



City of Dallas

Sobering Center Update

**Public Safety Committee
March 5, 2024**

David Pughes, City Marshal,
Scott Whitworth, Chief Deputy,
Kristen Kubat, LMSW, MS, LVN,
Manager, Sobering Center
City of Dallas

- The Sobering Center was initiated in FY 2019-2020 as a part of the R.E.A.L Change Initiative
- Officially opened on August 30, 2021
- Sobering Center Goals:
 - Divert citizens from Public Intoxication criminal charges and provide services to address the root cause
 - Reduce recidivism and the demand on law enforcement

Sobering Center



- Process for Admission to the Sobering Center requires:
 - Upon arrival to the city detention center responding officers determine if the individual meets the criteria for admission to the Sobering Center
 - Only charge is Public Intoxication
 - No serious medical problems
 - 17 years of age or older
 - Non-violent and non-combative
 - Has not participated in the program more than twice in the current calendar year



Process – Sobering Center



Police Officer

- Arresting officers detains/arrests for Public Intoxication
- Individual is offered Sobering Center program/MIR completed

City Detention Center Staff

- DFR paramedic approves acceptance in the CDC
- CDC Desk Sergeant interviews individual at intake to determine eligibility for entrance into the Sobering Center program

Sobering Center Staff

- Sobering Center Staff explains process and approves/accepts individual into the program
- Sobering Center staff monitors, assesses, provides resources and discharge information



Increased Efficiency



- Improved reporting process for officers
 - Discontinued arrest report approval in the DPD RMS system by detention center sergeants
 - Original process- officers completed arrest report which required detention center Sergeant's approval in RMS system
 - New process- officers complete Miscellaneous Incident Report (MIR) which does not require detention center Sergeant approval
- Expedited report process for Dallas police officers
 - Returns officers back to the street much faster
 - Prevents arrest records for citizens
 - Reduces the burden on judicial system



Process



- Sobering Center staff will monitor individuals throughout their time with the Sobering Center
 - This could be as short as 4 hours or as long as 12 hours depending on the need connection to service
- The goal is to ensure we meet with each individual and know their situation so we can identify patterns of behavior and determine barriers that exist for each individual client
- This information assists caseworks in providing connection to appropriate services in the community prior to discharge



Improvements – Sobering Center



- Improvements and efficiencies have been created in the sobering center
 - New Program Manager Hired February 2023
 - 8 Caseworks
 - Construction has been completed in the new interview room
 - New policies and procedures have been implemented
 - Sobering Center Manager now reports directly to Chief Deputy over Detention Center for greater coordination and collaboration



Improvements- Sobering Center



- Documentation and reporting has been changed to provide a more accurate accounting of:
 - Individuals diverted from the criminal justice system and accepted into the sobering center each month
 - Individuals accepting referrals to resources
 - Collaboration with other city resources to provide services such as R.I.G.H.T Care, Crisis Intervention Team, OHS, and DFR Overdose Response Team
 - Formed partnerships with Salvation army, A21.org, South Dallas Employment project, our Calling, Trusted World



Future Improvements – Sobering Center



- New paint for interior walls/doors, murals, and inspirational décor to create a more aesthetically pleasing environment for sobering center clients



- The Sobering Center has provided **7,712** criminal justice diversions since implementation of the program
- The Sobering Center has provided direct services to **1,292** citizens in Dallas that were brought to the City Detention Center facing a criminal charge of public intoxication
- Only **116** individuals have been rejected to participate in the Sobering Center due to participating twice previously in a calendar year

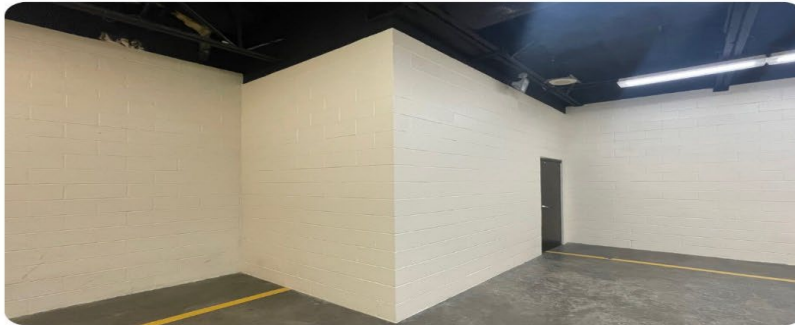
Next steps



- Working with community courts to expand eligible charges for diversion from the criminal justice system
- Expand program to include providing resources to victims of domestic violence and prostitution/human trafficking.
- Continue to build resource availability
- Establish a follow-up system with community partners to ensure needs are being identified and addressed resulting in reduced recidivism



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