criminal justice system by bifurcating Alternative Sentencing services between the Sheriff's Office (SBSO) and Probation Department (Probation) to provide an assessment of needs and appropriate referrals to services, resources and treatment, to individuals released from incarceration from the Santa Barbara County Jail (SBCJ) to serve their custody time on electronic monitoring, while maintaining community safety.

### **Challenge**

For many years, the SBSO has operated a division titled the Alternative Sentencing Bureau (ASB). The mission of the SBSO ASB is to offer quality community-based programs to individuals ordered to serve jail commitments who qualify to serve this time in the community in-lieu of physical incarceration. The SBSO runs two programs, the Sheriff's Work Alternative Program (SWAP) and Electronic Monitoring (EM). EM is a component of Alternative Sentencing, and when an individual is placed on EM, in essence their place of residence becomes their jail cell. Individuals are not allowed the freedom to come and go as they please and any time away from their residence must be scheduled with an EM officer. EM was historically and continues to be a main strategy to mitigate jail overcrowding and reserve physical incarceration for those that pose a more serious threat to the community and victims. While traditional EM allowed individuals to continue to be productive as part of the work force and allow them to be part of their families and communities, it did not address any specific needs upon release of incarceration or being placed on the program.

An additional challenge with traditional EM was the "supervision" component. The SBSO ASB unit was not able to complete residence checks, which requires staff to go into the field and conduct home visits. The field supervision component ensures individuals are complying with the program rules. In addition, individuals being released were in some cases provided referrals to community-based services; however, their needs were not specifically assessed and service enrollment was not a condition of release. Lastly, the SBSO determined risk level through the review of criminal history and the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS), as well as COMPAS ROVAR (see footnote 1) score consideration.

### **Solution**

On July 1, 2022, the SBSO and Probation began a collaborative effort to monitor eligible individuals serving their Court ordered custodial commitments via electronic monitoring in lieu of physical incarceration. The SBSO continues to accept and process all ASP applications, determine eligibility, and book/receive individuals prior to referring to Probation to begin the supervision portion of the commitment. Probation then enrolls these individuals in the program and supervises them in the community using electronic monitoring and completes field contacts as needed. Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) use an evidence-based assessment (known as the COMPAS<sup>1</sup> ROVAR), as mentioned above, for

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<sup>1</sup> The Correctional Offender Management for Profiling Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) Risk of Violence and Recidivism (ROVAR) is an evidence-based screening and assessment tool that informs decisions regarding supervision strategies and the likelihood of an individual to reoffend or reoffend violently.

individuals who have scored above a 3 with the IST<sup>2</sup>. An Inventory of Needs (ION)<sup>3</sup> is also completed on any individual who scores medium or high risk to reoffend or reoffend violently as assessed by the COMPAS ROVAR. Subsequent referrals to community-based programs are also completed based on assessed needs and as ordered by the Court. Substance abuse services are consistently identified as a top need of the population and have driven referrals to community organizations.

Some of the benefits of Probation supervising the individuals on EM are as follows:

- Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) are trained in case management and utilize evidence-based tools to identify individuals' needs and match appropriate interventions.
- DPOs specialize in community supervision and successfully interact with individuals during home visits.
- DPOs coordinate discharge planning services if individual is being placed on community supervision upon completion of sentence.
- Similar to above, if individuals are released from jail on a form of community supervision there is a continuity of supervision from incarceration to court ordered supervision.
- DPOs offer early delivery of case planning and treatment referrals.
- DPOs identify treatment interventions, including housing assistance, drug treatment, cognitive behavioral interventions aligned with individual's criminogenic needs, and vocational and employment assistance.
- Probation officers are trained in Motivational Interviewing and are trained to be solution/treatment focused.

The Probation Department worked closely with SBSO leadership to collaborate on best practices to assist the individual and the following are some of the steps that were taken in the process:

- A detailed memorandum was circulated to the Court and Judicial Partners.
- Policy manual sections were created to guide staff.
- Forms were created and updated, and an online application was launched.
- The Probation Department's IMPACT case management system was updated to keep the AS individuals identified.
- The Probation Department's GPS database was updated to enhance statistical information.
- Preliminary data points were identified and collected, and will be expanded as the program expands.
- DPOs were provided desk space within ASB to be co-located with SBSO, and probation officers and sheriff's deputies formed a good collaborative working relationship.
- Agreement was reached between the SBSO and Probation on which violations would cause an individual to be returned to jail custody.

## **Innovation**

The Santa Barbara County Alternative Sentencing program is innovative as it combines the strengths of two County Departments to meet the mission of reducing the jail population, while adding a more holistic

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<sup>2</sup> The Initial Screening Tool (IST) is completed on all new investigations and intakes. Individuals who score 3 or below will be considered low risk and will not receive additional assessment.

<sup>3</sup> Research findings indicate justice involved individuals often have deficits in the domains of education, housing, employment, substance abuse, relationships, and cognition. The Inventory of Needs (ION) scales identify the individual along these dimensions.

supervision approach to improve outcomes and target the needs of those who are re-entering the community.

## **Results**

Participants with identified needs have benefitted from needs assessment, as well as the recommended services and supports, and Probation follow-up as applicable. The split of the program into two components – referral and screening, handled by the SBSO, and community supervision and case management, handled by Probation – has allowed each agency to offer its respective expertise to this population, which has enhanced community safety and individual outcomes. The data collected also offers a picture of this population, including top needs and success rates.

The majority of individuals supervised on EM are known to Probation. In review of the 633 total referrals between July 1, 2022, and May 31, 2023, 92 (14.5%) were determined to have no prior involvement with Probation, 236 (37.3%) had prior Probation involvement on either a Field Supervision or Pretrial Supervision caseload, and 305 (48.2%) had limited involvement with Probation on Investigations or Court caseloads. Of the 92 with no prior Probation involvement, 88 (95.7%) were determined low risk with no criminogenic need identified, 63 (68.5%) were referred to services, of which 60 (or 95.2%) were court ordered referrals and 28 out of 29 of those without a referral were assessed as low risk with the remaining one assessed as high risk and exiting successfully after 12 days.

Of the 633 total individuals enrolled on EM between July 1, 2022, to May 31, 2023, 517 or 81.7% did not require an ION as they were determined to be low risk to reoffend. Of the 433 individuals referred to a program the majority (416 or 96.1%) were referred by Court order. Of the 200 not referred to program, 171 (85.5%) were assessed as low risk to reoffend. While under supervision of the Probation Department, 572 individuals exited, with 95.1% exiting successfully. In total, 433 referrals were made to an extensive list of treatment services.

## **Replicability**

Other California Counties can implement a similar structure with a strong collaboration and agreement with the local Sheriff's Office. Outcomes from the first year are promising in terms of the number of individuals successfully exiting the program, and the number of referrals to services; each jurisdiction has the potential to tailor their alternative sentencing program according to local norms and preferences. It also may allow agencies to better manage staffing challenges and leverage limited human resources, as was the case with SBSO.

## **Project or Program Contact**

Spencer Cross  
Acting Deputy Chief Probation Officer  
117 East Carrillo St. Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
[scross@countyofsb.org](mailto:scross@countyofsb.org)  
805-882-3704