



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Awarded \$7,000,000 from Prop 47 Grants to Reduce Recidivism

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County has been awarded two Prop 47 grants that total \$7,000,000 to fund the expansion of services to help people living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders who are involved in the criminal justice system. Only Yolo County and Los Angeles County received both grants.

Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) received \$6,000,000 to fund the Connections to CARE (Community, Assistance, Recovery, and Engagement) program. The Yolo County District Attorney (DA) also received an award of \$1,000,000 to fund the Pathway to Home program. HHSA, the DA, and other county partners, worked collaboratively on applying for each of these grants.

HHSA's Connections to CARE program will use Proposition 47 Grant funds to reduce recidivism by expanding services to address "complex facing system-involved people," including:

- Access to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment
- Trauma-informed intensive case management
- Peer support, housing, and other wrap-around supportive services for adults with a history of SUD and current or recent justice system involvement
- Emphasis on individuals experiencing homelessness

In 2021, a Harm Reduction Pilot project was launched by the District Attorney's office in partnership with Health and Human Services where individuals arrested for certain drug related offenses would be sent a letter indicating that their charges would be dismissed if they completed a screening to determine appropriate substance use or mental health treatment needs. Recognizing the complex needs of those involved in the program thus far and using a data-informed approach, partners sought this grant opportunity to support these individuals more broadly.

The Connections to CARE project aims to improve the behavioral health and well-being of participants with identified behavioral health needs by engaging in appropriate services and reducing risk/harm related to ongoing substance use, such as an increase the self-sufficiency of participants through secured stable housing, improved income, and enrollment in health insurance. The goal is to reduce the justice system involvement for participants through prevention of further justice system involvement and diversion so that participants may have their SUD-related charge dismissed.

"We plan to emulate the success of our first Proposition 47 funded program by continuing the robust collaboration between the different County departments and the Community-based nonprofits – all with the intent to improving the lives of our clients and making Yolo County safe," said HHSA Program Coordinator Anisa Vallejo, who guided the successful grant application.

The Yolo County DA's Office Pathway to Home Grant Funds will use Proposition 47 grant funds to reduce recidivism by expanding access to mental health treatment, wrap-around supportive services, and housing for adults charged with misdemeanors who are incompetent to stand trial due to a mental illness.

"We are very excited continue our partnership with HHSA on an innovative program which will provide much needed and deserved support to the underserved population of individuals who live with mental illness and/or substance use disorders, commit misdemeanor level crimes, and are determined by a judge to be incompetent to stand trial," said Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig. "Recent changes to the law have left this population in the dust – this wraparound program with housing support is designed to provide services to these individuals who are also experiencing homelessness. For some who are too ill to engage, this program will provide some incentive to help them get well and become productive members of society."

Yolo County has worked collaboratively to improve outcomes for incarcerate people with mental health problems, including the Public Defender's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Probation Department, the District Attorney's Office, the Courts, HHSA, community-based organizations and County Counsel. These departments are all members of the Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) whose mission is to protect the public by holding offenders accountable and providing opportunities that support victim and community restoration, offender rehabilitation, and successful reintegration.

One of the keys to assisting system-involved people has been the ability to assess and treat mental illness. Recently, [Yolo County received recognition](#) as a Stepping Up Innovator County for its expertise in the use of data to drive decisions and offer better outcomes on the number of incarcerated people who have serious mental illnesses. These efforts now ensure nearly 6,000 bookings into jail are screened for mental illnesses every year.

To learn more about the CCP, visit www.yolocounty.org/CCP.

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About Prop 47: Prop 47 is a voter-approved initiative in 2014 that reduced the penalties for some nonviolent crimes from felonies to misdemeanors and directed the funds from state incarceration savings to help system-involved people rehabilitate their lives.