

# Stumbling Blocks & Roadblocks: Critically Examining Strategies to Secure Court Appearance

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## **TODAY'S JOURNEY**

**UNPACK REAL STORIES**

**COMPARE WHAT IS NEEDED TO WHAT WE DO**

**EVALUATE THE EVIDENCE ABOUT WHAT WE DO**

**CRITICALLY CONSIDER WHERE WE GO FROM HERE**



## UNPACKING REAL STORIES



I'm homeless. As part of the agreement with the local shelter, they drop several off us off at the community library and tell us to stay there until 2:30pm. If I leave, the shelter won't guarantee my place for that evening. I called pretrial services to let them know I couldn't visit them because I was staying at the library. I emailed them using my phone. No response, but my phone can be spotty. Also, I couldn't Zoom from the library. I thought my messages to Pretrial would reschedule my visit and court date, but as it turns out, it didn't reschedule. I didn't want to jeopardize my shelter for that evening by leaving the library – so I didn't.



FTA for Pretrial Contact

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I overslept. I had stopped taking my meds – I have a serious diagnoses – and when that happens, I get drowsy and sleep a lot. Court was on a Monday, but I slept until Wednesday. I didn't mean to sleep three days. When I woke up, I went to work and didn't follow up with the court because I knew I already missed it. It was a bad decision on my part.



FTA for Missing Court

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I was scared and fell into depression. This happens to me. I'm also going through divorce court and I just have a lot going on and it was overwhelming. So, I was scared to show up to court and then go to jail when I have other things to take care of. So, I didn't go.



FTA for Missing Court



I was charged with a stupid, non-violent misdemeanor. The judge kept telling me I had to turn myself in. My attorney begged court for to reschedule my court dates due to my home/family responsibilities. Nope. My wife just had eye surgery and couldn't care for her self and our son has autism. I had to care for my family. I am the breadwinner. My stupid misdemeanor charge wasn't important enough to turn myself in – I stayed out to make money for my family.



FTA for Missing Court

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We're human and make mistakes. The county court is very strict with court. I was super late to court, so I didn't bother to show up. I knew they would issue a warrant. If I showed up late, I knew they would remand me to jail. Instead, I took my chances and stayed out. By missing court, I was able to keep arranging my medical services and my social services. If I had to gone to jail, I would have lost that and my job at the time.



FTA for Missing Court

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I don't have a driver's license, so I can't drive. And my judge intimidates me and made me cry at the last hearing. It is not pleasant to attend court with that judge. I don't have a ride and I have to rely on my parents to drive me. They work, and I told that to my judge. I did tell the judge that I could make it to court by 3pm and asked if I could then, but that wasn't good enough for that judge and he issued a warrant. Plus, I live across the state line and the ride into the county is very far and hard to figure out.



FTA for Missing Court



## STUMBLING & ROADBLOCKS

**Meghan**  
(shelter/library story)

**Housing, Structures/policies of court & library, lack of court responsiveness, misunderstanding of court processes**

**Dwayne**  
(meds/SMHD story)

**Mental health**

**Cherrell**  
(dep/divorce story)

**Mental health, navigating multiple courts, not ready**

**Danny**  
(breadwinner story)

**Family responsibilities, collateral consequences of job/income loss to family**

**Reggie**  
(late story)

**Structures/policies of court, co-occurring other medical/social service needs**

**Amy**  
(judge/no ride/far story)

**Culture of the court, transportation needs, distance**

## >>> COMPARISONS

**Housing, Structures/policies of court & library, lack of court responsiveness, misunderstanding of court processes**

**Court reminders, PTS contacts, UA testing, EM**

**Mental health**

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## >>> EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE

COURT REMINDERS	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE
PTS CONTACTS	EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICE
UA CONDITIONS	BEST PRACTICE
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	BEST PRACTICE
TYPE OF EVIDENCE	



# EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

**Quasi-experimental or RCT (strong methods); Always shows causality of changing outcome of interest**



# EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICE

**Quasi-experimental or RCT (strong methods) OR NOT; Shows causality of changing outcome of interest under certain conditions or sometimes. Or, for similar outcomes.**



## BEST PRACTICE

**No research/evidence. Null effects but not harmful effects, and practically easier. Historic practices.**



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## >>> EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE

COURT REMINDERS	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE	STRONG EFFECTS
PTS CONTACTS	EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICE	MIXED EFFECTS
UA CONDITIONS	BEST PRACTICE	MIXED EVIDENCE
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	BEST PRACTICE	FEW EFFECTS*

STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE

## >>> EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE

COURT REMINDERS	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE	STRONG EFFECTS	Reduces FTA, particularly if contacted more than once. Decay affects within systems with long case processing times. Content matters.
PTS CONTACTS	EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICE	MIXED EFFECTS	
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WHAT WE KNOW

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UA CONDITIONS	BEST PRACTICE	MIXED EVIDENCE	
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ELECTRONIC MONITORING	BEST PRACTICE	FEW EFFECTS*	<b>Improves court appearance (1 study) but with increased technical violations, most costs, and no understanding of how the technology impacts TVs.</b>

WHAT WE KNOW

## >>> COMPARISONS

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## **TODAYS JOURNEY**

**UNPACK: REAL STORIES TOLD US THERE ARE VARIOUS  
STUMBLING & ROADBLOCKS**

**COMPARE: WHAT WE DO/ASSIGN IS NOT EXACTLY WHAT  
FOLKS NEED TO GET TO COURT**

**EVALUATE: WHAT WE DO/ASSIGN HAS MIXED EVIDENCE  
THAT IT HELPS PEOPLE GET TO COURT**

**RECONSIDER: HOW DO WE FEEL ABOUT THIS?**

“



IT IS

**NOT**

THE COURT'S  
RESPONSIBILITY TO

**HELP**

PEOPLE  
GET TO COURT



”



“



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WE HAVE TO IGNORE:

PEOPLE ARE COMPLEX

AND HAVE COMPLEX NEEDS

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

TENSION OF POLICIES

RULES WE'VE SET ARE ARBITRARY

**PEOPLE ARE COMPLEX**

**AND HAVE COMPLEX NEEDS**

**STRUCTURAL BARRIERS**

**TENSION OF POLICIES**

**RULES WE'VE SET ARE ARBITRARY**



**DOES  
'FAILURE TO APPEAR'  
RELIABLY CAPTURE  
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN  
BOTH  
MEASURE &  
LANGUAGE?**

**PEOPLE ARE COMPLEX**

**AND HAVE COMPLEX NEEDS**

**STRUCTURAL BARRIERS**

**TENSION OF POLICIES**

**RULES WE'VE SET ARE ARBITRARY**



**WE SEND  
PEOPLE  
BACK TO  
CUSTODY  
FOR  
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## WHERE DO WE GO NEXT

**RECONSIDER WHAT  
WE'RE DOING**

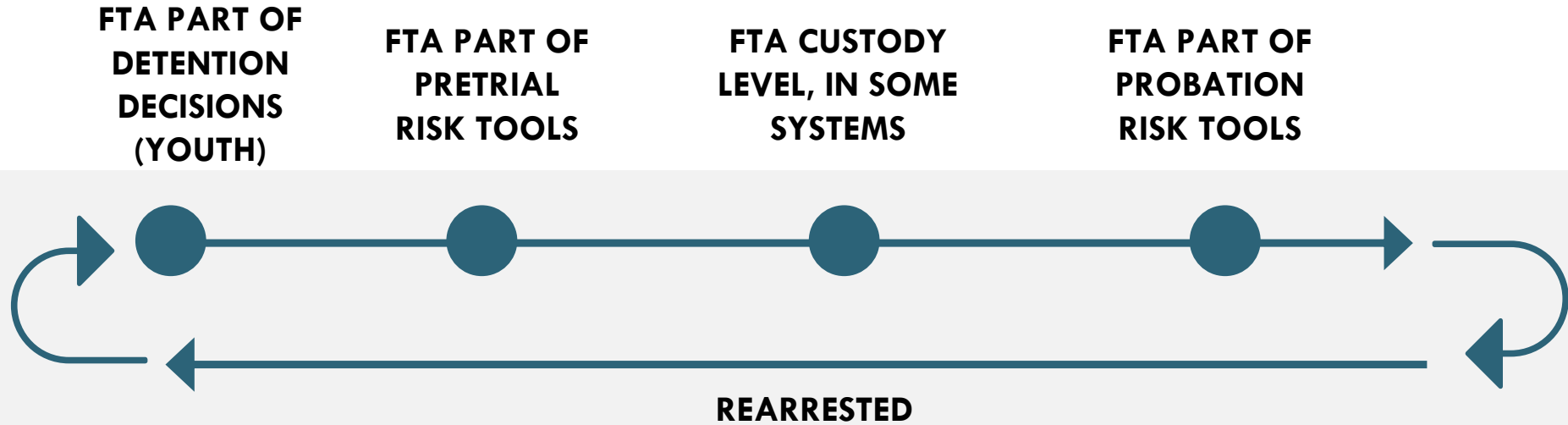
**IDENTIFY & UNDERSTAND  
RESIDENTS' NEEDS**

**DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO  
TARGET THESE NEEDS**

**EVALUATE IF THEY HELP PEOPLE  
GET TO COURT & HOW OFTEN**

**RECONSIDER WHAT  
WE'RE DOING**

## >>> IMPLICATIONS



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**CRITICALLY CONSIDER WHERE WE GO FROM HERE**

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