

RAPID DIVERSION PROGRAM (RDP)

Fact Sheet

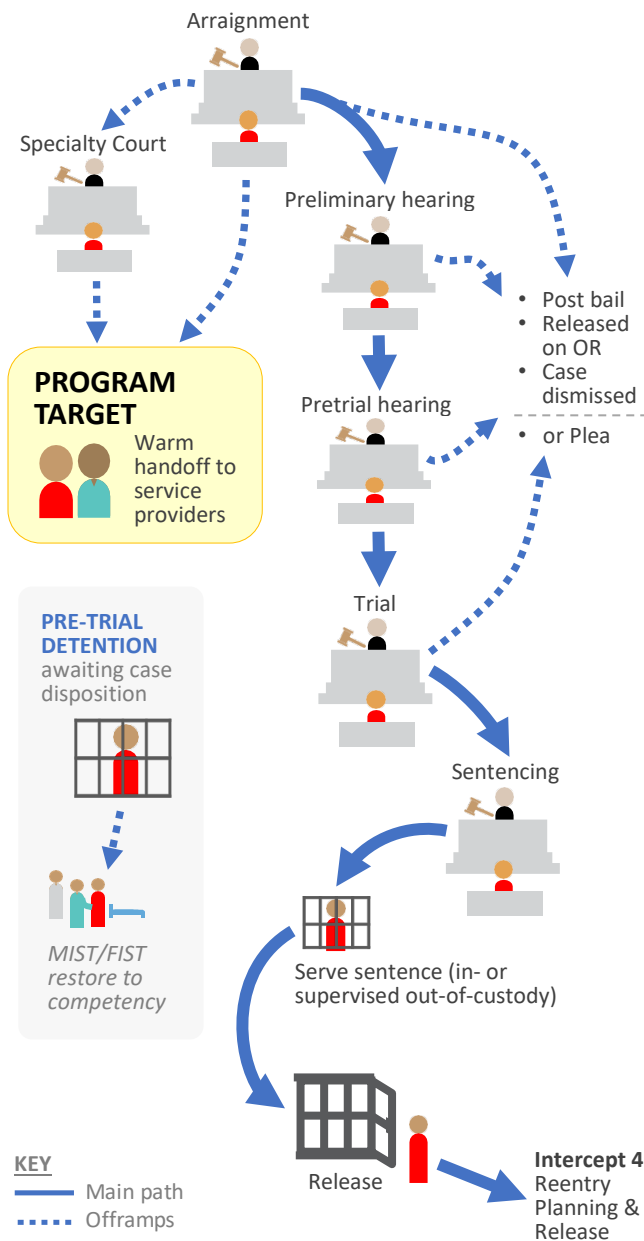
Sequential Intercept Model Target:



INTERCEPT 3

Jail Custody & Court Process

Goal: Avoid Post-Plea Conviction



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Originally piloted in 2019 by the [Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office](#), with grant funding through the [MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge](#), the [Rapid Diversion Program \(RDP\)](#) in the Justice, Care and Opportunity Department (JCOD) is a pre-plea diversion program targeting individuals with a mental health diagnosis or substance use disorder. Individuals in this program participate in programming, receive housing resources, and are case managed for a period of time recommended by the service provider and approved by the court. Cases are dismissed for individuals who successfully complete the program. This program addresses [Intercept 3](#) of the [Sequential Intercept Model](#) – the strategic framework for LA County's re-defining of the justice system and push towards more community-based upstream prevention.

PROGRAM METRICS & DESIRED OUTCOMES

- ✓ Decrease in incarceration rates among populations most disproportionately represented
 - Black women and men
 - Latinx women and men
 - Individuals with substance use & mental health needs
 - Transgender individuals
- ✓ Decrease in costs related to incarceration
- ✓ Reductions in recidivism rates for participants
- ✓ Increase service linkage rates for justice involved individuals
- ✓ Increase program completion rates

JCOD will be collecting data and tracking these results ongoing, to ensure these outcomes are achieved.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

- Target population for this program includes individuals with:
 - Mental Health Disorders
 - Substance Use Disorders
- Program utilizes PC 1001.36, the mental health diversion statute, as basis for diversion (i.e., disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the offense).
- Initially started with misdemeanor arraignments, but now also expanded to felonies
 - **Excludes crimes involving** domestic violence, DUI, firearms, sex offenses, or other serious violent offenses

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

- Defense attorneys identify potential RDP candidates by looking for defendants who: a) have a history or show signs of mental illness (including substance use disorder); b) are willing to accept mental health services; and c) are charged with an offense that is eligible for mental health diversion.
- Once identified, candidates are referred to the RDP branch coordinator, who interviews the candidate and reviews relevant records, including the police report and rap sheet to see if the candidate: 1) appears to have a mental health condition (including substance use disorder); 2) is willing to accept treatment (including medication, residential treatment if appropriate); 3) are charged with an RDP-eligible offense; and 4) are a suitable participant for the program.
- Those deemed eligible and suitable for the program are then referred to an in-court clinician for a clinical evaluation (including a review of their documented mental health history). If the clinician concludes that the candidate suffers from an eligible disorder and is otherwise suitable for diversion, the clinician will make a treatment recommendation. Based on that recommendation, a system navigator who works alongside the clinician will find an appropriate program for the candidate. Once the candidate has been connected to services, the clinician writes a short-form diversion report which, if approved by the prosecution, is then forwarded to the court for diversion approval under PC 1001.36.
- Once a candidate has been diverted by the court, they will be assigned to a case manager who meets with the candidate on a weekly basis, supports the candidate, provides service linkage as needed, and regularly reports back to the clinical team and court on the candidate's progress in their program.
- Length of stay in the program ranges from 6 months to 2 years, based on charge severity and the participant's individual needs.
- Upon successful completion of the program, participants are celebrated at a graduation ceremony in court, with the judge presenting certificates of completion and encouraging remarks.

COURTHOUSE SITES & TIMELINE

JUN 2019



Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center (CCB)
Downtown Los Angeles

SEP 2020



Airport Courthouse
Los Angeles
Van Nuys Courthouse West
Van Nuys

DEC 2020



Gov George Deukmejian Courthouse
Long Beach

FEB 2021



Michael Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse
Lancaster

AUG 2021



Compton Courthouse
Compton

PROGRAM HISTORY & OTHER FACTS

- First launched June 2019 at Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center (Criminal Courts Building) in downtown LA
- Starting in September 2020, the ATI Office (now a part of JCOD) further expanded the program to five additional courts
- Also in March 2021, expanded to felony cases
- Clinicians and system navigators staffed by Department of Mental Health or SSG/Project 180, or Exodus Recovery, depending on location