



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Sheriff's Office
Department No.: 032
For Agenda Of: December 13, 2016
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Sheriff Bill Brown (x4290)
Director(s)
Contact Info: Lieutenant Rob Plastino (x4136)
SUBJECT: Stepping Up Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illness in Jails

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Adopt a Resolution to actively support the work of the Stepping Up Initiative that is led by the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and the American Psychiatric Foundation to make more effective use of strained budgets and safely reduce the number of adults with mental illnesses in jails by connecting them to community-based treatment and services when possible; and
- b) Find that the proposed action is an administrative activity of the County which will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment and is therefore not a "project" as set forth in California Environmental quality Act Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).

Summary Text:

The Stepping Up Initiative encourages county leaders to designate or convene a diverse team of leaders and stakeholders to carry out a six-step planning process that can yield measurable reductions in the number of adults with mental illnesses cycling through the nations jails. On Monday, November 14, 2016, Santa Barbara County stakeholders from the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, Public Defenders Office, County Probation, and Behavioral Wellness met to discuss the Stepping Up Initiative and came to a collaborative agreement that they would unilaterally support this Initiative.

Background:

Each year, there are an estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses admitted to jails across the nation. This is the equivalent to the populations of Vermont and New Hampshire—combined. Almost three-quarters of these adults also have drug and alcohol use problems. Once incarcerated, individuals with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and upon release are at a higher risk of returning to incarceration than those without these illnesses.

The human toll of this problem—and its cost to taxpayers—is staggering. Jails spend two to three times more money on adults with mental illnesses that require intervention than on those without those needs, yet often do not see improvements to public safety or these individuals' health. Although counties have made tremendous efforts to address this problem, they are often thwarted by significant obstacles, including operating with minimal resources and needing better coordination between criminal justice, mental health, substance use treatment, and other agencies. Without change, large numbers of people with mental illnesses will continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families, missed opportunities for connections to treatment, inefficient use of funding, and a failure to improve public safety.

The Stepping Up Initiative six-step planning process is as follows:

1. Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails;
2. Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels;
3. Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community;
4. Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers;
5. Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan; and
6. Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

Narrative: No fiscal impact from the enactment of this resolution. County departments will make internal changes using current fiscal resources.

Special Instructions:

Please send a copy of the minute order to Sheriff's Office, attention Sheriff Brown.

Attachments:

Resolution and Stepping Up California Update

Authored by:

Chief Deputy Sam Gross, Law Enforcement Operations, Sheriff's Office (x4295)