



IMPROVING SERVICES FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS IN NAVAJO COUNTY, ARIZONA



NAVAJO COUNTY JUSTICE SYSTEM PLANNING TEAM

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IMPROVING SERVICES FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS IN NAVAJO COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

Navajo County has an estimated population of 108,650 residents (US Census 2022 estimate) and covers an area of 9,960 square miles, most of which is rural. Navajo County has over 6,000 square miles of federally designated Indian reservation with the reservations of Navajo Nation, Hopi Indian Reservation, and Fort Apache Indian Reservation all partially located within the county. The county seat is Holbrook, with a 2020 population of 5,073 residents. The largest industries in Holbrook are Public Administration, Accommodation & Food Services, and Construction. The largest city in the county is Show Low, AZ with a 2020 population of 11,732. Spanning over 66 miles, Show Low has a population density of 189 people per square mile, an average household income of \$62,377, and a poverty rate of 19.29%.

The justice and behavioral health system serving Navajo County has been put under significant stress in recent years due to a rising demand for services for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders involved in the justice system. Navajo County is continually seeking ways to better understand community needs, to enhance coordination with justice and community partners, and to seek funding to address the needs of individuals with behavioral health disorders.

The county is committed to improving services through the Navajo County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The Navajo County CJCC was formed in 2015 and membership includes representatives from Navajo County's criminal justice, governmental, and health and human service agencies (see Appendix A for list of current members). The Navajo County CJCC meets monthly to discuss planning and implementation of different project initiatives and quarterly with community stakeholders. CJCC spearheaded efforts to establish Navajo County as one of the first Arizona counties to pass a Stepping Up Resolution, has supported the development of a Sequential Intercept Model map for the county, and secured several federal grants for justice programming in the county.

FINDING A PATH FORWARD TO PROMOTE CHANGE

In 2022, Navajo County was selected as one of ten communities in the nation to be part of the County and Court leadership initiative funded by the State Justice Institute (SJI). Rulo Strategies LLC, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., and the National Association of Counties (NACo) provided technical assistance and support to each county. Members of the Navajo County CJCC committed to supporting the development of the following Strategic Plan and met on April 13, 2023, to develop the plan. Building on the priorities established by the CJCC since 2015, this Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for the CJCC and local stakeholders to align collective efforts and contribute to ongoing efforts.

Goals for 2023-2026

Goal 1: Enhance the ability of the justice system to address the needs of individuals with substance use disorders in jail and reentering the community.

Goal 2: Support the recovery of individuals with behavioral health needs who are involved in the justice system through peer support networks.

The Strategic Plan is evidence of the CJCC's ongoing commitment to addressing challenges and transforming the justice system. Prior to meeting in April 2023, the planning team surveyed partners in the justice system to gather information on the needs of individuals in the justice system to inform the strategic planning process. The following questions were asked:

1. The needs of the people your organization or agencies serves may change over time based on a variety of influences. What changes have you observed over the last two years that the planning team should consider during the strategic planning process?
2. What is working well right now within our criminal justice system that we should, at a minimum, continue and/or expand? This may include policies, programs, practices, or pilot initiatives within any agency or efforts that are system wide.
3. What are the top two to three most significant challenges, barriers, or gaps that exist in our criminal justice system that need to be addressed to better serve our community and the individuals interacting with the criminal justice system?
4. Do you have suggestions for how to begin addressing these challenges, barriers, or gaps in the next three to five years?
5. What else should the team consider as it moves towards developing a strategic plan?

Over 60 people responded to the survey and identified the following as the top suggestions for the planning team to consider during the strategic planning session:

Survey Response Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide more funding for victim support services. 2. Increase transportation options. 3. Build an in-patient treatment facility. 4. Enhance community engagement/awareness. 5. Coordinate with medical community around mental health services. 6. Increase access to housing that accepts individuals with criminal records. 7. Increase law enforcement staff. 8. Utilize medicated assisted treatment. 9. Develop substance use prevention programs. 10. Deliver training for criminal justice staff on supporting individuals with behavioral health needs. 11. Address poverty and lack of basic needs for individuals reentering the community from the justice system.

A full report on the survey responses can be found in Appendix A.

During the April 2023 strategic planning session, the team identified several opportunities to reduce barriers to accessing appropriate treatment and create opportunities to divert people from the justice system at the earliest possible contact point. The following list of opportunities is not in any priority order.

Identified Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resources for individuals in the justice system (treatment, job training, other therapeutic supports). • Provide substance use disorder treatment in jail that will extend to return to community. • Start Medicated Assisted Treatment in the jail. • Utilize trauma informed care in all services.

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- Include peer support at all intercepts.
 - Enhance the targeted use of evidence-based practices (for high-risk individuals).
 - Use data to make decisions.
 - Establish partnership building between hospitals and the jail.
 - Restoration to mental competency.
 - Increase transitional housing, including affordable, sober housing,
 - Address stigma in the community.
 - Eliminate the Medicaid exclusion rule for individuals involved in the justice system.
 - Make the justice system (court) easy to navigate for all citizens.
 - Support workforce development for individuals involved in the justice system.
 - Develop an overarching communication strategy (to increase trust, build credibility).
 - Focus on harm reduction models.
 - Engage individuals with lived experience (e.g., survey people in the jail).
 - Increase information Sharing (think about RCORP work as a place to start).

Based on the survey results and opportunities discussed, the planning team identified goals, objectives, and strategies to improve outcomes and strengthen coordination.

GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS IN JAIL AND REENTERING THE COMMUNITY.

A subset of individuals cycle in and out of the justice system due to unaddressed behavioral health needs. These individuals often are at low risk for violence but at high risk of arrest for low-level crimes, including drug or property crimes. A justice system designed to address complex behavioral health issues through rapid engagement and targeted services can break the cycle of re-arrest and re-incarceration.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
<p>1 Initiate a medicated assisted treatment (MAT) program in the Navajo County Jail.</p> <div><p><u>Lead(s):</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ernie Garcia• Ken Maruyama<p><u>Timeline:</u> 2 years</p><p><u>Partners Needed:</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment Provider• Medical Provider</div>	<p>A. Identify examples of other agencies who have implemented MAT and are using short-term and long-term funding for MAT.</p> <p>B. Develop a funding strategy to seek and secure funding to support building infrastructure to include administration costs and operational costs. Consider submitting a proposal to request funds through the opioid settlement funding available in the county.</p> <p>C. Consult with the Department of Public Health to determine if the jail is eligible for medication coverage.</p> <p>D. Identify data that will be collected to track program success.</p> <p>E. Implement the MAT program in the jail.</p>
<p>2 Identify opportunities to enhance reentry services for individuals preparing to reenter the community from jail.</p> <div><p><u>Lead(s):</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reentry Coordinators• Dawn Wilson<p><u>Timeline:</u> 3 years</p><p><u>Partners Needed:</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Public Health• Peer Supports• Treatment Provider• Community Groups</div>	<p>A. Develop a CJCC reentry sub-committee to explore reentry needs for individuals in the Navajo County jail. The sub-committee should include representatives from the jail, treatment partners, peer support, reentry coordinators, and community groups.</p> <p>B. The sub-committee will lead efforts to assess reentry needs of individuals in the jail, identify gaps in services, and develop a list of program ideas.</p> <p>C. Develop a reentry services plan to present to CJCC to consider for support and funding ideas. The plan should include a special emphasis on workforce development for individuals to include resume building, clothing,</p>

and partnerships with community groups such as Goodwill and Arizona at Work.

GOAL 2: SUPPORT THE RECOVERY OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM THROUGH PEER SUPPORT NETWORKS.

Peer support is an effective way of supporting the recovery of individuals involved in the justice system with behavioral health needs. Drawing on lived experiences, peer specialists can connect people to needed services to support recovery efforts. Individuals who have support from peers often show increased engagement with treatment and overall improvement in motivation and hopefulness.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
<p>1 Build a peer network to support tribal members involved in the justice system.</p> <div><p><u>Lead(s):</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">Susy Salvo-Wendt<p><u>Timeline:</u> 3 years</p><p><u>Partners Needed:</u></p><ul style="list-style-type: none">TribesIndian Health ServicesRCORP Consortium</div>	<p>A. Develop a CJCC sub-committee comprised of representatives from the local tribes, the treatment providers, and justice system stakeholders to assess the need for tribal peer supports.</p> <p>B. Explore how other communities are developing peer support networks in jails with similar target audiences. Leverage Summit Health's program to build peer support and training available.</p> <p>C. Identify the agency responsible for hiring and managing the peer support network.</p> <p>D. Identify the resources available to connect tribal individuals to services available in the county and in the tribal communities.</p> <p>E. Implement the peer support program to support tribal individuals in the jail and develop a system to track progress and success.</p>

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- 2 Build a peer network to support veterans involved in the justice system.

Lead(s):

- Dawn Wilson

Timeline: 3 years

Partners Needed:

- Summit Health
- Veterans and local partners service veterans
- Department of Public Health

- A. Develop a CJCC sub-committee comprised of representatives from the local programs that support veterans, the treatment providers, and justice system stakeholders to assess the need for veterans' peer supports.
 - B. Explore how other communities are developing peer support networks in jails with similar target audiences.
 - C. Identify the agency responsible for hiring and managing the peer support network and develop a job training program to support individuals interested in becoming a peer support specialist.
 - D. Identify the resources available to connect veterans to services available in the county. Coordinate efforts with the Navajo County Veterans Court to leverage existing resources and partnerships.
 - E. Implement the peer support program to support veterans in the jail and develop a system to track progress and success.
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APPENDIX A
NAVAJO COUNTY, AZ CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL
MEMBERS

APPENDIX B
STAKEHOLDER SURVEY RESULTS