

Lake County 2018 Safety and Justice Challenge Fact Sheet

We've got a problem to fix:

- Despite the county's below average crime and arrest rate, there is still an over-reliance on incarceration for low-risk, non-violent offenders.
- According to a JFA Institute Study, pretrial defendants and behavioral health needs are main drivers of the Lake County jail population. The jail pretrial population alone was 79.9% in 2017 with an average 19.1 day jail stay. In 2017, only 29 people (5.4% of the jail population) were in custody for less than 3 days. Further, a May 17, 2018 snapshot revealed that 236 people (43.5% of the jail population) were in custody on cash bonds over \$50,000.
- The misuse of the jail takes an especially heavy toll on people of color. Despite making up 29% of the local population, African Americans and Hispanics make up 54% of the jail population, on average.
- Overuse of detention causes disruption in the stability of arrestees' families and communities; it leads to higher re-arrest rates and produces worse case outcomes with more back-end incarceration.

Progress is being made to create a fairer, more effective local justice system:

- In 2017, Lake County received \$50,000 from the Safety and Justice Challenge to develop an innovative program to provide jail high utilizers with a warm handoff to culturally competent intensive case management services with a goal of reducing recidivism.
- To help understand the jail population drivers, the Lake County Jail identified 100 persons who cycle in and out of jail three to six times in a twelve-month period.
- Twenty-five jail high utilizers with an average of 3.8 jail bookings volunteered in the program. They included 23 low-income individuals, 12 females, 10 African Americans, four Hispanic/Latino individuals, and three individuals that self-identified as LGBTQ+.
- The 25 jail high utilizers received best practice assessments to identify their needs, including mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, chronic health conditions, and referrals to over 100 community resources.
- Fourteen of the 25 jail high utilizers successfully completed the program and only eight were rebooked in the jail within 12 months.

There are proposed solutions to keep making progress:

- Supported with an additional \$700,000 from the Safety and Justice Challenge awarded in 2018, Lake County will implement forward-looking, smart solutions, to address the misuse and overuse of jails in the county and further reduce the local jail population by at least 10% over the next two years.
- To continue reducing the jail population safely, the county plans to implement key strategies aimed at meeting the needs of those with behavioral health and substance abuse issues and instituting non-jail options for lower-risk offenders.
- Lake County is expanding its Jail High Utilizer Program for 30 additional inmates and adding a peer recovery specialist to maintain engagement upon release into the community. Jail high utilizers will be encouraged to participate in expanded jail programming while incarcerated and

upon release into the community, be provided culturally sensitive intensive case management and peer support.

- Additional strategies will be developed from jail population driver analysis that touch all points of the system, ranging from pre-booking diversion to early release for non-violent offenders, and are enthusiastically embraced by public safety partners. These policy-driven innovations will reduce jail bed usage while ensuring the county advances its commitment to having the 'right' inmates remain in custody while ensuring access to critically needed services for all.

Who is helping to affect change?

- The strategies and initiatives supported by the Safety and Justice Challenge are being led by the Lake County Sheriff's Office in partnership with the Lake County Board and other Justice Partners.