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# Housing First for the Criminal Justice Population

Leah Vail Compton, MA, MBA  
State Community Forensic Liaison  
Florida Department of Children and Families



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Florida Coalition  
FOR THE HOMELESS  
CELEBRATING *25*  
YEARS




## Department of Children and Families State Mental Health Treatment Facilities



# **Agenda**

- **Homelessness in the Criminal Justice Population**
- **Criminal Justice System and Housing First Basics**
- **Sequential Intercept Model**
- **Statewide Criminal Justice Initiatives**
- **Discussion**



# Housing First and Criminal Justice?

- Communities across Florida have made significant progress implementing Housing First approaches along with other strategies.
- However, criminal justice involvement among people experiencing homelessness remains a significant problem.



EMERGENCY SHELTERS AND OTHER HOMELESS SERVICES HAVE A LARGE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS DISCHARGED FROM JAILS OR PRISONS.



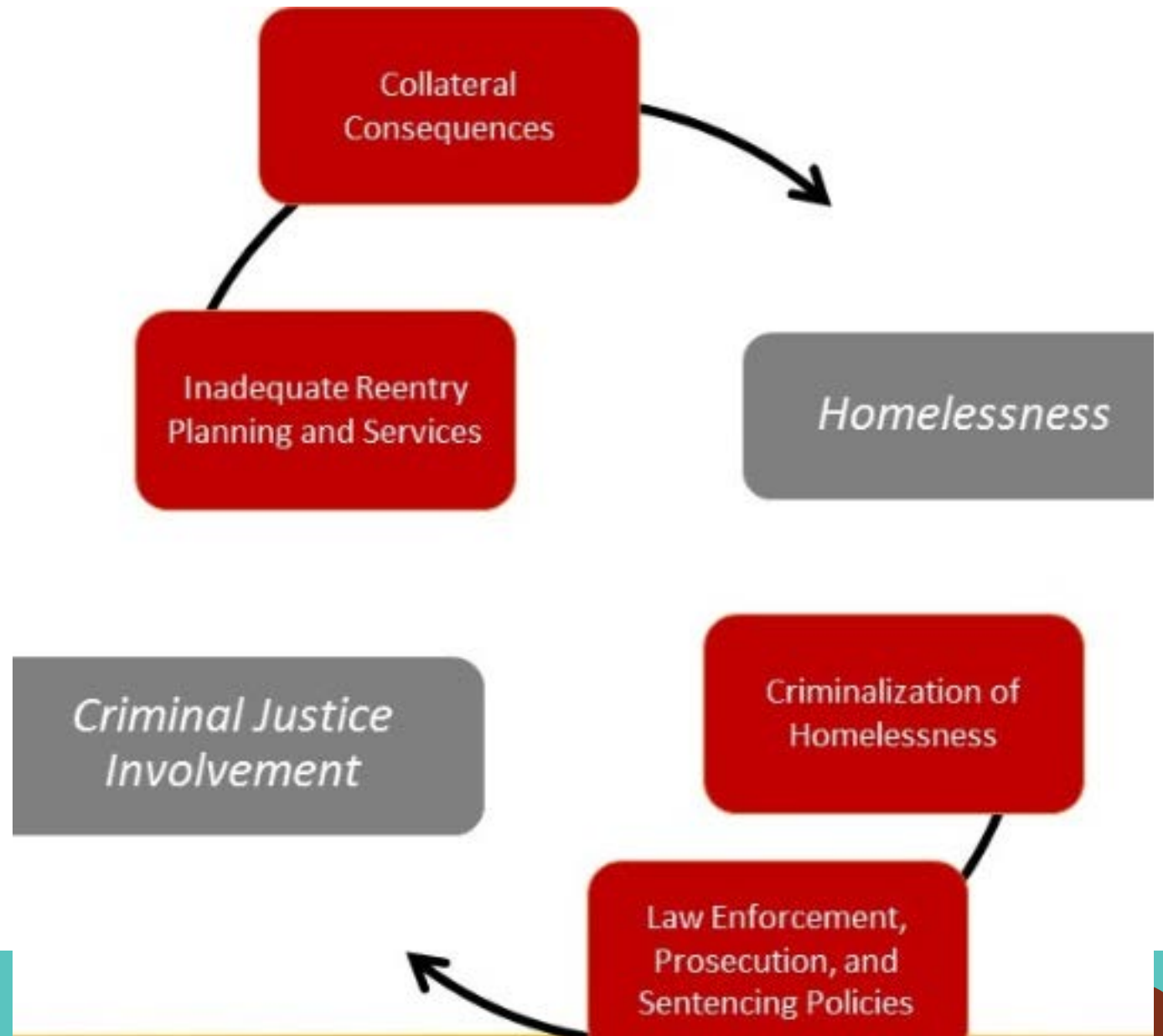
LOCAL POLICIES DRIVE THE CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMELESSNESS SUCH AS SLEEPING OUTDOORS. SUCH POLICIES PERPETUATE THE CYCLE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT AND HOMELESSNESS.

# Homelessness in Criminal Justice Population

- High prevalence of past criminal justice involvement among people experiencing homelessness.
- The risk of criminal justice system involvement is higher for people experiencing homeless.

# Breaking the Cycle

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CELEBRATING

YEARS



# High Prevalence of Past Criminal Justice

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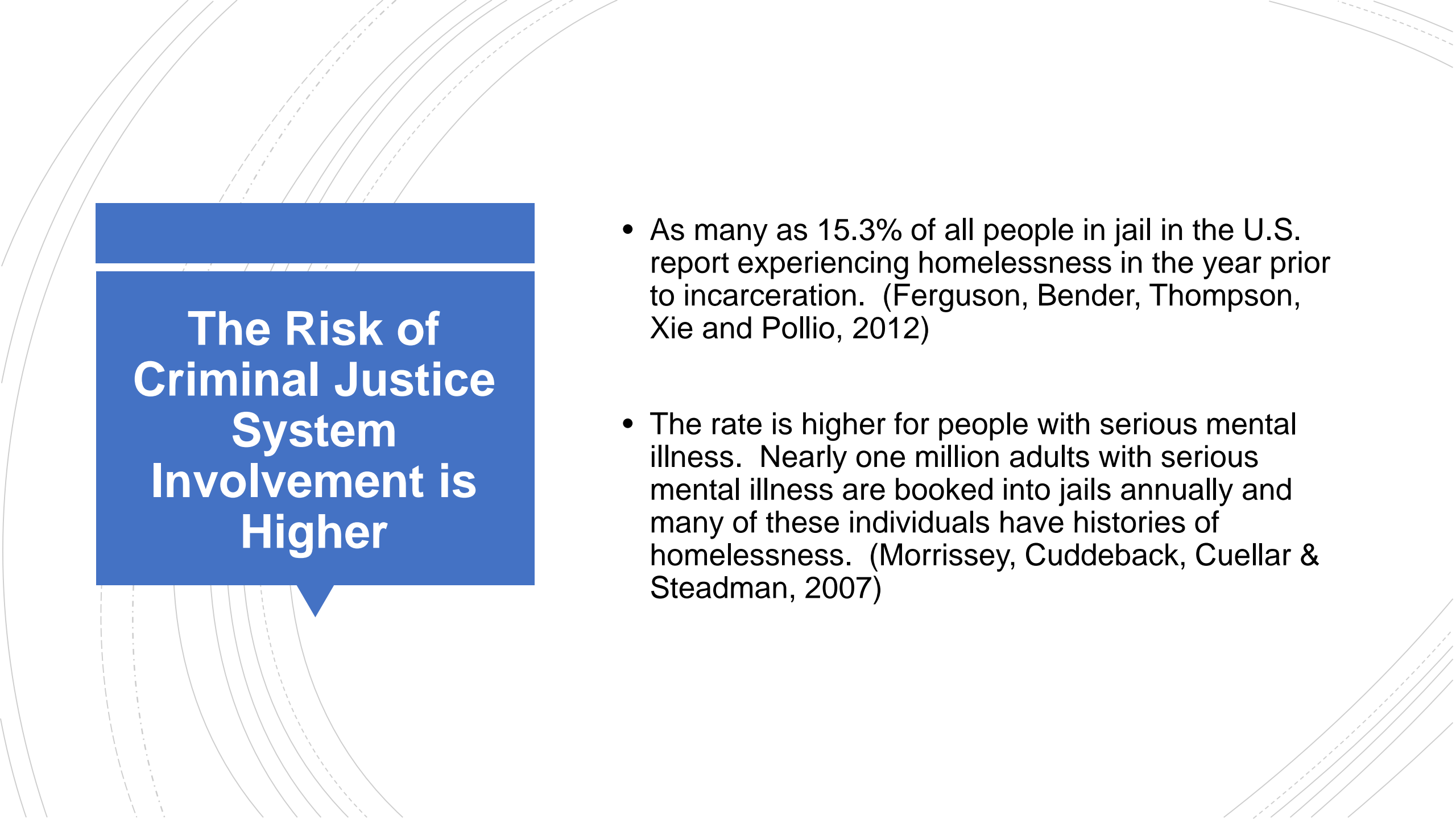
Anywhere from 25 to 50% of people experiencing homelessness have a history of incarceration. (Metraux & Culhane, 2006)

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Nearly 50,000 people, or 5% of all adults who enter shelters annually, come from correctional facilities. (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013)

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Homelessness is 7.5 to 11.3 times more prevalent among jail inmates than the general population (Greenberg & Rosen, 2008)

The background of the slide features a series of concentric, curved lines in a light gray color, creating a sense of motion or a circular path. These lines are more prominent on the left side and fade out towards the right.

## **The Risk of Criminal Justice System Involvement is Higher**

- As many as 15.3% of all people in jail in the U.S. report experiencing homelessness in the year prior to incarceration. (Ferguson, Bender, Thompson, Xie and Pollio, 2012)
- The rate is higher for people with serious mental illness. Nearly one million adults with serious mental illness are booked into jails annually and many of these individuals have histories of homelessness. (Morrissey, Cuddeback, Cuellar & Steadman, 2007)

## HOMELESS INMATES

**64.2%** vs. **46.4%**  
of homeless inmates reported a mental illness of non-homeless inmates

**54.9%** vs. **44.8%**  
of homeless inmates met the diagnostic criteria for PTSD of non-homeless inmates

**45.9%** vs. **35.3%**  
of homeless inmates reported having been diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder of non-homeless inmates

**52.0%** vs. **21.0%**  
of homeless inmates reported that they expected to be homeless upon leaving jail of those who were not homeless

**31.4%** vs. **53.0%**  
of homeless inmates reported that they had a job secured after jail of those who were not homeless

Percentages are from "A Study of Homelessness in Seven Colorado Jails," a report published by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice in June. Between June and October 2017, researchers surveyed 567 inmates in Arapahoe County, the City and County of Denver, El Paso County, Larimer County, Mesa County and Pueblo County jails. The study was designed to over-sample homeless people to have a sufficient number of people to produce reliable estimates of different indicators: 60.8 percent of the respondents were homeless.

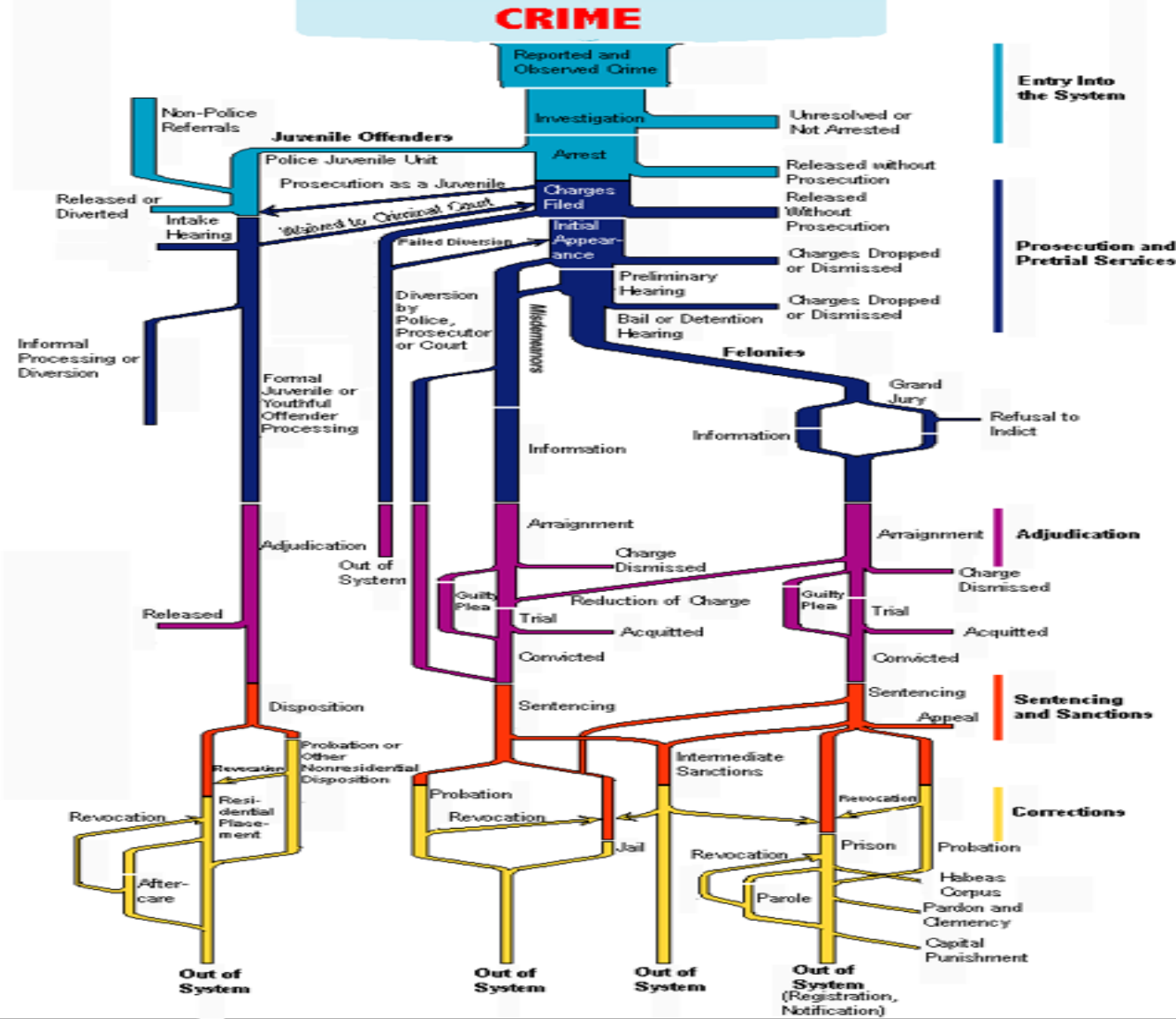
Note: "Homeless" means they experienced homelessness in the 30 days prior to coming to jail.



# What is the “Criminal Justice system”?

- A complicated, confusing system to enforce our criminal laws.
- It is the official process whereby accused persons are:
  - Arrested
  - Prosecuted
  - Convicted
  - Sentenced
  - Punished

# What is the Sequence of Events in the Criminal Justice System?



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# Housing First Basics

- Prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness.
- People need basic necessities like food and place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use and/or mental health issues.
- Giving individuals choice in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

## Two Common Models of Housing First

- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – targeted to individuals with chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, or substance use disorders. It provides long-term rental assistance.
- Rapid Re-Housing – provides short-term rental assistance and services

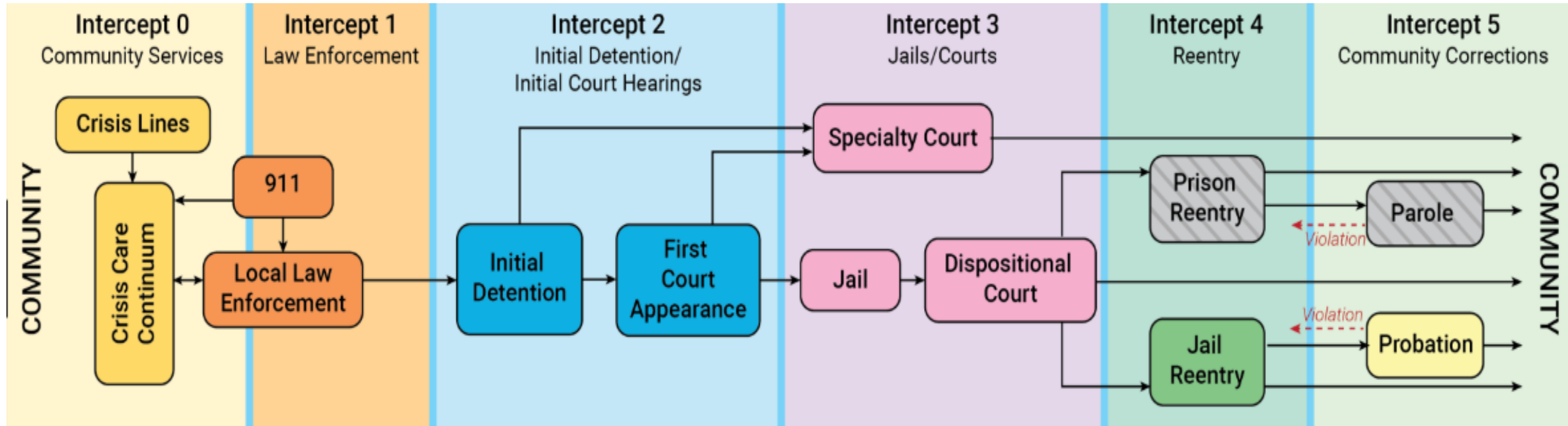








# Sequential Intercept Model



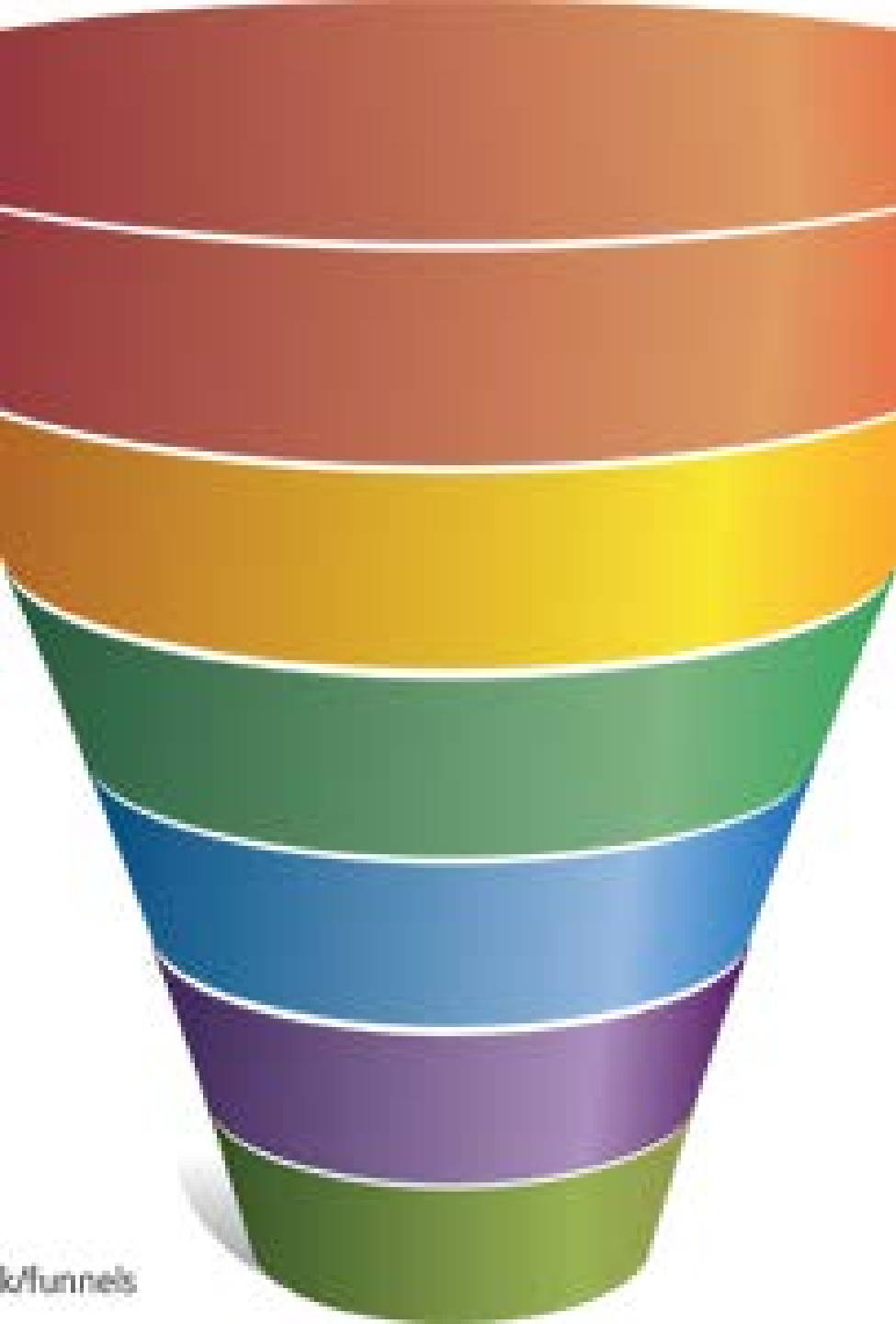
# Basics of the Sequential Intercept Model

- A community framework for Criminal Justice and Mental Health.
- Points of inception to prevent individuals from entering or falling deeper into the criminal justice system.

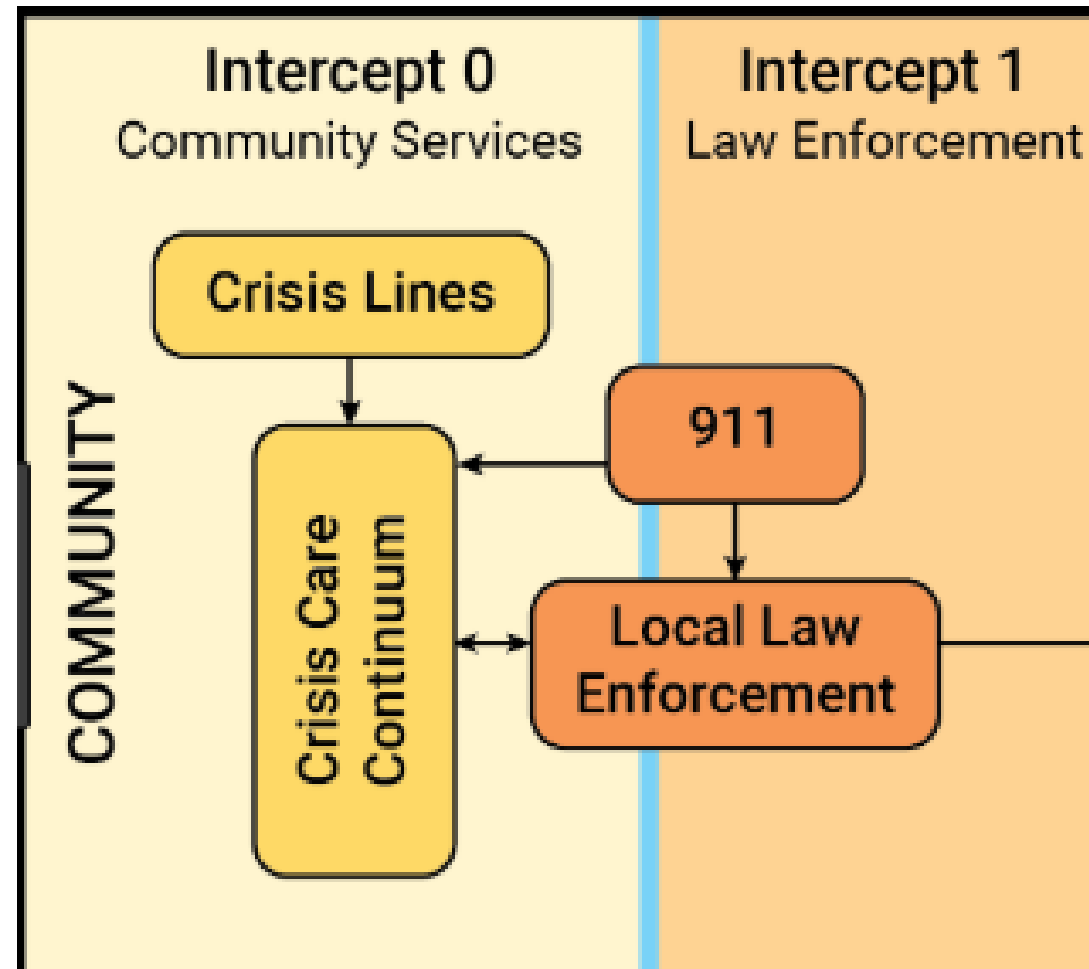


# More Basics of the Sequential Intercept Model

- People with mental disorders should not “penetrate” the criminal justice system at a greater frequency than people in the same community without mental disorders.
- Ideally, most people will be intercepted at early points, with decreasing numbers at each subsequent point.



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- The deeper that people enter into the system costs more time, money, and energy.
  - And the harder it is to exit them from the system.
  - Think of the model as a funnel.



# Intercept 0 — Community Services



Specialized law enforcement  
and provider based  
interventions



Alternatives to criminalization  
of homelessness and  
seamless systems of care



Collaborate with law  
enforcement and treatment  
agencies

# Intercept 0

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## Community Services



Adopt constructive alternative policies and practices that don't criminalize homelessness such as camping, public sleeping, sitting on sidewalks, or soliciting money



Existing Permanent Supportive Housing



Existing Rapid Rehousing



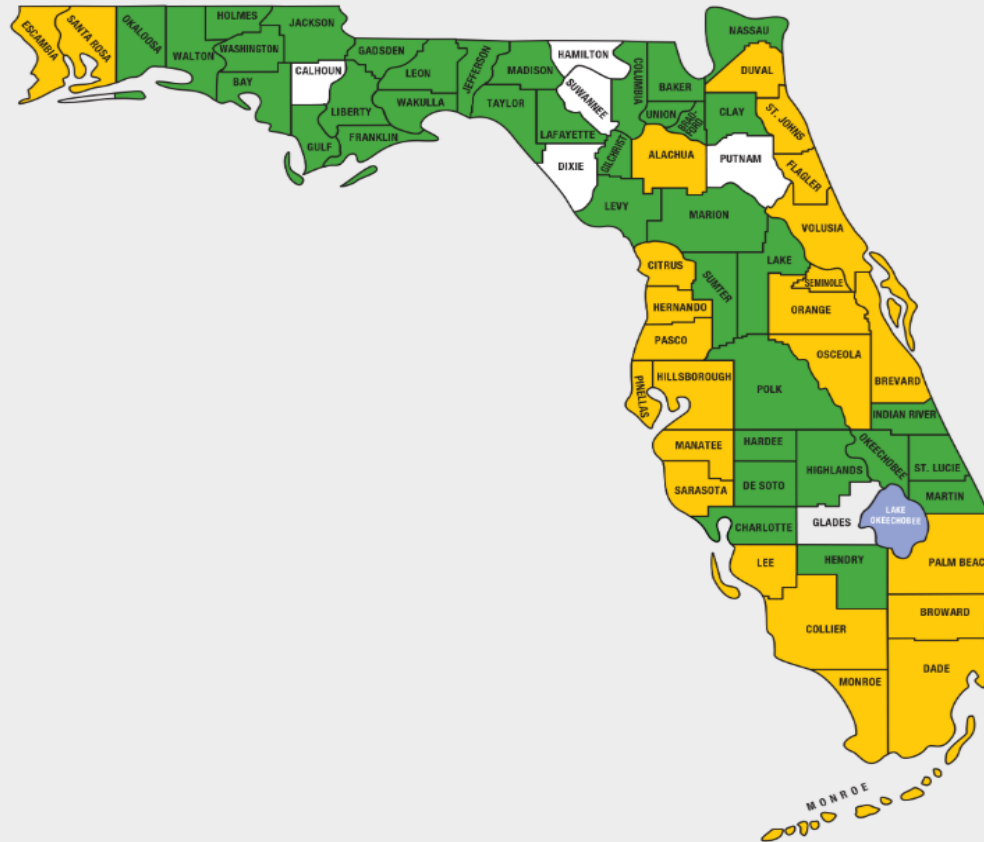


# Intercept 1: Law Enforcement

- Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT)
- Specialized Law Enforcement Training
- Mental Health First Aid for Public Safety
- Intervening with super-utilizers and providing follow-up after the crisis

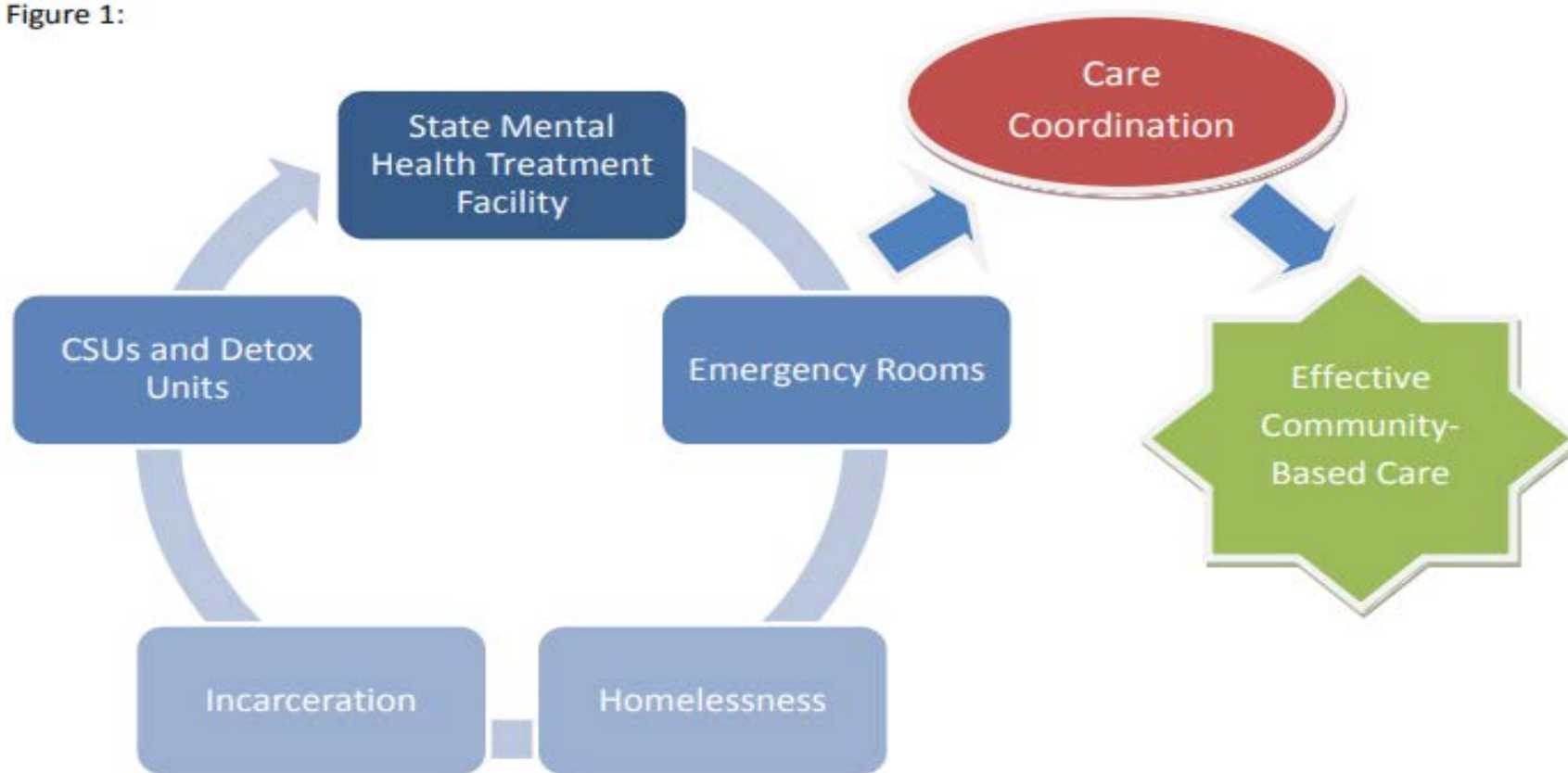
■ CIT Counties with New State Funding  
■ CIT Counties - 2014

**■ CIT Counties - 2014**



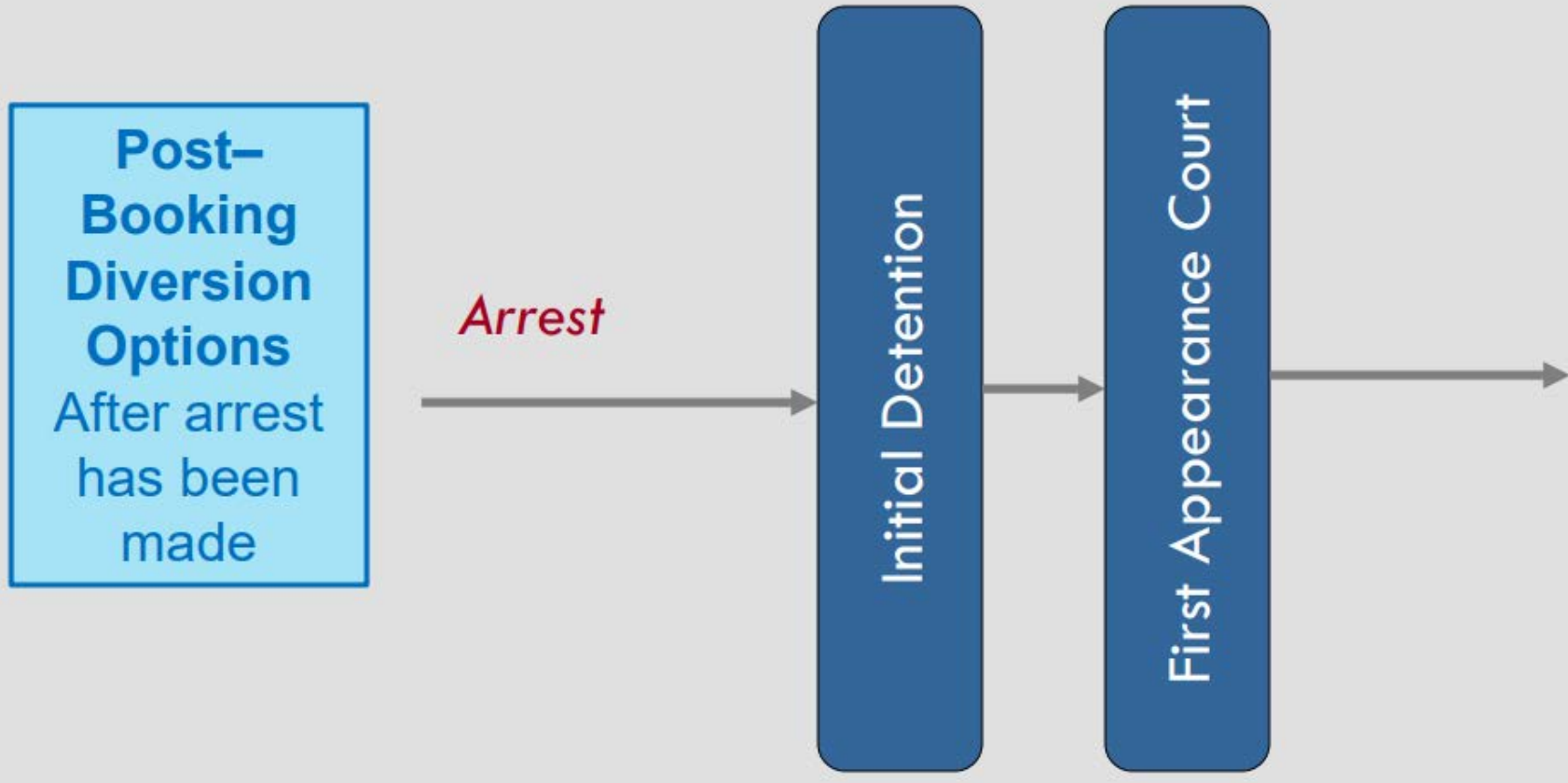
# Care Coordination

Figure 1:



## Intercept 2

### Initial detention/Initial court hearings



# Initial Hearing and Initial Detention

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- Post arrest diversion points of contact:
- Booking-in staff
- Classification officers
- Arresting and jail officers
- Jail medical

# Intercept 2

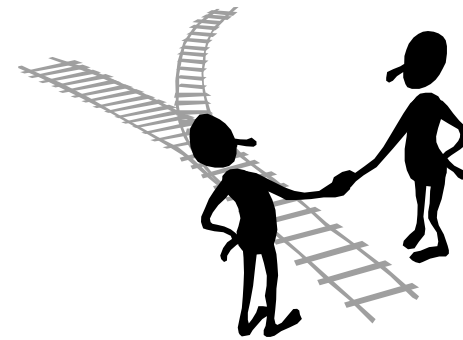
- Data matching initiatives between jail and community homeless service providers
- Pretrial release programs
- First appearance staff

# Jail Screening

- Who screens?
- What questions?
- For what?
- Who gets the screening?
- Do they assess risk?
- Why is it important to know the answers to these questions?

# Intercept 2 Diversion Opportunities

- Brief Jail Screening
- Motivational Interviewing
- Peer Services
- Benefit Coordination
- Pretrial Release Services





## **Intercept 3      Jails / Courts**

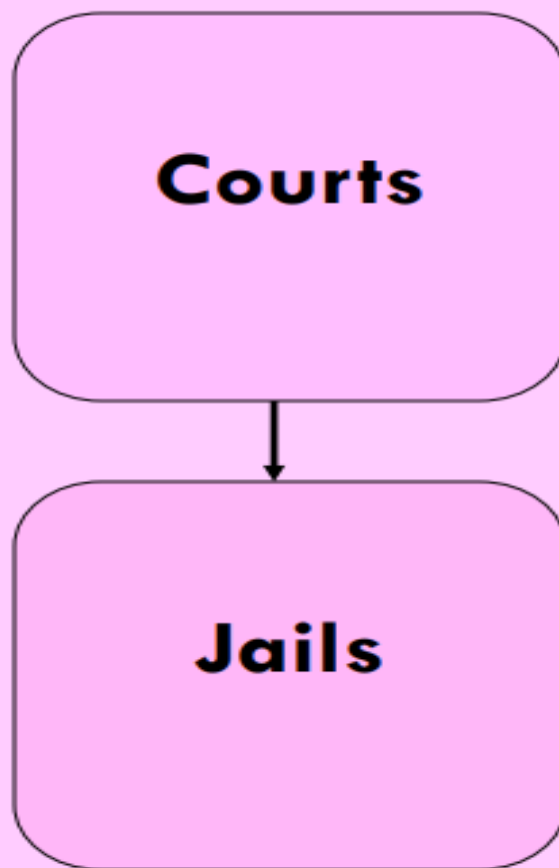
**Specialty  
Courts?**

**Other Court  
Programs**

**Jail-Based  
Diversion  
Programs**

**&**

**Jail Mental  
Health Services**



# Intercept 3: Problem Solving Courts

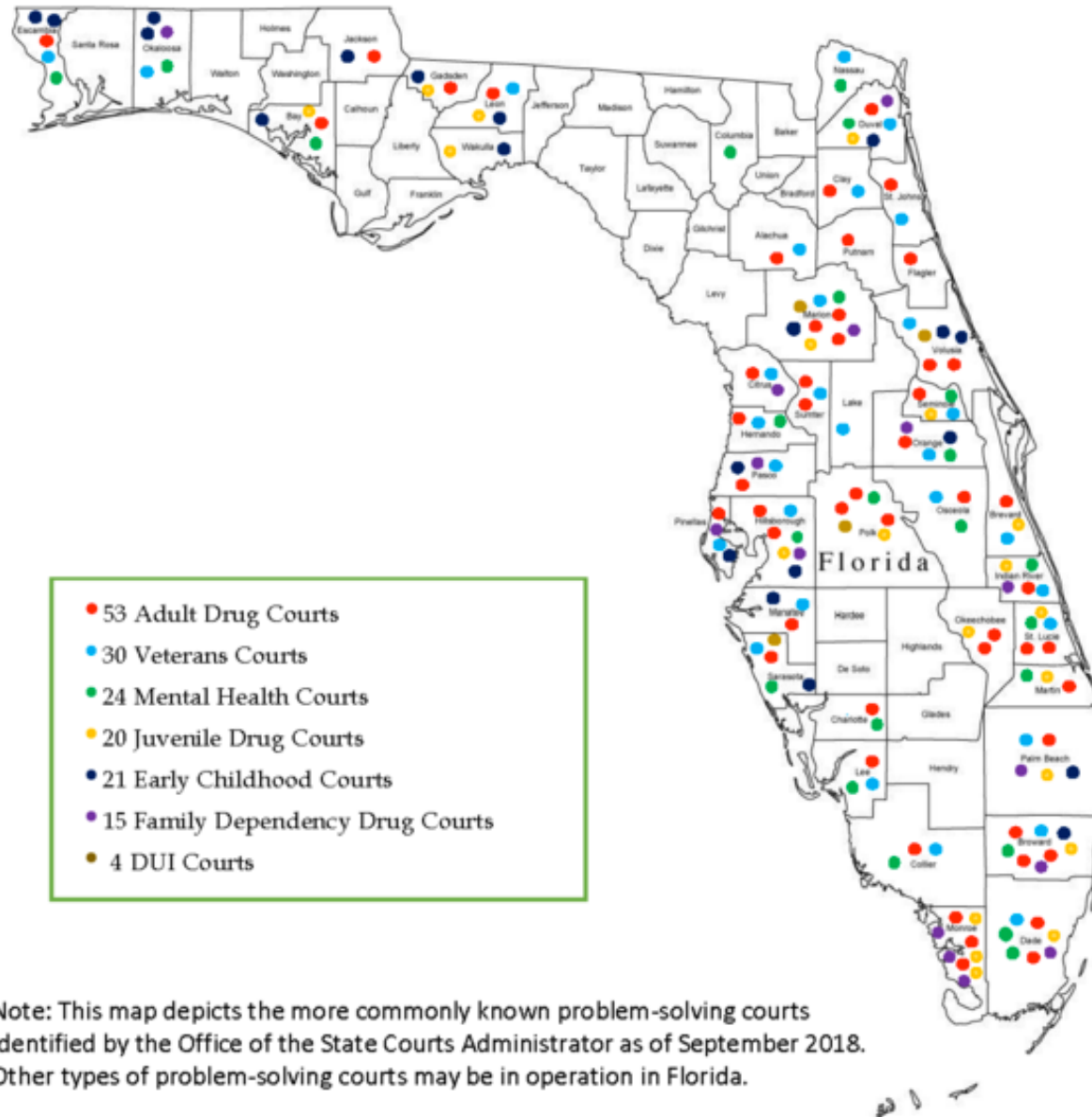
- Specialized courts to address the needs of persons with needs.
- Limit punishment focusing on problem solving strategies to avoid further involvement in the criminal justice system.



# Problem Solving Courts

- Reduce jail time
- Smooth transition to community treatment and services
- Collaboration with all agencies
- Diversion from criminal justice system
- Specialized monitoring





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# Community Courts

- A problem solving court that addresses quality of life or “nuisance” cases and takes a more proactive approach to public safety.
- Several national models.

# Florida's First Community Court

- 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- January 2019
- Court team includes the City of Lauderdale, Broward County, the Chief Judge, the State Attorney's Office, the Office of the Public Defender, Broward Sheriff's Office, public and private service providers.
- The City of Fort Lauderdale was one of five jurisdictions in the nation to receive a federal grant to implement the specialized court.

# Broward Community Court Goals

- Action Cooperative
- Combine punishment with help
- Give the community a voice in shaping sanctions
- Recognize that communities are victims
- Use punishment to pay back the community
- Open social services at the court to residents

# Broward Community Court Cases

- Trespass
- Disorderly Conduct
- Public Intoxication
- Sleeping on the Beach
- Public Indecency
- Health Safety Violations
- Vandalism
- Obstructing Traffic
- Panhandling
- Misdemeanor drug possession
- Resisting arrest
- Simple assault
- Simple battery
- Petit Theft
- Loitering and Prowling
- Defrauding an Innkeeper



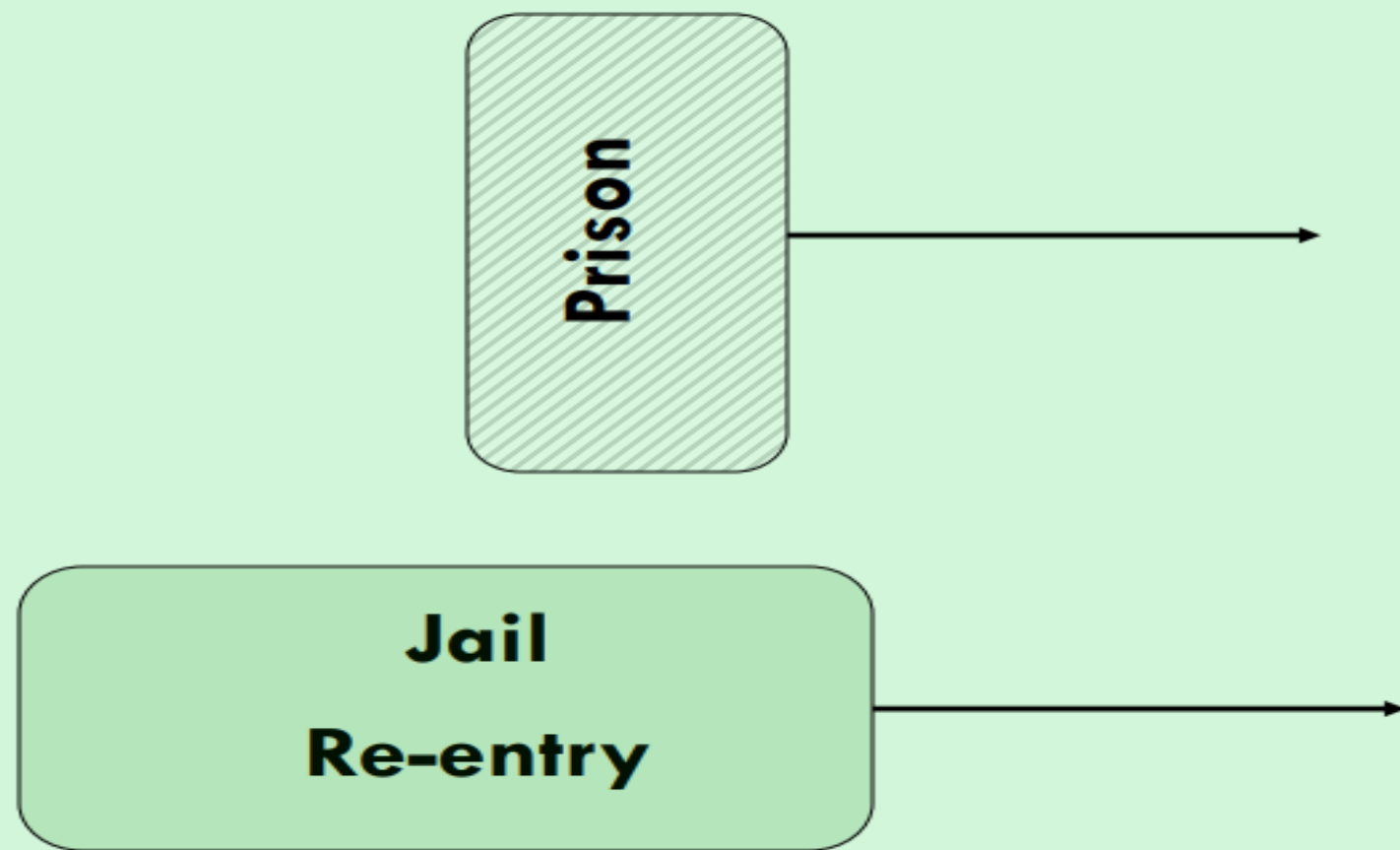
# Jails

- Screening at booking
- Benefit Coordination
- Classification/Discharge
- VA Jail Programs
- Mentorship Programs
- Faith Based
- Volunteers!!



# Intercept 4

## Reentry



# Reentry/Reintegration

- Re-entry from Prison, Jail, and State Hospital.
- There is little continuity of care or communication between corrections and community for individuals who are homeless leaving correctional settings.
- Homeless individuals being released may be unaware of services.

# Assess Housing at Re-entry

- Were they experiencing homelessness before they were incarcerated?
- Do they have family members or social supports?
- Do they have income to pay for rent?
- What kind of tailored approach?

# Reentry/Reintegration

- Working together to stop the cycle.
- Assess-Plan-Identify-Coordinate – APIC Model
- GAIN Reentry Checklist



# GAINS Re-Entry Checklist

- Based on APIC
- Assist jails in re-entry planning
- Predicts potential needs
- Steps taken

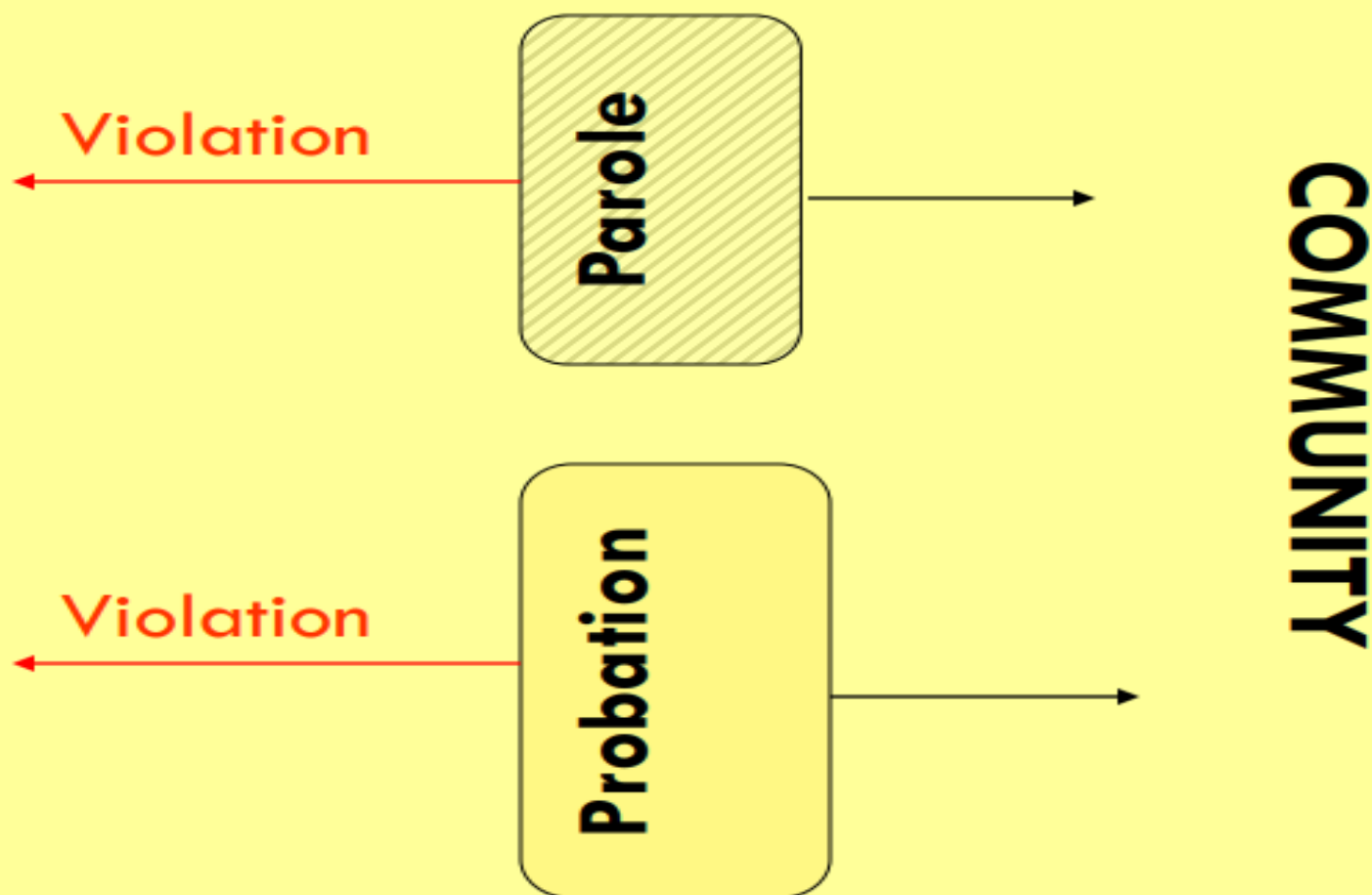
GAINS Re-Entry Checklist For Inmates Identified with Mental Health Service Needs					
Detainee's Name _____ Last, First M		Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Date of Birth ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Today's Date ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Jail ID # _____ SSN#
Name of Facility	Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number	Current Status <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Trial Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> Sentenced Inmate	Date of Admission ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Projected Release Date ____/____/____ mm dd yy	
Potential Needs in Community After Release		Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)		Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals	
Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/>					
Psychotropic Medications <input type="checkbox"/>					
Housing <input type="checkbox"/>					
Substance Abuse Services <input type="checkbox"/>					
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/>					
Health Care Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>					
Income Support/Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>					
Food/Clothing <input type="checkbox"/>					
Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>					
Other <input type="checkbox"/>					
Full plan completed and discussed with detainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
Attachments? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
If no, why?					
Detainee refused <input type="checkbox"/>		Court released before plan completed <input type="checkbox"/>			
Incomplete for other reasons <input type="checkbox"/>		Specify: _____			

# SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)

- A nationwide training designed for case managers who assist persons who are homeless through the application and disability determination process.
- Approval rates of 60-95% on INITIAL applications for homeless applicants in an average of 87 days.

# Intercept 5

## Community corrections / Community support





# Community Corrections

- Specialized Probation
- Forensic Intensive Case Management
- Trauma-Informed Treatment
- SAMHSA Tool Kits:
  - Permanent Supportive Housing
  - Supportive Employment
  - Illness Management & Recovery (i.e., WRAP)

# Challenges to Collaboration

- Understanding funding – “silos”
- Limited history of true collaboration or community problem-solving
- Limited resources create a competitive and/or protective environment
- System “cultures”
- Local relationship building

# Keys to Success

- Task Force (shared leadership)
- Consumer & Family Involvement
- Communication & Information Sharing
- Boundary Spanners
- Champions
- Create Momentum or Traction

# Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant Programs

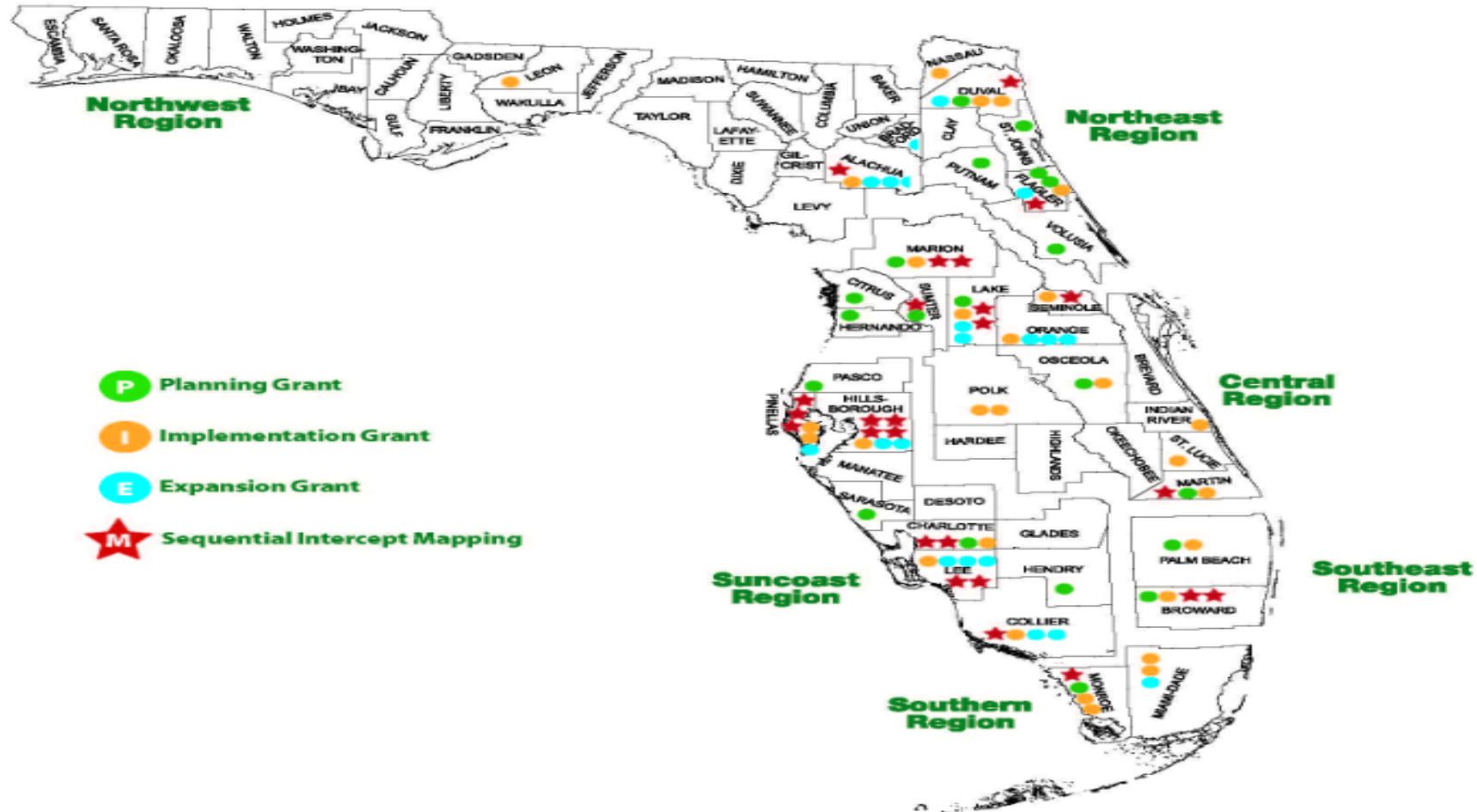
- Planning Grants
- Implementation Grants
- University of South Florida Mental Health Institute
- [www.usf.edu/cbcs/mhlp/tac/about-us/centerhistory.aspx](http://www.usf.edu/cbcs/mhlp/tac/about-us/centerhistory.aspx)



# Reinvestment Grants

- Must be used to “a problem-solving model and strategic plan for treating adults and juveniles who are in, or at risk of entering, the criminal justice system and include strategies to divert individuals from judicial commitment to community-based programs”.

# CJMHSR Reinvestment Grant Program



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# Polk County

## Accomplishments

- ↑ Established three new forensic programs since 2016
- ↑ Completed SIM in 2017
- ↑ Began housing initiative; New permanent supportive housing to open in 2020
- ↑ Received NACo 2019 Achievement Award in Criminal Justice and Public Safety

## Challenges

- ↓ Data sharing and Release of Info agreements
- ↓ Getting buy-in from Public Defender for jail transition program
- ↓ Data collection; Deciding what to track and who is responsible

## Next Steps:

- Continue following SIM action steps/ Update SIM
- Secure grant funding for continuation and expansion of forensic programs
- Continue refining Helping HANDS program



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# Polk County – Helping Hand Roots Program

- Offers supportive housing linking to safe, affordable, community-based housing with flexible, voluntary support services
- Participants can access, at their option, services designed to build independent living and tenancy skills, assistance with integrating into the community, and connections to community-based health care, treatment, and employment services



# Promising Strategies

- Wilwaukee County, Wisconsin
- Implemented Housing First to reduce reentry to jail
- One year outcomes:
  - municipal violations decreased by 82%
  - people experiencing homelessness decreased from 1,521 to 900
  - Instituted homelessness outreach teams

# Promising Strategies

- Returning Home-Ohio
- Pilot project
- Designed for disabled prisoners returning from state prison to five Ohio cities
- Participants were 40% less likely to be rearrested or reincarcerated within one year of release compared to a comparison group

# Summary

- Two decades of criminal justice reforms
- Decriminalization of homelessness
- Housing and criminal justice is complex and can vary
- Housing strategies for the most vulnerable populations reduce criminal behavior among subpopulations
- When people are stably housed, they have fewer non-violent offenses (survival crimes such as theft, robbery, trespassing, loitering and prostitution)
- Exiting jail or prison is a major risk factor to housing stability, creating a revolving door

- Questions?
- Comments?

# Resources

- [www.myflfamilies.com/](http://www.myflfamilies.com/) – DCF/SAMH - go to Mental Health then Forensic
- <https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/fmhi/> – Florida Mental Health Institute
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/gains-center> – SIM, APIC, GAINS checklist, Trauma
- [www.citinternational.org/](http://www.citinternational.org/) - CIT
- [www.prainc.com](http://www.prainc.com) – SOAR
- <https://stepuptogether.org/> - Stepping Up Initiative
- [www.faada.org](http://www.faada.org) – Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association – info/training
- <http://justicecenter.csg.org> – The Justice Center

# References

Metraux, S. & Cuhane, D. Recent incarceration history among a sheltered homeless population. *Crime and Delinquency* 2006; 52(3): 504-517.

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**Leah Vail Compton, MA,**

**Leah.vailcompton@myflfamilies.com**

**(850) 491-8048**



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