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DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County District Attorney CCP Funding August 12, 2022

The Yolo County District Attorney receives \$818,464 in funding for DA staff annually from the CCP. This funding supports the following programs:

- (1) The DA's Restorative Justice Partnership (RJP) - formerly Neighborhood Court
- (2) The DA's Victim Services (VS)
- (3) The County collaborative Mental Health & Addiction Intervention Courts (MHC/AIC)
- (4) The County collaborative Mental Health Diversion Program (MH-Div)*
- (5) The Department of State Hospitals grant program

*funded in full by CCP

Each of these programs is consistent with the full Mission of the CCP and every goal of the CCP.

Specifically, the CCP funds the following DA staff:

-Supervising Deputy DA Christopher Bulkeley – 100%. He supervises the MHC/AIC and RJP programs. He is the assigned Deputy DA for Mental Health Court and handles all cases in the RJP program and Department of State Hospitals grant.

-Chief Deputy DA Jonathan Raven – 3.7 %. He oversees all collaborative courts, supervises the MH-Div program and Department of State Hospitals grant, and is the assigned Deputy DA for Addiction Intervention Court.

-Victim Services Advocate Heather Blair – 100%. She is assigned all AB 109 cases, works with the victims on the Restorative Justice and teaches classes to offenders at the Day Reporting Center.

-RJP Program Coordinator Nicole Kirkaldy – 100%. She runs the day-to-day operations of RJP and Collaborative Courts.

-Deputy DA Martha Wais – 57.3 %. She is the deputy DA assigned to MH-Div and runs the MH-Div team meetings.

-RJP Advocate Marlen Solorza – 100%. She provides advocacy to victims whose cases are in the RJP program.

-CommuniCare contract - \$273,397. CommuniCare handles the treatment for the MH-Div program. The DA administers this funding which is allocated to CommuniCare.

(1) Restorative Justice Partnership

Program Summary

Despite adopting a new name in 2021, Restorative Justice Partnership (RJP) maintains the same program model established in 2013 and continues as one of the District Attorney's benchmark innovative programs providing an alternative to the traditional judicial system for hundreds of participants per year. Participants in RJP engage in a 3-step restorative justice-based mediation-style conference with members of the local community. The conference is designed to encourage accountability and reach a resolution that addresses harms and impacts from the offense committed by the participant. The conference process is also paired with additional treatment and/or social service-related supports for those who have mental health or substance use conditions. Victims have agency and are engaged throughout this process to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met to the extent possible.

How Much Did We Do?

With over 2563 conferences held and 2265 successful completions in the life of the program to date, RJP has expanded far beyond the initial pilot stage and achieved the goal of diverting 10% of filed felonies by 2021/22. 2021 saw 78 felony cases complete the RJP conference process, compared 22 in 2019 and just 9 in 2018.

In March of this year, thanks to CCP funding, RJP was able to bring on a Victim Advocate specifically assigned to handle RJP cases. The new advocate has already been assigned more than 60 new cases, in addition to 100+ continuing cases. She makes an average of 15 case management calls per week and has also participated in several conferences (presenting 3 written statements and in 3 with a direct victim present).

How Well Did We Do It?

The RJP Advocate has already received positive feedback from victims regarding her thorough assistance, clear explanation of court processes, and prompt response times. This type of dedicated service to victims has enabled us to better address victim needs and meet our program and office goal to seek and do justice with compassion. Program participants surveyed following their conferences also report high rates of satisfaction with the restorative justice conference. Across 5 criteria, participants consistently scored the program over 80% for preparedness, overall process, conference environment, restorativeness, and outcome. However, the follow-up commentary received by staff is what truly speaks volumes:

“I finished all 3 [AA] meetings it was awesome!!! I am definitely going to continue attending. And thank you so much for all you’ve done to help me!!!” -CM

“Thank you for not giving up on me.”-CV

“I appreciate all of your support, help and kind words. I appreciate you all.” -JB

Is Anyone Better Off?

One change in recent years is the implementation of a Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM) assessment for all felony-level RJP participants. The SSM is completed by a Social Worker Practitioner during RJP intake and again following program completion. The goal is to identify areas where participants need additional supports in the areas of housing, employment, finances, mental health, or behavioral health. The SWP then works with participants to increase stability in any areas they score below the standard self-sufficiency. The follow-up SSM checks to see whether there have been any changes in these areas following program completion. To-date, over 90% of successful felony-level participants have maintained or increased their SSM scores following program completion.

(2) Victim Services

Program Summary

Victim advocates are trained to support victims of crime. They offer emotional support, victims’ rights information, help in finding needed resources, and assistance in filling out crime victim related forms. Our advocates frequently accompany victims and their family members through the criminal justice proceedings. Advocates work with other organizations, such as criminal justice or social service agencies, to get help or information for the victims we serve. Victim advocates’ responsibilities vary depending on the victim’s situation. Victim Services heavily relies on volunteers. Some of our volunteers are survivors who have chosen to help others who are going through their own healing process.

How Much Did We Do?

Victims Services received 3,167 referrals in FY 2021-2022. The caseload of advocates was as follows: Angelica Saldana (161); Julia Hernandez (154); Kenya Salazar (153); Deissi Munoz (55); Heather Blair (448 referrals, 60 Notices of Release cases, and 30 Prop 57 cases: 538 total); Lindsey Hall (72); Ana Mejia (79); Marlen Solorza (121) Estela Morales (65); and Laura Valdes (1,804).

In FY 2021- 2022 the AB109 Victim Advocate facilitated 6 virtual Victim Awareness Classes for the Day Reporting Center (DRC) and reached a total of 34 clients. Classes were held July 13, 2021, November 17, 2021, December 21, 2021, March 9, 2022, June 14, 2022, and June 17, 2022. March 9, 2022 marked the 50th Victim Awareness Class conducted since the inception of the program in 2014.

How Well Did We Do It?

The success of the Restorative Justice Partnership (RJP) program has led to the addition of a full time Victim Advocate position assigned to the RJP program. As of April 2022, RJP program victim case referrals are no longer being assigned to the AB109 Victim Advocate. The newly implemented Victim Advocate position solely dedicated to RJP now handles all new victim case referrals. This ensures that victims receive undivided attention and direct services as requested.

Is Anyone Better Off?

In August 2021 the victim's satisfaction survey became available online. Upon completion of every case, a flier with a QR barcode and the case tracking number is mailed out to each victim. A paper copy of the survey is still available by request. The goal of making the survey available online is for it to lead to increased participation. Data is not yet available, but once it is the program will be able to better evaluate the crime victims' experience in Yolo County.

As of January 2022, the AB109 Victim Advocate is assigned to cases effected by SB 483- Resentencing under PC 1171 and PC 1171.1 and SB 384- California Tiered Sex Offender Registration. Providing notification to victims of crime about changes in the law ensures transparency, continuity of information, and ensures that victims are not misinformed by other sources. Upon notification of the changes in the law by the AB109 Victim Advocate, victims are often shocked and require assistance in accessing resources to address the impact of reliving past trauma. They often request meetings with the Chief Assistant Deputy District Attorney assigned to these issues to help them understand how they may address the changes in the law. Victims say that they are better off for knowing about the changes in the law than not knowing at all, and that they are better off for being notified directly by a team composed of an advocate and an attorney who can address their questions and concerns.

(3) Mental Health Court and Addiction Intervention Courts

Program Summary

Mental Health Court (MHC) and Addiction Intervention Court (AIC) are a minimum 18-month court-based treatment and monitoring systems for adult offenders with a serious mental illness or substance use disorders. These programs are designed to increase the treatment engagement of the participants while reducing both arrests, hospitalizations (for MHC), and jail time both during and after their involvement and participation in the program. These programs are collaborative efforts between the Probation Department, Health and Human Services Agency, Yolo County Superior Court, the Public Defender, and the District Attorney. Mental Health Court follows the Forensic Assertive Community Treatment model where participants get intense services two hours per week or meet with staff four times per week. The team provides participants with wrap-around treatment which includes a focus on mental health, substance abuse, housing, vocational training and school, and physical health.

The goal is to address the criminogenic factors and reduce recidivism. When participants are close to graduation, they participate in a Restorative Justice conference.

Four district attorneys contribute significant time to this program. While a Supervising DDA is funded by the CCP, the Chief Deputy and two DDAs are compensated through general fund dollars. The team is now implementing a grant of \$747,280 from the Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance. As a result, Mental Health Court has doubled from 15 to 30 participants and is nearly at full capacity.

Additionally, the team received a \$1.1 million dollar grant from the Department of State Hospitals. This grant will allow justice partners to divert some individuals who are deemed incompetent to stand trial or are at risk for being incompetent to stand trial. This will allow the team to treat these individuals within the County and avoid sending them to a State Hospital. The District Attorney coordinated the drafting and submission of this grant and also has been administering the grant. The team is in the process of changing administration from the DA to HHSA. The grant is now at full capacity but due to a recent augmentation to the funding from DSH, more participants will be added.

RBA outcome measures are coordinated by HHSA and are not yet available for 2021-22.

(4) Mental Health Diversion

Program Summary

Mental Health Diversion (MH-Div) is a minimum one-year court-based treatment and monitoring system for adult offenders with mental illness and/or a substance use disorder (SUD) and those behavioral health issues were a significant factor in the commission of their criminal offense. The program is designed to increase the treatment engagement of the participants while reducing the number of arrests, jail bed days, acute hospital bed days and number of long term or state hospital bed days both during and following graduation from MH-Div. This program is a collaborative effort between the Probation Department, CommuniCare Health Centers, Yolo County Superior Court, the Sheriff's Department, the Public Defender, and the District Attorney.

The intention of the intensity of the program is to provide adult offenders with support in their journey through the MH-Div Program. This program requires supervision status with the Yolo County Probation Department. Depending on the needs of the individual, treatment consists of substance use treatment and/or mental health treatment. Substance use treatment could be residential or outpatient services. Contact between the treatment provider, CommuniCare, and Probation is approximately 4 to 5 times a week. Additionally, participants are required to be present the first and third Wednesday of the month for Mental Health Diversion court. Currently, court is by Zoom, but it may be in person in the future. The goal is to address the criminogenic factors and reduce recidivism. When participants are close to graduation, they participate in a Restorative Justice conference where feasible.

How Much Did We Do?

Outcome measures are not available as the program only started taking referrals in December 2021, was almost fully staffed in January 2022, and had its first participant accept the program on February 7, 2022. As of August 8, 2022, there are 21 participants in the program, 10 potential participants have been found suitable and expect to accept at their next court date, and 7 are pending assessment.

How Well Did We Do It?

In the first six months MH-Div had 16 participants who had participated collectively in 49 Zoom Court Appearances. Only two participants have been terminated to date, both for walking away from residential treatment within a day or week of placement from custody.

Is Anyone Better Off?

Currently 5 participants have “phased up” to Phase 2 meaning they successfully completed all of the requirements of Phase 1 including, but not limited to: attending all required court appearances, maintaining consistent attendance at all appointments for psychiatric treatment, case management, and substance use counseling. Additionally, they must have no positive drug or alcohol test results for a minimum of 30 days and have been medication compliant to for a minimum of 45 days.