

THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM: Deflection & Diversion

**A Program of the Augusta County
Commonwealth Attorney's Office**

[date tbd]

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Agenda



- Program History and Development
- Program Design
- Eligibility Criteria
- Referral and Intake Procedures
- Program Goals and Outcomes
- Successes and Challenges



PATHWAYS PROGRAM

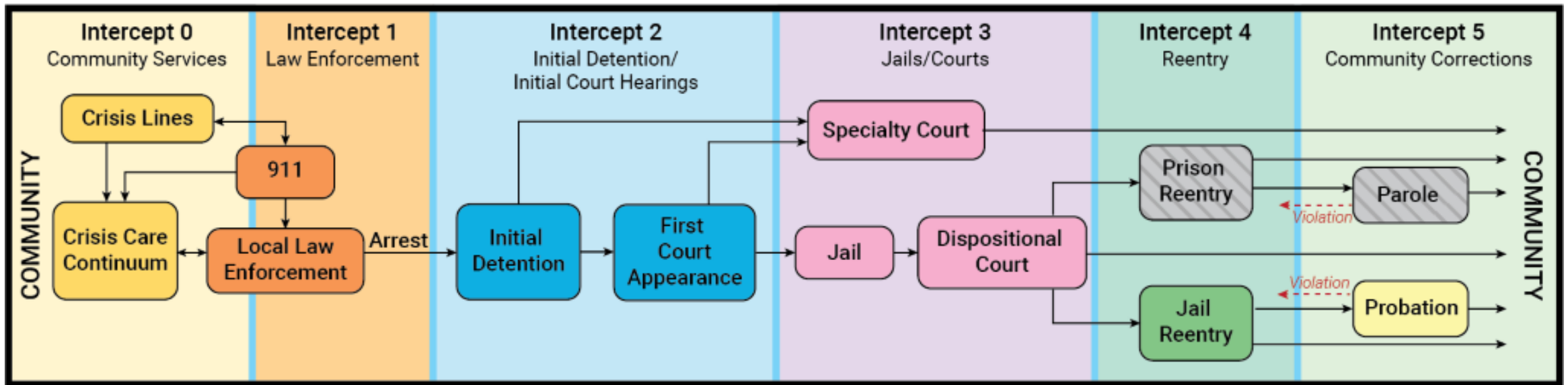
A grant-funded program within the Augusta County Commonwealths Attorney's Office (ACCAO) that seeks to deflect or divert individuals encountered by first responders and community services providers. The goal is to redirect individuals away from the criminal justice system, and reoccurring high volume use of the medical and mental health systems, when timely treatment and access to community resources is a more appropriate option.

Rebranded from LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion)

Program Development



The Sequential Intercept Model



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Who Qualifies?

- Adults with **apparent mental health and/or substance abuse issues**, whether through criminal investigation, or not. Including felony level possession of illicit drugs.
- Drug overdoses. For example, Fentanyl and more recently, Carfentanil.



Who Does NOT Qualify?

Individuals with:

- DUI charge
- Charges involving violence (e.g., battery, strangling, use of firearm and/or brandishing, etc.)
- Known history of drug distribution, or current possession which indicates PWID (amount, scales, multiple packages, etc.)



How Can We Do This?

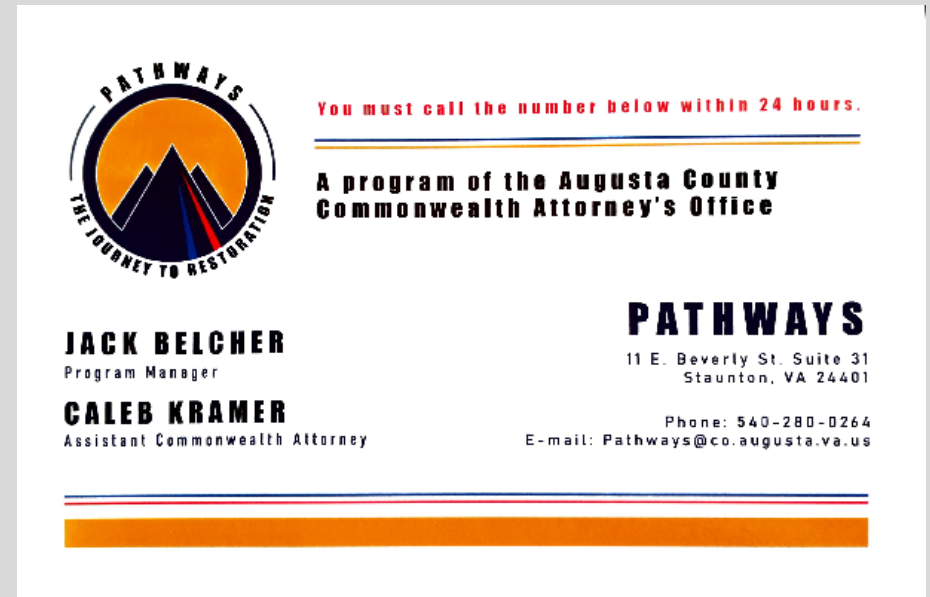


That first 72-hours of any crisis is crucial to engagement

- **The First Responder** determines if the person just encountered may have an untreated, mental health and/or substance use problem that **COULD** be treated.
- **The First Responder** does not need to make a determination of readiness for treatment. **Pathways** clinical staff will screen the individual for acceptance into the program after they contact **Pathways**. Their answers on the screening assessment, their criminal background history (i.e., VCIN), and their behaviors during the *engagement phase*, will determine whether or not they will be offered this *compassionate alternative*.

Making A Referral

- You simply give the individual and/or family member this Pathways referral card and a rack card (Deflection), or brochure (Diversion).
- Then they have **24 hours** to contact Pathways at the number provided.



The Referral Process

K.I.S. (Keep It Simple)

Email Pathways at Pathways@co.augusta.va.us with the basic information.

Or,

Call Jack at 540-280-0264

And leave the basic info on voicemail



Incident Information

Referring
Officer: Sgt James Bond (#137)

Date & Time: 11/30/22 0900

Referred Person's Information

Name: John Smith

Contact #: 540-245-0666

Other Contact
Person Info¹: NA

Potential Charges Information

Agency
Reporting (e.g., 2022-0003249)
Number: ACSO 20230000275

Potential
Charge(s): Possession Schedule I/II Substances
Reckless Driving 77/55

Any Additional Information² (Optional)

Officer has had multiple encounters with the individual. Has history of charges including felony eluding. Individual states he recently resumed using drugs. Was recently released from prison and is living at his mom's home in Verona.

¹ Other contact person info could include a parent, spouse, close friend and their cell number or email contact information. Typically needed if the referred person does not have their own phone, address, or email access (e.g., homeless, couch-hopping, etc.)

² Any Additional Information is anything you feel might be relevant when we are screening the individual to determine appropriateness for the program (e.g., appeared very motivated, young children are involved, supportive or non-supportive family or friends, etc.)

Program Goals



- Disrupt the cycle of individual and family crises.
- Move individuals QUICKLY into treatment; typically within ~ 72 hours of the crisis.
- Reduce time spent trying to resolve SA/MH problems. It's a process.
- Foster quick access to a broader network of treatment providers.
- Cultivate an environment with fewer recidivist emergency calls.
- Educate the community on steps they can take BEFORE the next crisis.

Pathways Community Resource Guide

Pathways Community Resource Guide



A PROGRAM OF THE AUGUSTA COUNTY COMMONWEALTH
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

11 E. BEVERLY ST., SUITE 31. STAUNTON, VA 24401
540) 280-0264

Primary, **Secondary**, & Tertiary Service Areas

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

HOUSING & SHELTER

JOB READINESS & EMPLOYMENT

DENTAL HEALTH

SENIOR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

SOCIAL ENRICHMENT

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

PHYSICAL HEALTHCARE

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

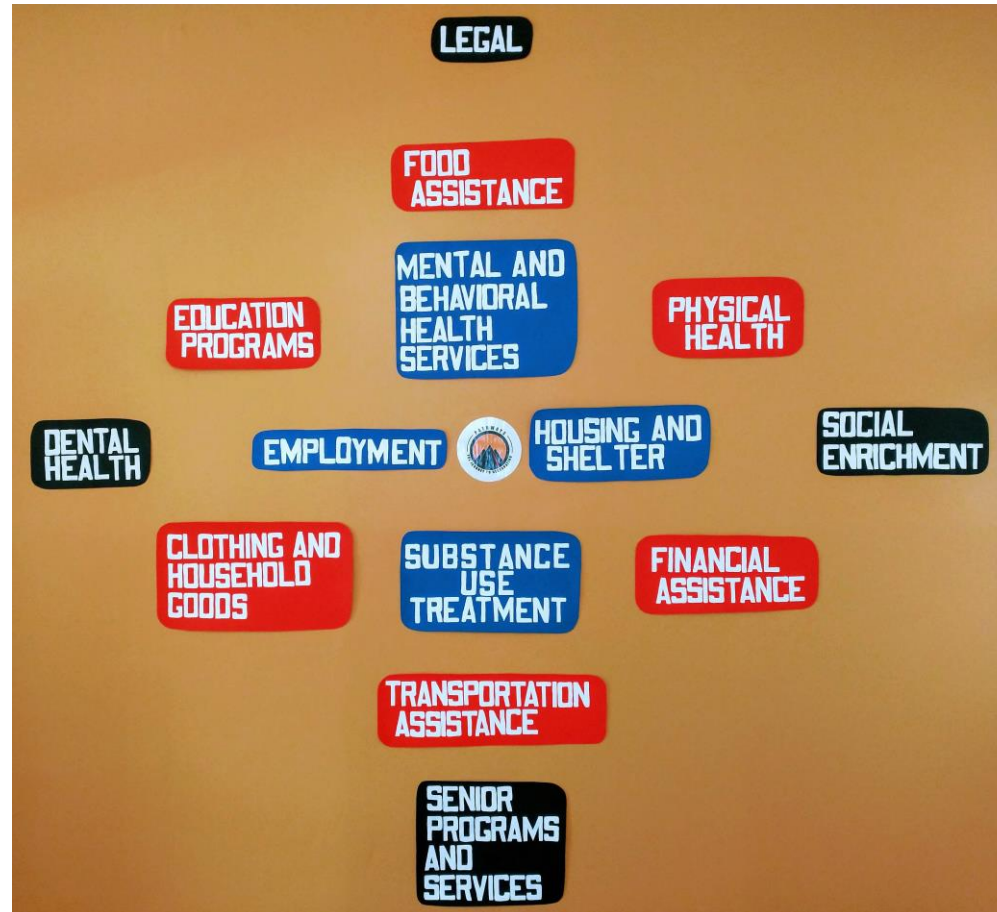
CLOTHING & HOUSEHOLD GOODS

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

FOOD ASSISTANCE

TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

Primary, Secondary, & Tertiary Service Areas



Buy in from Community Stakeholders



Deflection/Diversion:

- ✓ Helps the individual, and his/her family.
- ✓ Saves lives
- ✓ Helps the community
- ✓ Saves time and money by not prosecuting
- ✓ Saves the cost of incarceration and recidivism
- ✓ Makes communities safer
- ✓ Reduces homelessness in a more permanent way



Program Success

- This new expanded program started taking felony referrals in May of 2021. Since then, there have been 97 referrals to the Pathways. Of these, 36 were not assessed due to lack of engagement or program rule out criteria. The rest were inducted and referred to an appropriate level of care and services.
- 33 of these did access some level of services but were not able to complete program requirements, while the rest either successfully completed or remain in good standing.
- A preliminary recidivism analysis reveals that there have been no re-arrests for participants who have successfully completed program requirements. 15% recidivism for those who accessed some services but did not complete
- This program has had a measurable effect on the level of felony drug arrests in Augusta County. From 2016 to 2020, the number of felony drug arrests performed by the ACSO averaged 387 per year. In the 2021-2022 period when this program was active, there were an average of 285 drug arrests per year.



Challenges

- Very rarely ever received a hard “no,” but a lack of active cooperation is worse
- Major challenge is changing institutional inertia and ingrained procedures
 - Constant LEO trainings
- Getting stakeholders to work and share information “out of the silo”



Role of Prosecution

- Prosecution is a critical player, can make or break a diversion program
- Is key to obtaining a foot in the door for other stakeholders. Everyone answers the phone from “the Commonwealth’s Attorney”
 - Institutional prestige can also help in gaining stakeholder buy-in
- However, prosecutors think in very defined ways, and have a very traditionally defined role.
 - Hard for other players to think of prosecutors acting outside this role, hard for prosecutors to think outside the role themselves.
- Key is to think systemically and focus on overall outcomes



Questions?





BJA's

Comprehensive

Opioid, Stimulant,
and Substance Abuse

Program