



City of Dallas

Sobering Center Update

Public Safety Committee

May 13, 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
 - Provide services to address the root cause
 - Reduce recidivism
 - Increase efficiency for law enforcement

Sobering Center



- Process for Admission to the Sobering Center requires:
 - Upon arrival to the City Detention Center a determination is made to ensure 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



Benefits of Sobering Center



- Officers complete Miscellaneous Incident Report (MIR) which does not require detention center Sergeant approval, returning officers back to the street faster
- Provides resources to individuals wanting assistance
- Prevents arrest records for citizens
- Reduces the burden on judicial system



Process



Police Officer

- Arresting officer arrests for Public Intoxication and transports to City Detention Center
- If individual is eligible for Sobering Center a Miscellaneous Incident Report is 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



Process – Intake



- Individual is searched for contraband, screened by DFR paramedic, all personal property is inventoried and placed in the detention center property room
- Individual is brought to detention center Sergeant's desk and interviewed by the Sergeant to verify identity, advise individual of charge, and determine eligibility for Sobering Center program
- If the individual meets the eligibility requirements for the Sobering Center, the Sergeant will contact a Caseworker to speak to the individual
- Caseworker explains the requirements of the program and obtains verbal voluntary acceptance from the individual for admission into the program
- Individual is escorted to 2nd floor Sobering Center housing



Sobering Center Procedures



- Sobering Center staff monitors individuals throughout their time in the Sobering Center
- Individual is released once determined to no longer be a danger to self or others, this can be as short as 4 hours or as long as 12 hours
- The goal is to meet with each individual and know their situation to identify patterns of behavior and determine barriers that exist for each individual client
- This information assists caseworkers in providing connection to appropriate services in the community prior to discharge



Sobering Center Process – Interview



- Caseworkers meet with each individual in the Sobering Center and complete an assessment where individual needs are determined
- Male interviews are conducted in the Sobering Center housing dorm interview room
- Female interviews are conducted in a separate interview room



Process – Release



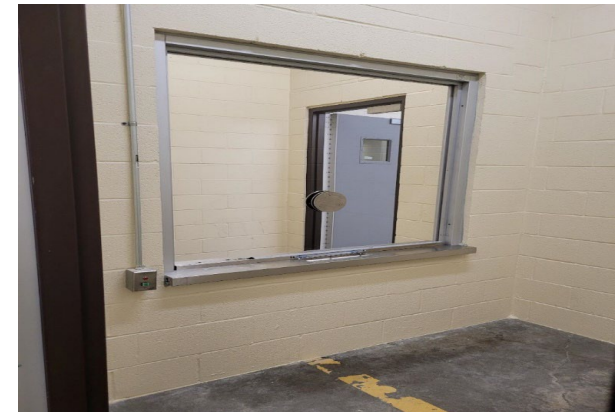
- Upon release the Individual is provided:
 - Discharge plan
 - Resources with contact information
 - Sobering Center contact information for any further needs



Improvements – Sobering Center



- Improvements and efficiencies have been created in the Sobering Center
 - New Program Manager Hired February 2023
 - 8 Caseworkers working 24 hours/7 days per week
 - 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 **7,874** criminal justice diversions since implementation of the program
- The Sobering Center has provided direct services to **1,305** citizens in Dallas that were brought to the City Detention Center facing a criminal charge of public intoxication
- Only **123** individuals have been rejected to participate in the Sobering Center due to participating twice previously in a calendar year

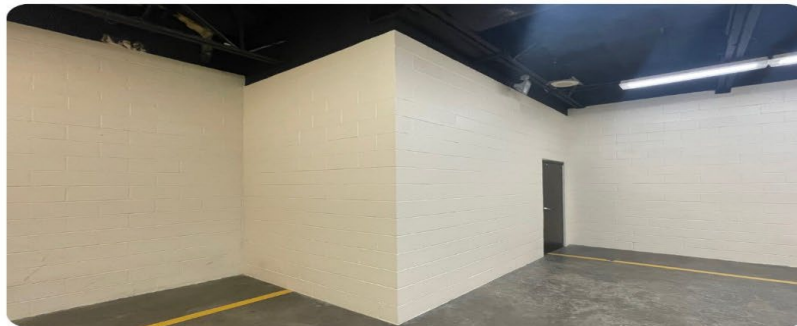
Next steps



- 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



Questions?





City of Dallas

Sobering Center Update

Public Safety Committee

May 13, 2024

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