

Lee County, Florida:

Taking Action for Change

Transforming Services for Persons with Mental Illness in Contact with the Criminal Justice System

Introduction

This report summarizes the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop held in Lee County, Florida on February 24th and 25th 2010. The workshop was facilitated by the Florida Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse (CJMHS) Technical Assistance Center at Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI), University of South Florida (USF). This report includes:

- ❖ A brief review of the origins and background for the workshop
- ❖ A summary of the information gathered at the workshop
- ❖ A cross-systems intercept map as developed by the group during the workshop
- ❖ An action planning matrix as developed by the group
- ❖ Observations, comments, and recommendations from the Florida CJMHS Technical Assistance Center to help Lee County achieve its goals

Recommendations contained in this report are based on information received prior to or during the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop.

Background

The Lee County Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse (CJMHS) Planning Council along with the full support of multiple local stakeholders requested that the Florida CJMHS Technical Assistance Center facilitate the Cross-Systems Sequential Intercept Model Mapping and Taking Action for Change in Lee County, Florida to provide assistance with:

- ❖ Creation of a map of the points of interface among all relevant systems
- ❖ Identification of resources, gaps, and barriers in the existing systems
- ❖ Development of a strategic action plan to promote progress in addressing the criminal justice diversion and treatment needs of the target population

The participants in the workshop included 35 individuals representing multiple stakeholder systems, including mental health, substance abuse treatment, human services, corrections, advocates, family members, consumers, law enforcement, and the courts. A complete list of participants is available at the end of this document. John

Petrila, J.D., LL.M. (USF-FMHI) and Nicolette Springer, M.S. (USF-FMHI) facilitated the workshop sessions.

Objectives of the Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise

The Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise had three primary objectives:

1. The development of a comprehensive picture of how people with mental illness and co-occurring disorders flow through the Lee County criminal justice system along five distinct intercept points: Law Enforcement and Emergency Services (Intercept 1), Initial Detention/Initial Court Hearings (Intercept 2), Jails and Courts (Intercept 3), Community Re-entry (Intercept 4), and Community Corrections/Community Support (Intercept 5).
2. The identification of gaps, resources, and opportunities at each intercept point for individuals in the target population.
3. The development of priority areas for activities designed to improve system and service level responses for individuals in the target population.

The Lee County Cross-Systems Map created during the workshop is on the last page of this document.

Lee County Cross-Systems Map Narrative

The following information reflects the notes taken during the *Cross-Systems Mapping Exercise*. These notes include a description of the map at each intercept point in the Sequential System Map by the Lee County CJMHSA Planning Council participants. Gaps in service delivery and resource opportunities are identified at each intercept point. These notes may be used as a reference in reviewing the Lee County Cross-Systems Map and as a tool in developing a formal strategic plan and future Memorandum of Understanding among the CJMHSA Planning Council members and other community stakeholders.

Intercept I: Law Enforcement / Emergency Services

A person in need can enter into the mental health system in two ways, through volunteer admission or through contact with law enforcement and/or emergency services. Law enforcement includes the Lee County Sheriff's Office and eight other local police departments (Fort Myers Police, Cape Coral Police, Sanibel Police, Florida Gulf Coast University Police, Edison State College Police, Port Authority, Fish and Wildlife and Florida Highway Patrol). If the person in need or a third party contacts 911, the call is routed to a city operator that will dispatch services as needed. Several dispatchers have partaken in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training including 11 from Lee County Sheriff's Office, 5 from Fort Myers Police Department and 1 from Cape Coral

Police Department. It is estimated that 210 law enforcement officers throughout Lee County have also participated in CIT training.

When law enforcement arrives, several scenarios may play out. An individual requiring immediate medical attention will be transported via ambulance to one of the local medical facilities. Lee Memorial Hospital has six locations throughout the county. Once medical clearance is established a person is transferred from the hospital to the crisis stabilization unit located at Vista Behavioral Crisis Services if a bed is available. Vista is a public Baker Act receiving center as well as a Marchmen Act receiving facility but their Marchmen beds are limited to juveniles and have a 28-day wait list.

Alternatively, the individual may be brought to the Lee County Triage Center and Low Demand Shelter. The Triage Center is a pre-arrest diversion program for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis who are homeless, indigent, and/or intoxicated and would have otherwise been arrested for a low-level offense. There are currently 27 beds but an expansion to 58 beds is in progress and will be completed mid-April 2010.

Voluntary mental health and substance abuse screening and assessment can take place at either one of the Hospitals, Vista or the Triage Center. If there are no criminal charges pending, the individual may be released back into the community. However, if criminal charges are pending, then the individual is returned to police custody to complete arrest procedures.

Intercept II: Initial Detention / Initial Detention and Court Appearance

According to the Lee County Sheriff's website the Lee County Jail has a capacity of 2,003 however has an average daily population of about 2,500. During our workshop it was estimated that approximately 100 individuals are booked daily.

Upon arrival at the jail, staff conduct several assessments in order to determine eligibility for jail services and treatment options. Risk classification, medical, mental health and substance abuse evaluations are all administered during the booking process. All inmates are then screened by pretrial services, potential Mental Health Court participants are referred to Coastal Behavioral Health (CBH) for a full assessment and eligibility determination. It is estimated that CBH refers about 10 to 20 clients a month to Mental Health Court. Drug Court referrals can also be made by pretrial services.

An outside vendor, Prison Health Services, provides medical services in the jail. All inmates are assessed by a nurse for general medical needs. The nurse can suggest further evaluations if deemed necessary. On day one of the workshop it was stated by a Prison Health Services staff member that approximately 6% of inmates are administered psychotropic medication on a daily basis. A psychiatrist visits the jail twice a week. He/she sees patients at the main jail on Mondays and at the downtown jail on Wednesdays. Prison Health Services will contact the psychiatrist as needed throughout the week and additional visits will be made upon an emergency.

Within 24 hours of arrival at the jail, all defendants appear before a judge via closed circuit television for their initial court hearing. Those who were screened and determined eligible for a specialty court or diversion program proceed into those respective programs.

Intercept III: Jails / Courts

Those who are not eligible for specialty court or other diversion program are assigned to either circuit or county court based on their charges. Even after assignment to circuit or county court, defendants may still be given the option by the judge to partake in such programs at a later point. Defendants in circuit court may also be transferred to a forensic state hospital.

Mental Health Court in Lee County was established in June 2002. The Court works in conjunction with Coastal Behavioral Health as the mental health provider. There is no maximum capacity and the number serviced varies monthly with the most recorded being 70 and the average being 40. They receive about 60 referrals a month from Pretrial Services for both felony and misdemeanor defendants with either violent or nonviolent charges. All clients must have an Axis I diagnosis but otherwise there is no other automatic exclusions. The State Attorney determines final inclusion for each defendant. As per statute, Judges cannot “transfer” cases into Mental Health Court, the State Attorney can however decide to move a case from one court to Mental Health Court.

Staff members from Mental Health Court, including the presiding judge, the State Attorney’s office, the Public Defender’s office and Probation meet weekly to discuss the cases on the mental health docket. All defendants are either on pretrial release or probation. The program does not have predetermined length of treatment. Each case is individualized.

The relationship between the court staff, the State Attorney, Public Defender, Probation and provider are very amiable. There does not seem to be any communication problems. Currently, one judge presides over Mental Health Court, it was noted that several feel it would be beneficial to have a rotation of judges. The lack of peer specialists was also mentioned. In comparison, Drug Court is more restricted than Mental Health Court. It is structured as a post-plea adjudication program and is limited to felony offenders.

All adjudicated cases then proceed to judicial disposition. Defendants who are found not guilty or have had charges dropped are released into the community with no services.

Intercept IV: Re-Entry

Individuals who are sentenced to more than one year of incarceration are transferred to State Prison. Those serving less than one year are housed in Lee County Jail.

There are some resources within the jail designed to prepare inmates for release however there are two FACT teams that conduct in-reach in the jail. There is currently no wait list for FACT assistance. The two teams have 10 staff members and an average of 100 clients.

If inmates are part of a program that provides case management then entitlement and other discharge planning is provided. However, inmates that are not part of a program do not receive any transitional assistance. Jail administration and staff do not have the resources to assist with housing, support services, treatment or reestablishment of benefits for the population that is not part of a specialized jail program. Several attendees at the workshop did acknowledge that Lorata Brady, a jail staff member, had made a packet of services for inmates.

One major obstacle mentioned was that many inmates do not have access to or have never had a valid drivers license, a social security card or a copy of their birth certificate. Without these documents getting entitlements or reestablishing benefits is nearly impossible.

Intercept V: Community Corrections / Community Support

After judicial disposition or upon release from incarceration, individuals can be placed under the supervision of a number of community corrections agencies. These include, state probation, county probation, conditional release and pretrial services.

The jail attempts to release inmates with a mental illness to a caregiver, case manager or family member. They make every effort to avoid releasing them alone. Individuals with documented mental illness are provided with a three-day supply of medication and a prescription for additional refills when released into the community. However, he prescription can only be filled at one designated CVS. According to attendees at the workshop, it would be a significant walk from the jail and public transportation is not available.

Housing options upon release are limited but there are some community organizations that can provide assistance. These include Salvation Army, New Life Center, Gulf Coast Jewish Services, Renaissance Manor and After the Rain. The availability and restrictions of each of these organizations varies. There are also 8 beds available for veterans in the County.

The Lee County Action Plan

Subsequent to the completion of the Systems Mapping exercise, the assembled stakeholders began to define specific steps that could be taken to address the gaps identified in the group discussion about the systems map. Five priority areas were identified, including opportunities for tactical interventions to promote “early quick victories” and more strategic interventions to stimulate longer-term systems changes. These priority areas are outlined on the following pages.

Priority Area 1: Information Sharing			
Objective	Action Step	Who	When
Increase Identification of Inmates with Mental Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DOC and DCF to share reentry information ▪ Jail Staff to share medication roster with State Attorney staff ▪ Add Mental Health status to questionnaire ▪ Consent form for release 	Ann Arnall (LCDHS) Kaylynn Janice Jeff Karen Angelina FMHI - Analysis	

Priority Area 2: Baker Act Issues			
Objective	Action Step / Questions to be Answered	Who	When
Explore the problems with Baker Act Initiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a wait list? ▪ Why are some people being held for 14 days? ▪ What can be done to change this process? ▪ Determine the regulatory ramifications 	Ann Arnall (LCDHS)	

Priority Area 3: Medical Clearance			
Objective	Action Step / Questions to Answered	WHO	WHEN
Sort through the process of medical clearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why no mental health assessment? ▪ When clearance there is limited access to Baker Act bed if needed, how can this be resolved? ▪ How is this being billed? 	Karen (AHCA) Ann Arnall (LCDHS) Greg (NAMI)	

Priority Area 4: 916 Cases			
Objective	Action Step	Who	When
Consolidate Competency to Stand Trial Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible use of case managers from Pre-Trial Services ▪ Determine when cases return 	Belinda (Probation) Kathy Katie (Public Defender) Kaylynn (Vista)	

Conclusions and Recommendations: Summary

A process such as the Cross-Systems Mapping & Taking Action for Change workshop can result in the acknowledgment of a somewhat daunting list of service gaps. In this respect, Lee County is much like most Florida counties and indeed like many jurisdictions in the United States. At the same time, Lee County is very unique and has important strengths.

- ❖ First, the individuals who participated in this workshop represented all of the major stakeholders necessary to accomplish change in this area.
- ❖ Second, participants were enthusiastic and frank in their comments and observations. This spirit of collegiality and willingness to discuss limitations as well as strengths is an important part of being able to work across systems, as is necessary in improving the lives of people with mental disorders in or at risk for entering the criminal justice system.

As Lee County moves forward in addressing the issues identified during this process, there are three issues in particular that may be of particular importance.

- ❖ First, the planning process over time needs to identify the specific points in the process where intervention is possible and might have the biggest impact. It is impossible within existing resources to resolve every problem identified in a planning process, but it is possible to identify the potential points where an intervention might make the most difference.
- ❖ Second, it is worth inventorying the data that are currently available in making this judgment and identifying what types of data that could be useful but either are not collected or not retained in an accessible data base. The USF-FMHI CJMHSA Technical Assistance Center can assist in this task.
- ❖ Third, it is critical that the planning process not lose the momentum created to date. Planning meetings involving all relevant stakeholders should be conducted on a regular basis and assigned priority by stakeholders. In addition, there are a number of resources available to Lee County to accomplish some of the tasks identified during the workshop as next steps. Those resources should be utilized whenever possible to expand the capacity of the planning group.

In closing, we would like to thank Lee County for allowing the CJMHSA Technical Assistance Center to facilitate this workshop. In particular we would like to thank Ann Arnall for her work in handling the local arrangements and for providing community leadership. Finally, a great gratitude to all the local stakeholders who took the time to share their experiences throughout the two day visit. We look forward to continuing to work with Lee County.

Resources

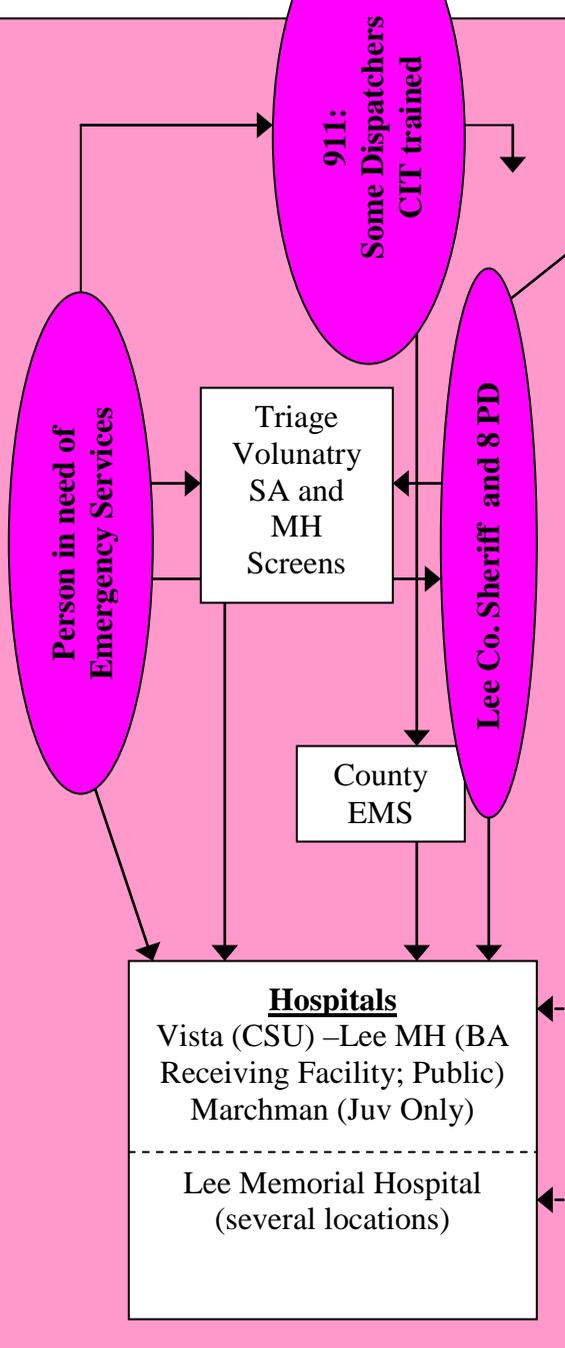
Website Resources and Partners	
Florida Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Technical Assistance Center	www.floridatac.org
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute Department of Mental Health Law and Policy	http://mhlp.fmhi.usf.edu
Florida Partners in Crisis	http://www.flpic.org
Justice Center	www.justicecenter.csg.org
Policy Research Associates	www.prainc.com
National GAINS Center/ TAPA Center for Jail Diversion	www.gainscenter.samhsa.gov

Other Web Resources	
Center for Mental Health Services	www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention	www.prevention.samhsa.gov
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment	www.csat.samhsa.gov
Council of State Governments Consensus Project	www.consensusproject.org
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill	www.nami.org
National Center on Cultural Competence	www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	www.health.org
National Criminal Justice Reference Service	www.ncjrs.org
National Institute of Corrections	www.nicic.org
National Institute on Drug Abuse	www.nida.nih.gov
Office of Justice Programs	www.ojp.usdoj.gov
Partners for Recovery	www.partnersforrecovery.samhsa.gov
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	www.samhsa.gov

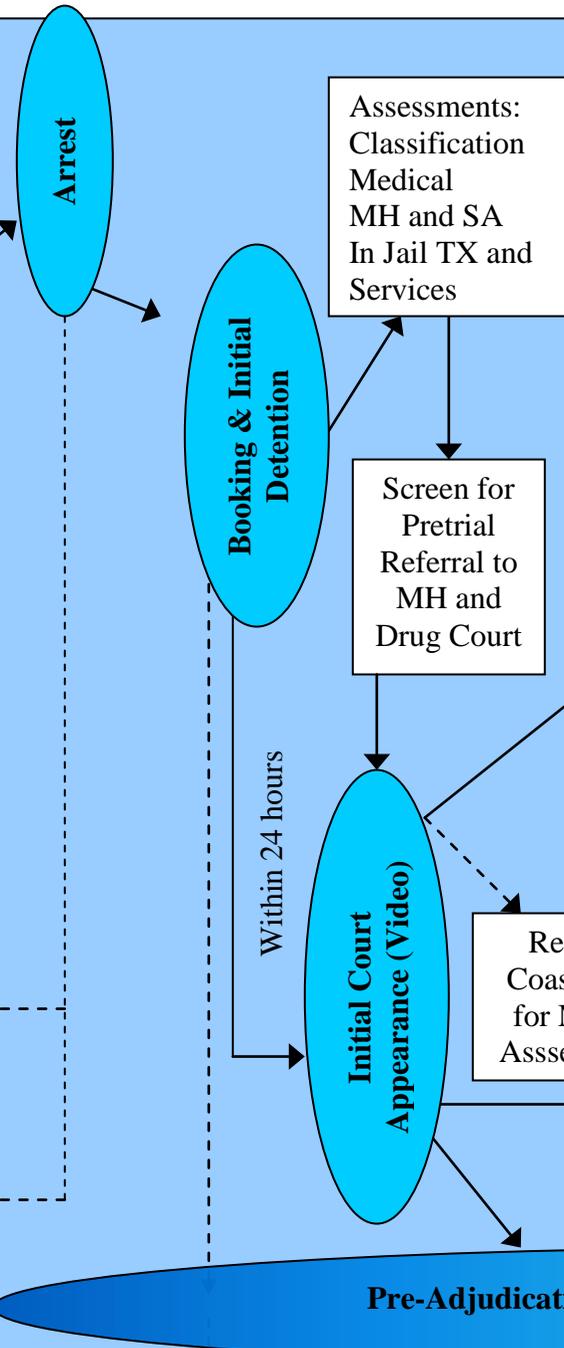
Participant List

NAME	AGENCY	E-MAIL
Ann Voorghees	Value Options	ann.vorhees@valueoptions.com
Dawn Clark	SWFAS	dclark@swfas.org
Larry Susthan	SAD	
Jeff Nichols	County Probation	jnichols@cjis20.org
Lt. Kevin Kouer	LCSO	Kkoller@sheriffleefg.org
Sgt. David Velez	LCSO	dvelez@sheriffleefg.org
Belinda Smith	LCPD	Dsmith@ca.cjis20.org
Kerri Pawlak	AHCA	pawlak@ahca.myflorida.com
Karen Brooks	AHCA	brooksk@ahca.myflorida.com
Jan Stepnoski	LCSO-MH	janicestepnoski@sherriflee.org
Tom McCormick	Salvation Army	tim_mccormich@USS.salvationarmy.org
Mike Tomaselli	FMPD	Mtomaselli@fmpolice.com
David Clapp	CFBHN	dclapp@CFBHN.org
Dr. Billie Scruggs	LCSO	bscruggs@sherriflee.org
Lt. Lisa Burch	LCSO	lburch@sheriffleefl.org
Tanya Slater	TLS	tlsconsulting@embarqmail.com
Lt. Mike Ciolino	LCSO	mciolino@sherriflee.org
Greg Gananver	NAMI Lee County	gregg@namilee.org
Ken Lsach	Ft. Myers Police	Klsack@fmpolice.com
Mary Kay Brothers	AHCA	brotherm@ahca.myflorida.com
Kaylynn Berrios	LMHC	berriosk@leementalhealth.org
Cheryl Buos	AHCA	bussd@ahca.myflorida.com
Brian Seibert	CBH	bseibert@coastalbh.org
Meg Mgelthur	TSA	
Julie Boudreaux	LCDHS	jboudreaux@leegov.com
Angelina Foster	PTS	afoster@ca.cjis20.org
Amy Kinsey	PTS	akinsey@ca.cjis20.org
Jennifer Matlock	CCPD	jmatlock@capecoral.net
Sandi Kaiser	Value Options	sandra.kaiser@valueoptions.com
Mary E Fletcher	Public Defender's Office	maryf@pd.cjis20.org
Kathy Smith	Public Defender's Office	kathleens@pd.cji20.org
Katie Turner	Asst. PD	katherinet@pd.cji20.org
Marcie Gillis	Jennings Behavioral	gillismarcie@gmail.com
Roger Holly	Lee Mental Health	hollyr@lmh.org
Sharon Massitelli	AIM Target Program	

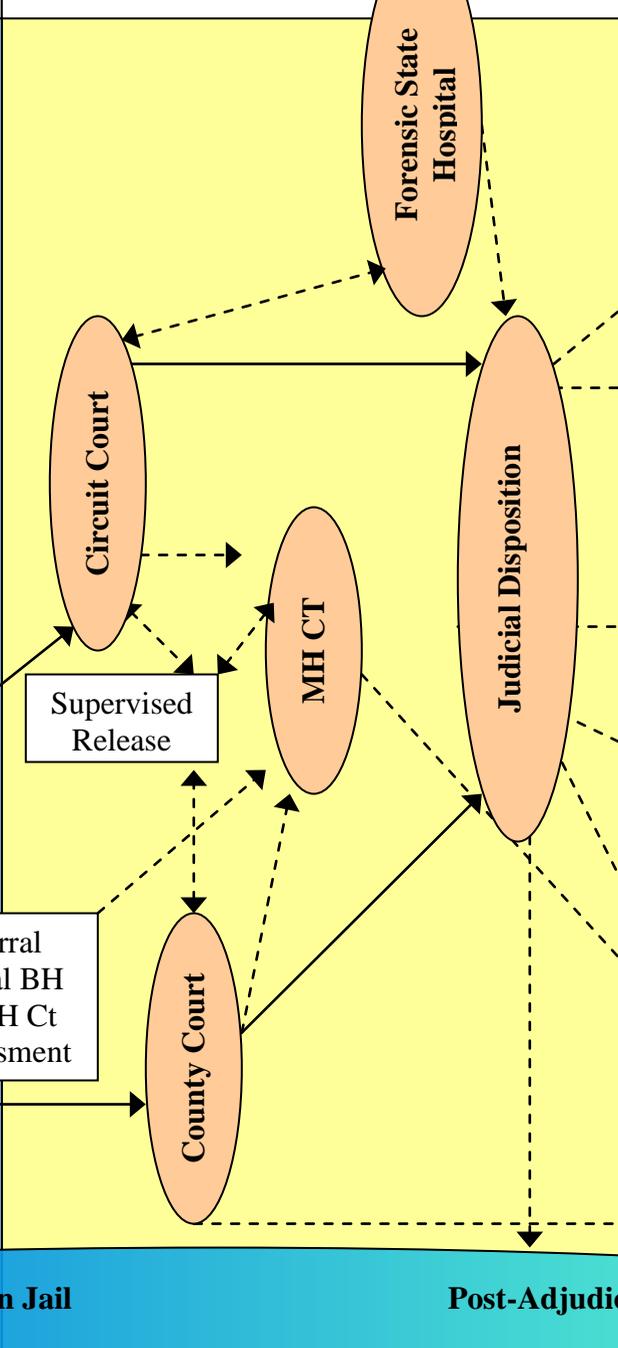
Intercept 1:
Law Enforcement



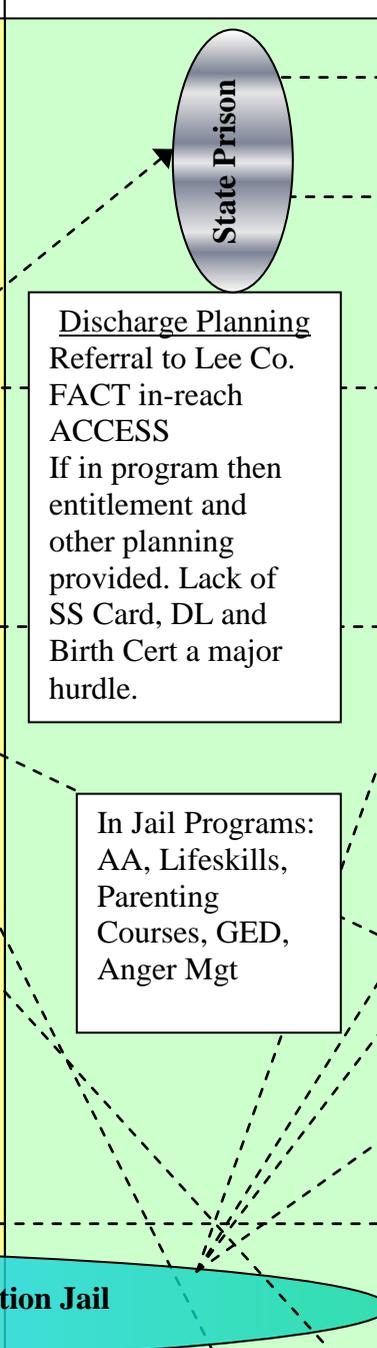
Intercept 2:
Initial Detention and Court Hearing



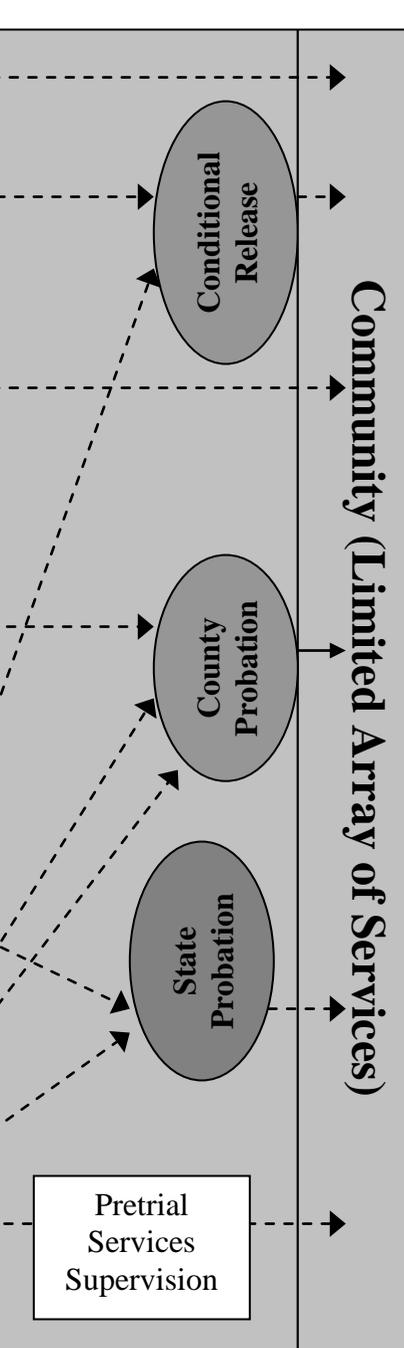
Intercept 3:
Jails and Courts



Intercept 4:
Re-Entry



Intercept 5:
Community Supervision



Discharged to Community