

Jail Diversion & Community Assistance

Pre and Post Booking – 2 Approaches with 1 Goal

Learning Objectives

Describe

What is the Jail Diversion Desk?

Partnerships – The Harris Center, HCSO, District Attorney Office, and Arresting agencies

Identify

How does it work?

Client Engagement – who are we helping?

Accomplishments & Barriers – Data and current barriers?

Discuss

Other duties of the Jail Diversion Desk

Jail Diversion meets Community Assistance

Purpose of the Jail Diversion Desk

The Jail Diversion Desk was created to redirect individuals arrested for low level misdemeanors and who have a background of mental illness from incarceration to a mental health treatment center.

The staff's role includes engaging the arresting officer, assessing the arrestee and the district attorney about whether individuals are suitable for jail diversion.

Diversion can also take place in the community via law enforcement hotline that offers phone assessments and provides guidance to the officer in the field.

Individuals can be diverted to:

- (1) Sobering Center for individuals who are intoxicated
- (2) NeuroPsychiatric Center (NPC) for individuals who are mentally ill and a danger to themselves or others
- (3) The Respite, Rehab, and ReEntry Facility (6160) for individuals with mental health issues who require programming, medication, and case management.

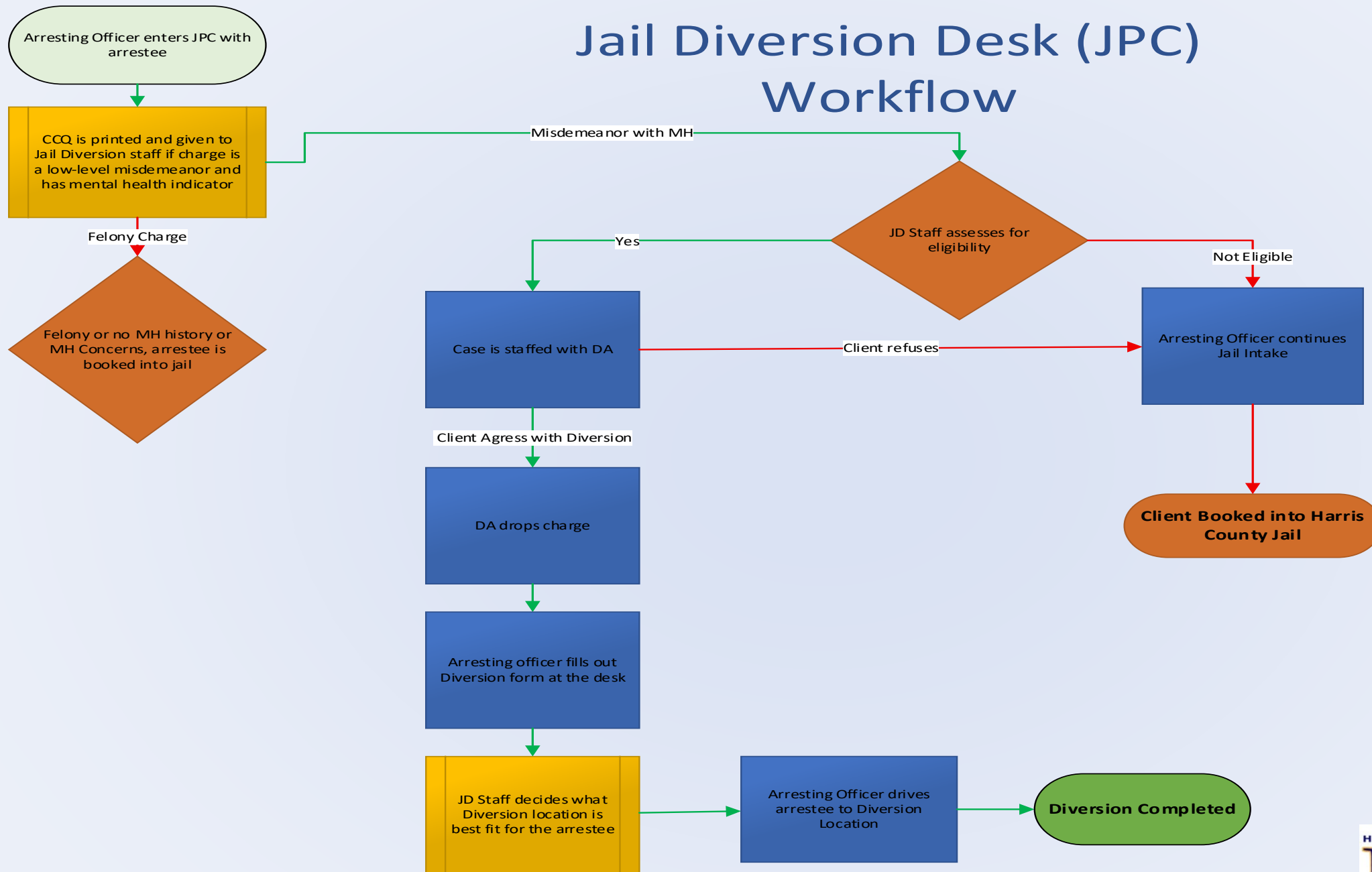


Location & Partnerships

Located on the first floor of the Joint Processing Center in the Harris County Jail, the Jail Diversion Desk operates 24/7 with staff that includes licensed clinicians and qualified mental health providers.

This initiative is a partnership among the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO), Houston Police Department (HPD), District Attorney's Office (DAO), and The Harris Center (THC).

Jail Diversion Desk (JPC) Workflow



Candidates for Jail Diversion

Suspects arrested primarily on low-level, non-violent misdemeanor charges and it is believed the suspect has mental health or other psychosocial issues that were a contributing factor to commission of the crime. Suspects meeting this criteria and having any one of four flags shall be sent to the Diversion Desk for assessment.

- ❑ Yes: “Does the prisoner display any unusual behavior, appear incoherent, disoriented, make any statements regarding suicide, or show signs of mental illness.
- ❑ Suspect has a mental health history as determined by the Mental Health History check
- ❑ Suspect claims to be suicidal or has mental health concerns as identified in the applicable questions on the Mental Health Screening Form
- ❑ A match response to the Continuity of Care Query (CCQ)

Accomplishments & Barriers

2025 Data

Screened – 3,659

Hot Line Calls – 67

Ineligible for Diversion – 1,461

Presented to DA – 2,265

Diversions Declined by DA – 1,430

Individuals diverted to 6160 – 795

Individuals diverted to NPC - 40

Barriers

- Arresting Agencies needing training regarding Jail Diversions
- Clients unwilling to be diverted
- District Attorney Office understaffed.

Other Jail Diversion Duties

Post Booking Services

Suicide Risk Assessments

MH Crisis Interventions

Consultation Services

Community Needs Assessments



Other Duties.....cont.

- **New Responsibilities**
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals booked into the Harris County Jails, the Jail Diversion desk took on new responsibilities.
- In compliance with our commitment to safeguard the lives of those in custody, the Jail Diversion licensed staff completes a suicide risk assessment for any inmate deemed suicidal. Suicidal inmates are not permitted to attend court proceedings or be released until their mental health has been properly assessed and interventions have been implemented. It is essential that we prioritize the mental health and safety of every individual within the facility. By implementing this job duty, we are taking proactive steps to prevent potential harm to arrestees and help continue the booking & releasing process for the HCSO.
- The Jail Diversion staff also assist in completing community needs assessment for individuals with misdemeanors that are being released on a General Order Bond (GOB). Staff performs a mental health and needs assessments to identify inmates' community needs prior to release. Resources and referrals are provided to inmates including housing, clothing, mental health, and transportation to and from court. Staff provides direct linkage to the Harris Center's Respite, Rehab, and Re-Entry center.



Transforming Lives: Learn how Jail Diversion Staff are making a difference!

Services Provided by Staff:

1. Engagement Services
2. Consultation Services
3. Suicide Risk Assessments
4. Community Needs Assessments

CARP – Community Needs Assessments

The Jail Diversion staff is also completing community needs assessments for individuals being released on a General Order Bond.

This program addresses community needs including mental health, mitigating court appearances and homelessness with the hopes of lowering recidivism.

Identify and engage

- Identify and engage individuals being released on GOB/PR Bonds

Complete

- Complete a community needs assessment to inquire about mental health and other community needs.

Reduce

- Reduce recidivism by providing and linking patients with community resources.

Mitigate

- Mitigate Non-Court Appearances
- Through support services and court reminder phone calls

Community Referrals Offered:

- SNAP or Food Banks
- Clothing
- SSI Benefits
- Employment Help
- Housing (Shelter/Voucher)
- Harris Health Financial Assistance (Gold Card)
- Mental Health Services with The Harris Center 6160 Mental Health Facility
- Group/Individual Therapy
- Transportation (Home, To and From Court)



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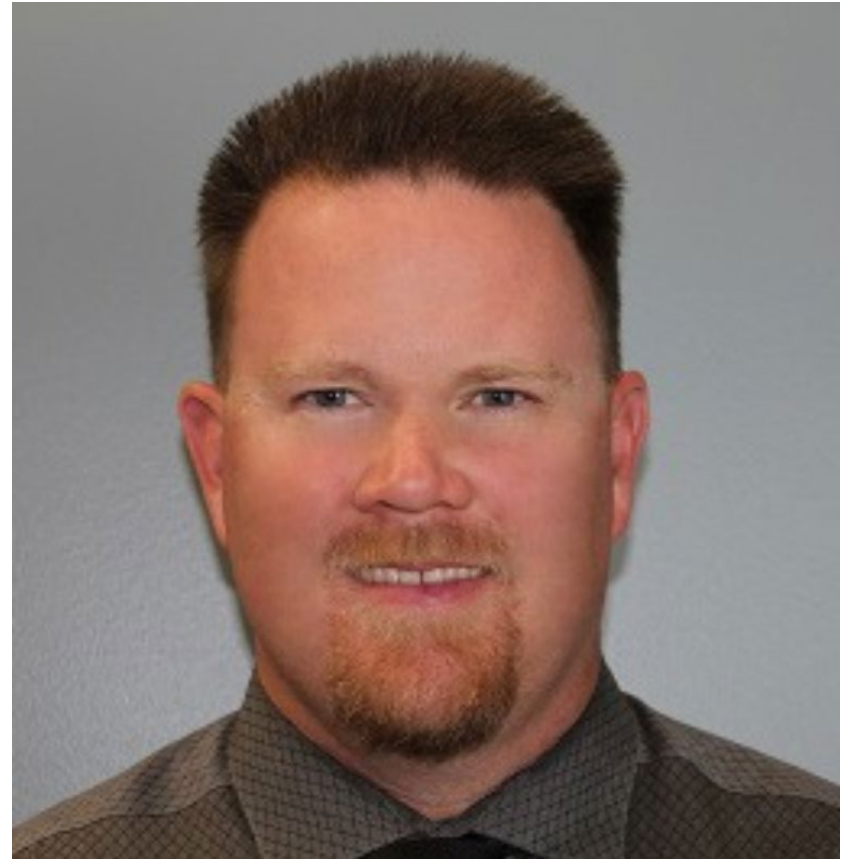
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Thank
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