

Prosecutor-Led Diversion Initiative Fact Sheet

What is the Prosecutor-Led Diversion Initiative?

The Prosecutor-Led Diversion Initiative is a Bureau of Justice Assistance national training and technical assistance program designed to help prosecutors plan, implement, and evaluate new prosecutor-led diversion options. Funded under the Second Chance Act, the program seeks to encourage and provide assistance to prosecutors who are building the next generation of diversion programming: programs that serve individuals who are jail or prison bound and who frequently suffer from mental illness or drug dependency issues.

What are the major objectives of the initiative?

The Prosecutor-Led Diversion Initiative has five major objectives. First, the initiative will provide intensive training and technical assistance to no fewer than sixteen jurisdictions seeking to develop new diversion alternatives for this problem population. Second, it will develop a mentor network of exemplary diversion sites that can provide peer-to-peer assistance to jurisdictions seeking help in developing such programs. Third, it will produce an online toolkit of resources that will be available to any jurisdiction wishing to develop such programming. Fourth, it will highlight promising diversion programs and practices at two regional forums for up to two hundred fifty participants. Fifth and finally, the initiative will assess the nature and extent of prosecution-led diversion programming being used across the nation through a national survey of prosecutors.

What does prosecutor-led diversion mean?

Diversion programs can generally be characterized as police-led, prosecutor-led, or court-led, based upon who is responsible for determining the eligibility criteria for a given program, who decides if a diversion offer is made in a given case, and who decides if a program participant has successfully completed the program's conditions. In a prosecutor-led diversion program, these responsibilities are primarily exercised by the prosecutor.

Does the initiative provide funding to jurisdictions that are planning, implementing, or evaluating such programs?

No, unfortunately it does not. This is a training and technical assistance grant only. That assistance, however, does include advice on how to fund such programming and how to plan for program sustainability.

What is a prosecutor-led diversion mentor site?

A prosecutor-led diversion mentor site is a BJA designated prosecutorial entity that is highly experienced with developing and operating a diverse range of evidence-based, data-driven diversionary programs and is willing to share that expertise with their prosecutorial colleagues. Such a mentor site may host site visits; provide assistance by telephone, correspondence, and email; may participate in training and technical assistance visits to other jurisdictions; and may make presentations at regional conferences or other trainings.

Do mentor sites receive any financial assistance for serving in this role?

Mentor sites do not receive any direct financial assistance, but any out of town travel costs associated with them providing help to another jurisdiction is reimbursed.

Is there any other benefit to a jurisdiction serving as a mentor site?

In addition to the recognition a jurisdiction receives as a designated mentor site, such a jurisdiction will be an integral part of the prosecutor-led diversion mentor network and will itself have direct access to advice and assistance from others that can use to improve the operations of its own programs.

If a jurisdiction wants to serve as a mentor site, is there a deadline to apply?

Interested jurisdictions are encouraged to complete an online application by Friday, June 17 if they are interested in being selected as part of the initial wave of mentor sites. Jurisdictions are free, however, to complete an application at any time thereafter. Additional mentor sites will be designated during the life of this grant program.

How will mentor sites be selected?

Mentor sites will be selected based on the strength of their diversion programming and on their capacity to serve as mentors to the field.

What does a jurisdiction need to do to become one of the sixteen jurisdictions receiving intensive training and technical assistance?

A link to a separate electronic application will be released in a subsequent email. Interested jurisdictions should fill out that application when it becomes available. Sites will be competitively selected for assistance based on the strength of their applications.

Is anyone assisting the Bureau of Justice Assistance in delivering the Prosecutor-Led Diversion Program to the field?

The Bureau of Justice Assistance has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) to serve as the national training and technical assistance providers for the Prosecutor-Led Diversion Initiative. APA has also subcontracted with the Center for Court Innovation and National Opinion Research Center (NORC) to augment its training and technical assistance team.