

Miami-Dade County  
Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice  
Cooperative Statement- 2015

**I. Background:**

The Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project (CMHP) was established 15 years ago to divert nonviolent misdemeanor defendants with Serious Mental Illnesses (SMI), or co-occurring SMI and substance use disorders, from the criminal justice system into community-based treatment and support services. Based upon project success, the program has expanded to serve defendants that have been arrested for misdemeanors, 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felonies, non-violent 2<sup>nd</sup> degree felonies and other charges as determined appropriate. The program operates two components: pre-booking diversion consisting of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement officers and post-booking diversion serving individuals booked into the jail and awaiting trial. Other programs and supportive services, such as Peer Specialists, the SOAR Entitlement Unit and Miami-Dade Forensic Alternative Center have been developed and implemented to ensure that successful recovery and community integration outcomes can be achieved with the appropriate assistance and support.

The CMHP's success and effectiveness depends on the commitment of stakeholders throughout the community. Such cross-system collaboration is essential for the transition from the criminal justice system to community-based treatment and services. Program operations rely on collaboration among community stakeholders including but not limited to: the State Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Miami-Dade County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust, the Florida Department of Children and Families, the South Florida Behavioral Health Network, the Social Security Administration, Jackson Memorial Hospital-Public Health Trust, law enforcement agencies, public and private community mental health providers, family members, and mental health consumers.

**II. Vision:**

The vision of the community is to divert individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI; e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression) or co-occurring serious mental illnesses and substance use disorders away from the criminal justice system and into comprehensive community-based treatment and support services. This is accomplished by eliminating gaps in services, and by forging productive and innovative relationships among all stakeholders who have an interest in the welfare and safety of one of our community's most vulnerable populations.

**III. Mission:**

The mission of the agreement is to minimize preventable and unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system for people with serious mental illnesses and possible co-occurring substance use disorders. This is accomplished by supporting recovery and community integration by ensuring access to necessary treatment and supportive services in the community.

**III. Goal:**

The goal of this agreement is to engage stakeholders to participate in strategies that aim to divert individuals with SMI or co-occurring SMI and substance use disorders away from the criminal justice system and into comprehensive community-based integrated health and psychiatric treatment, housing and support services. This will be achieved by:

1. Establishing linkage and referral responsibilities to facilitate pre-booking and post-booking diversionary practices;
2. Promoting the provision of and access to integrated physical and behavioral health care throughout Miami-Dade County;
3. Promoting access to evidence-based practice and treatment that include the essential elements of care designed to meet the needs and experiences of individuals involved in the criminal justice system;
4. Promoting communication and the exchange of information among all stakeholders ;
5. Providing ongoing information regarding policy, financing, and legislative issues related to criminal justice and behavioral health; and,
6. Working cooperatively toward the establishment of the Miami-Dade Mental Health Diversion Facility that will be designed to create a centralized, coordinated, and seamless continuum of care for individuals who are diverted from the criminal justice system.

#### **IV. Responsibilities:**

The participating members of criminal justice, law enforcement, behavioral and physical healthcare providers agree to support this Cooperative Agreement;

1. This agreement is intended to ensure mental health recovery and community integration by promoting pre-booking and post-booking intervention strategies for the diversion of individuals with SMI and SMI with co-occurring substance use disorders; and,
2. The participants of this agreement will work in collaboration to support and strengthen this agreement.

**Together as a community**, the below mentioned practices will occur to promote this cause:

1. All law enforcement agencies within Miami-Dade County will participate in CIT training and assign a representative to attend quarterly CIT Advisory Committee;
2. Each law enforcement agency is urged to collect data on CIT calls and outcomes;
3. Behavioral health and criminal justice stakeholder will participate in the CIT Advisory Committee and its subcommittees;
4. All stakeholders will work cooperatively to identify individuals with serious mental illnesses and possible co-occurring substance use disorders who meet program criteria to initiate jail diversion practices;
5. Jackson Correctional Health Services agrees to coordinate with the CMHP to facilitate post-booking assessment that identify in-custody offenders who are experiencing mental health related difficulties for the purposes of appropriate treatment interventions in the community;
6. Stakeholders will convene a quarterly meeting to promote communication and information sharing;
7. Behavioral health providers will offer evidence-based practices to best serve the target population, promote recovery, increase community tenure and decrease recidivism to the criminal justice system;
8. Behavioral health providers will provide written progress reports to the court in order to best inform decision making regarding criminal justice dispositions;
9. Each stakeholder organization will agree to identify a point of contact to actively assist in the resolution of barriers that may occur as a result of cross-system collaboration; and,
10. All stakeholders that provide community housing or linkage to housing will ensure that necessary standards and/or licensing requirements are maintained.

Signatures:

Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice  
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**Signatures:**

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Miami-Dade County

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The Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, Administrative Office of the Courts

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South Florida Behavioral Health Network

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Miami-Dade County Office of the State Attorney

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Miami-Dade County Office of the Public Defender

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Jackson Health System

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Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police

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National Alliance On Mental Illness (NAMI)