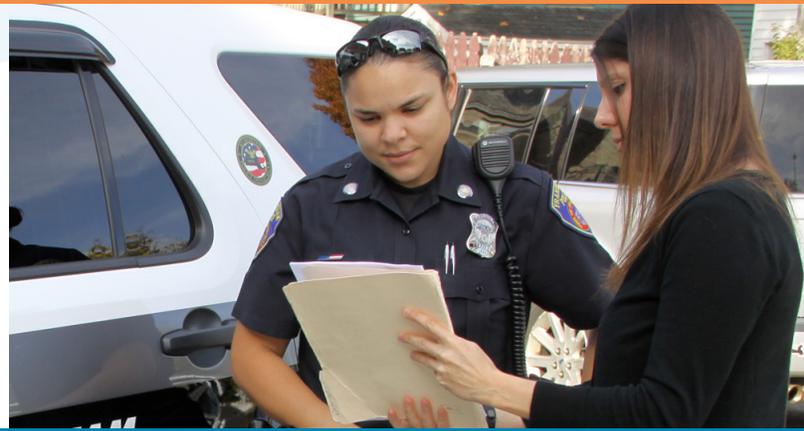




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Advocates Jail Diversion Program | A Co-Responder Model

ABOUT

Program Need

A disproportionate number of individuals in the Massachusetts criminal justice system have behavioral health disorders. Police officers often receive little training and limited resources to respond to calls involving these individuals.

42%

OF INMATES IN THE COUNTY JAIL SYSTEM HAVE A FORM OF MENTAL ILLNESS

26%

HAVE MAJOR MENTAL ILLNESS

Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association, 2012 report

Program History

Advocates launched the first Pre-Arrest Co-Responder Jail Diversion Program (JDP) in Massachusetts in 2003 at the Framingham Police Department. The model was successfully replicated in Marlborough (2008), Watertown (2011) and offered on a regional basis in Ashland, Sherborn, Holliston, and Hopkinton (2015).

Individuals Served

Since 2003, police officers across all four Advocates JDP programs have referred over 16,000 individuals in need of services to Jail Diversion Program clinicians.

The Model

The model pairs police officers with masters-level clinicians, who ride alongside officers on all calls involving individuals in a mental health or substance-related crisis. This co-responder jail diversion model is the only program in the Commonwealth that features a full-time clinician embedded in the police departments. They provide much needed de-escalation, crisis stabilization, assessment/evaluation services and on-the-job training.

Advocates Jail Diversion Program is also the only model operating in the Commonwealth that facilitates dual diversions — both from arrest and from emergency departments.

Arrest Diversion

By providing treatment-based alternatives, clinicians are able to facilitate arrest diversions on the scene and in the moment. Individuals who are not able to be diverted (more serious crimes/mandatory arrests) also receive support, resources, and referrals while in police custody.

Emergency Department Diversion

Because JDP clinicians are on-the-scene to respond immediately, they are able to reduce costly and unnecessary referrals to hospital emergency departments.

Funding

The Advocates Jail Diversion Programs traditionally have launched using short term local philanthropic support. Once efficacy has been established, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) has provided long term grant funding.



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IMPACT

Diversions and Cost-Savings

The average arrest diversion rates for individuals with a behavioral health condition range from 74% to 88% across the four programs. Since 2003, 2,445 individuals have been diverted from arrest as a result of the on-scene response by JDP clinicians, which has resulted in estimated cost savings of \$4,890,000.¹

Since 2003, across all four JDP programs, 1,572 individuals have been diverted from the hospital emergency departments by the presence of a masters level clinician on scene, which has resulted in estimated cost savings of \$6,288,000.¹

Pre-Arrest Jail Diversion Programs were developed to provide police with immediate access to a full-time masters-level clinician for support. Here's what they have to say:



The Framingham Police would not be able to fulfil its mission of keeping Framingham safe without the Jail Diversion Program... The ability to immediately divert low-level offenders away from arrest- and into treatment-benefits everybody.”

KENNETH FERGUSON, Chief of Police, Framingham Police Department



The police academy does not adequately prepare cops to respond to the mentally ill. Before the JDP, we were ‘on our own out here.’ In the JDP clinician, we have our own ‘in-house’ set of resources at our disposal.”

TONY EVANGELOUS, Police Officer, Marlborough Police Department



“In the academy, you learn to shoot and drive fast but that’s not the skill we need the most; we need to communicate with people better.”

ANONYMOUS, Police Officer, Marlborough Police Department

SINCE INCEPTION COST SAVINGS BY JDP	Arrest Diversions	Emergency Department Diversions
Framingham <i>Inception: 2003</i>	\$3,324,000	\$2,472,000
Marlborough <i>Inception: 2008</i>	\$1,076,000	\$1,976,000
Watertown <i>Inception: 2011</i>	\$382,000	\$1,620,000
Ashland Regional* <i>Inception: 2015</i>	\$108,000	\$220,000

*Includes Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, and Sherborn

¹ Formula cited in “Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Report on Pre-Arrest Jail Diversion Programs”, presented by Dr. Deborah Pinals, Assistant Commissioner for Forensic Services, Massachusetts State House, October 6th 2009.

SINCE 2003

TOTAL DIVERSIONS

4,017

INDIVIDUALS HAVE
BEEN DIVERTED

TOTAL COSTS SAVINGS

\$11.2M

COST SAVINGS TO JDP
PROGRAM COMMUNITIES

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