



# 2024 JUDICIAL SUMMIT ON MENTAL HEALTH

*WHERE CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES  
INTERSECT*

**DOWNTOWN  
AUSTIN  
COMMUNITY  
COURT**

# INITROUS



**JENNIFER  
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**Clinical Operations Manager |  
Clinical Services  
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**YVONNE  
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**Clinical Case Manager Supervisor |  
Clinical Diversion Program &  
Walk-in Case Management  
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# INITROUS

# OVERVIEW- VIEW FOR TODAY



## **DACC Introduction & Overview**

- Court Services
- Homeless Services

## **Clinical Diversion Program**

- Service Overview

## **Mobile Court**

- Pilot Purpose, Development and Services
- Court Navigation Training

## **Conclusion**

- Lessons Learned
- Q&A



# DOWNTOWN AUSTIN COMMUNITY COURT



## Established in 1999

- Chapter 2-10, Article 4 of Austin City Code
- 1st Community Court in Texas; 7th Community Court in United States

## Diversion and Deflection Model

- Intervention pre- and post-criminal justice involvement
- Intensive and compassionate wraparound services focusing on homelessness

## Mission Statement

- Empowering people to thrive by providing impartial justice and compassionate community-based services

# COURT SERVICES

## Class C Misdemeanors

- Non-traffic offenses
- Clients will not be sentenced to jail for a class C misdemeanor
- Clients may receive a fine, and/or are assigned community service, drug/alcohol classes, essays, or meetings

## Dockets

- Arraignment Docket
- Field Release Docket
- Walk-in (Non-Docket)

### JUDGE

Advices defendant of their rights and option

### PROSECUTOR

Deal to resolve case

### SOCIAL WORKER

Assesses client for services

### DEFENDANT

Agrees to a plea bargain

### JUDGE

Adjudicates and sentences client



# CLIENT ENGAGEMENT PATHWAYS





# DOWNTOWN AUSTIN COMMUNITY COURT HOMELESS SERVICES MODEL

*Frequent Utilizer*

## Clinical Diversion Program

- Increase court appearance and case completion rates
- Improve client connection to case management and social services

## Walk-in Case Management

- Brief 20-30 minute intervention, focusing on individual's immediate need

## Intensive Case Management

- Person-centered, housing-focused services with low caseloads
- Connection to wrap-around support services

# CLIENT ENGAGEMENT VALUES







# WALK-IN CASE MANAGEMENT

**Provides transition to continued client engagement from Clinical Diversion Program**

**Available for any individual experiencing homelessness**

**Brief 20-30 minute interventions, focusing on individual's immediate needs**

**Over 72 individuals are served each day**



**Obtaining ID's/Vital Documents**



**Applying For or Renewing of SNAP**



**Applying For or Renewing MAP**



**Linking to Employment Services**



**Resource Navigation**



**Coordinate Linkage to Other Agencies**



**Storage of Vital Documents**



**Medication Storage**



**Use of DACC Mailing Address**



**Linking to Medical & Behavioral Health Care**



**Applying For Unemployment Benefits**



# INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

**Provides transition to continued client engagement from Clinical Diversion Program**

**Person-centered, housing-focused services with low caseloads**

**Connection to wraparound support services**



**Counseling**



**Incentive Program**



**Legal System Navigation**



**Detox**



**In-patient Substance Use Treatment**



**Peer Support Specialists**



**Housing Programs**



**Rep. Payee & SOAR**



**Crisis Intervention**



**Transportation**



**Financial Assistance**

# HOMELESS SERVICES



**DACC has  
assisted  
in housing  
607+ clients  
since 2015**

**DACC has  
a waitlist  
of more  
than 500  
individuals**



# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM (CDP):

## Background & Purpose

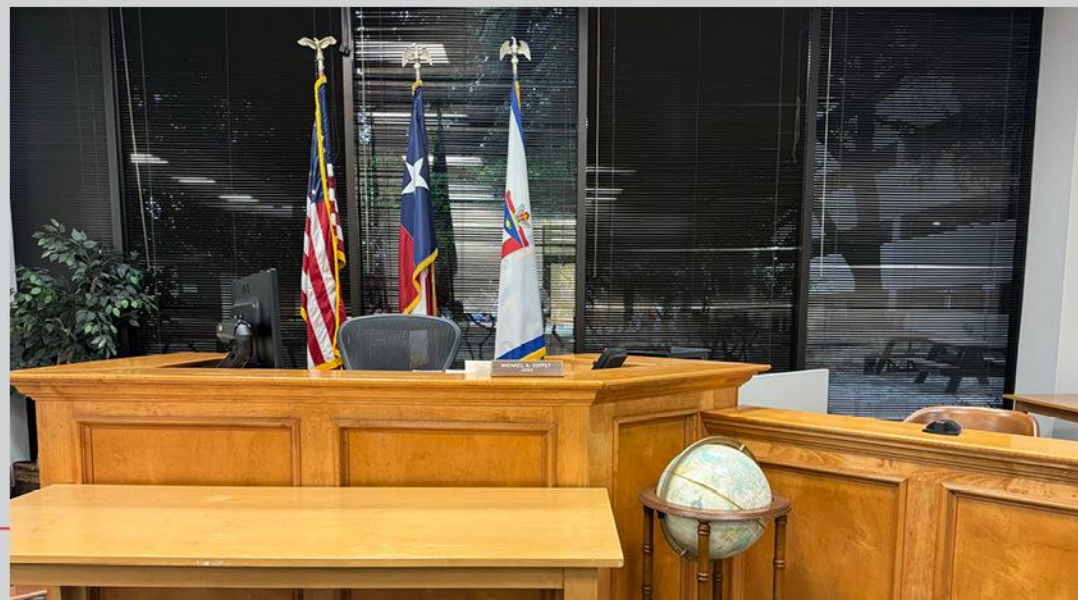
**Pilot implementation launched  
March 6, 2023**

**Developed after a year of  
stakeholder engagement, staff  
realignment and program design**

**Formal program to connect  
individuals in Court Services to  
Homeless Services**

### **Primary Goals:**

- Increase appearance and case completion rates
- Improve connection to case management and social services
- Reduce recidivism





# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM (CDP):

## Service Process & Referrals

### Staffing:

- Dedicated Clinical Case Manager Supervisor and two Clinical Case Managers

### Services:

- Assessments at entry for all participants
- Client-centered services based on existing needs and available resources

### Service Duration:

- Approximately 90 days to complete activities to resolve case(s) as authorized by the court
- If additional services needed after case(s) resolved:
  - Access DACC's Walk-in Case Management
  - Enroll in DACC's Intensive Case Management waitlist
  - Assisted with enrollment in other cases management/housing programs



# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM (CDP):

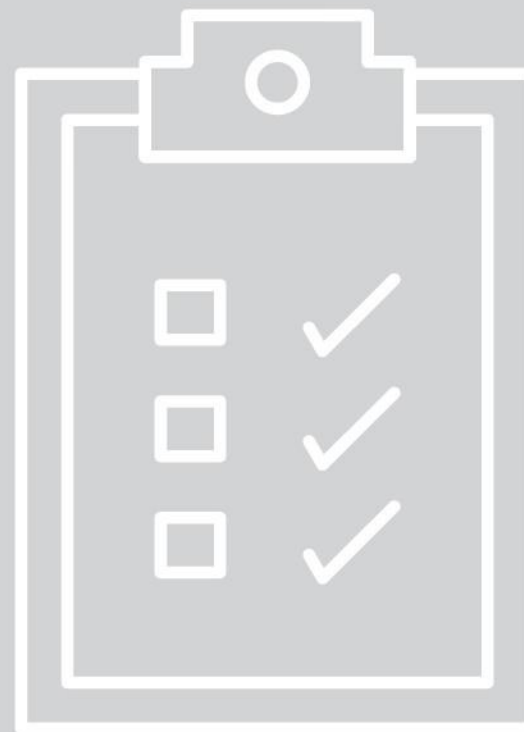
## Referrals

**Must be made directly by the court**

### **Target Population -**

Individuals experiencing homelessness with at least one open DACC case.

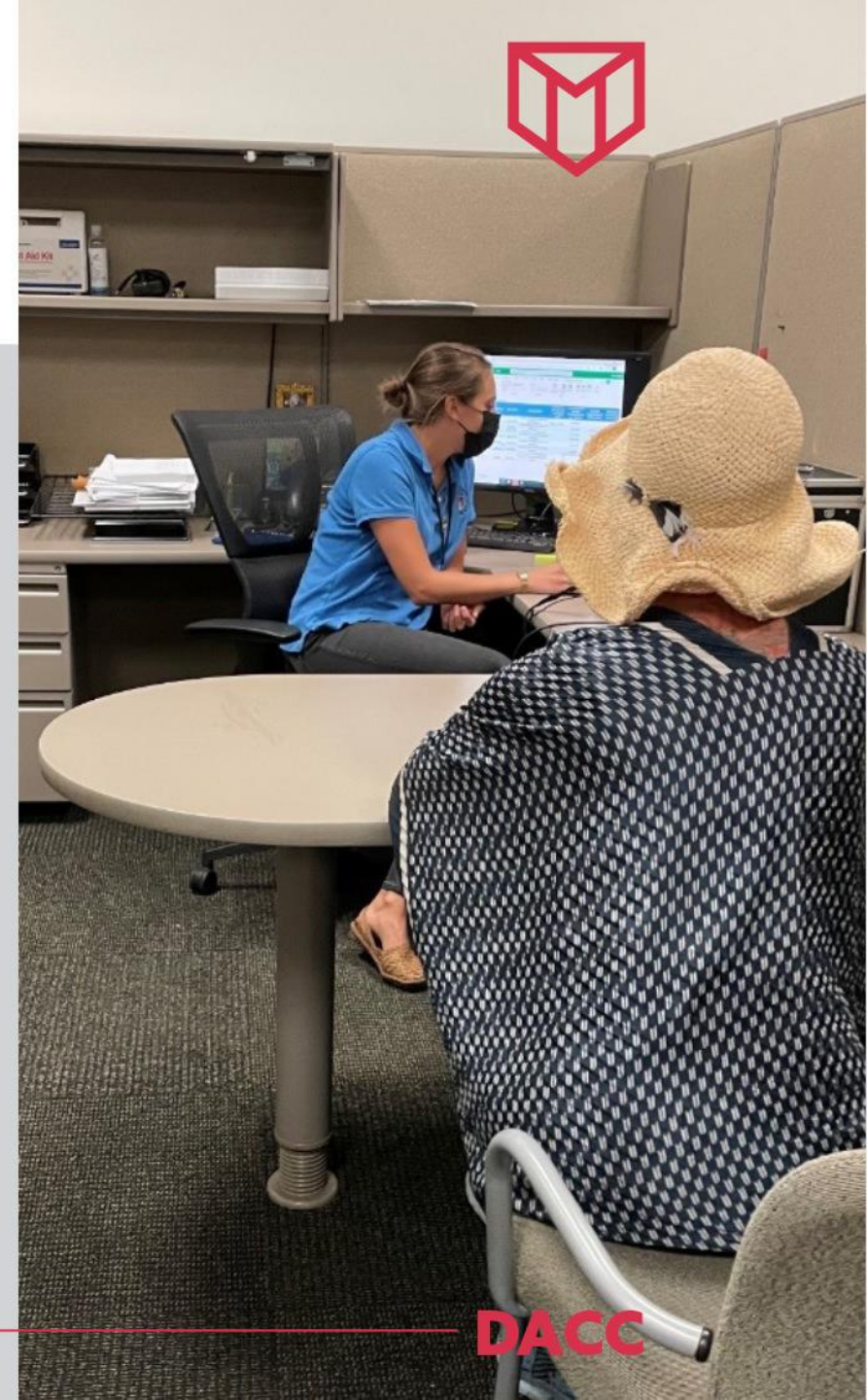
- Open to anyone with an active court case with DACC or Austin Municipal Court and serves a number of housed individuals in circumstances where they would benefit from CDP services.



# DACC SERVICE ENHANCEMENT

## Improvements for individuals engaged in Court Services:

- Service standardization
- Improved service equity
- Direct access to Clinical Case Managers:
  - Streamlines Court Services
  - Lowers wait times for Walk-in Case Management



# OVER- VIEW MOBILE COURT







# DACC MOBILE COURT OVERVIEW

## How it began:

- Previous site visits and best practice research by DACC
  - Judge Coffey asked staff to develop a mobile court strategy
- Created by Council Resolution 20230816-016

## Overall purpose:

- Community-based program - meeting people where they are already engaging in services
  - Focus on removing barriers and building trust with unhoused community
  - Available and beneficial for anyone who potentially has an open case, regardless of housing status
- Connect individuals with solutions for resolving outstanding cases and warrants
- Immediate connection to services through case manager





# DACC MOBILE COURT PROGRESS

## How it works:

- Court case checks & education about DACC services
- Virtual access to judge and prosecutor
- CDP Case Manager onsite

## Service day frequency and locations:

- 5 service days per month during Pilot period of October 18, 2023 through Feb. 5, 2024
- Transitioned to a bi-monthly schedule post-Pilot to maintain essential services at a sustainable level



# TRAINING TO NAVIGATE DACCC

## Supplement to Mobile court

### Goal

Work with community partners to stop people who are experiencing homelessness from losing access to services due to incarceration by empowering case managers to take an active role in helping client resolve open cases.

### Benefits

- Maximize reach of Mobile Court capability with minimal staff resources
- Support clients in completing sentencing requirements

### How

Demystifying court process by providing information about:

- DACCC and general criminal justice system
- How to identify open cases
- Process to get on a docket, attend court, and resolve cases



# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM DATA



**426 clients served**



**44% of clients are Black  
30% of clients are White  
25% of clients are Hispanic**



**653 cases resolved**



**75% of clients are men**



**70% of clients at medium to high  
recidivism risk**



**33% of clients served are  
Black men**



**55% of clients are 30-49  
31% of clients are 50+**



**20% Public Intoxication  
12% Possession  
9% Camping**



# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM DATA

Continued

**Average Court Cases  
Per Client: 2**

**Average CDP Task  
Completion Time:**

- 60-90 days

**Engagement** - *based off  
last 60 days of clients' contact  
with CDP*

- Active Client Engagement: 83%  
(FY 22-23: 73%)
- Active Case Engagement: 82%  
(FY 22-23: 65%)



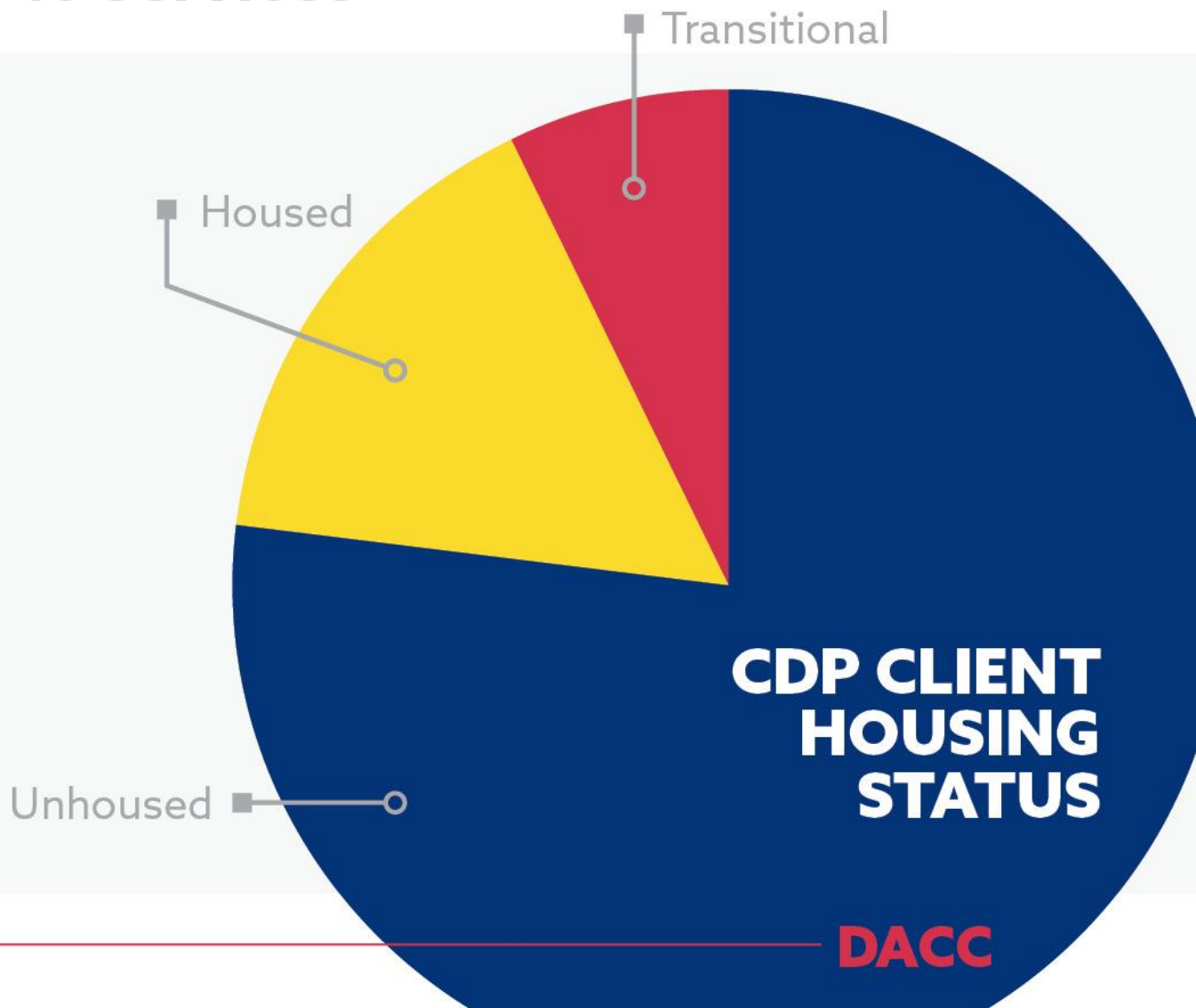
# CLINICAL DIVERSION PROGRAM DATA

## Housing status and connection to services

### Service and Resource Connections

- Housing navigation: 118
- Connection to transitional housing and shelters: 38
- Vital Documents Navigation: 135
- Connection to medical, mental health, and substance use care: 131

**80% experience homelessness at Program entry**



# LESSONS LEARNED

CDP



**01**

**Collaboration  
is Critical**

**02**

**Be Aware  
of Staffing  
Needs**

**03**

**Software System  
Needed for  
Programmatic and  
Data Needs**





# LESSONS LEARNED

## Mobile Court

**Be prepared for questions about other legal systems**

**Try out different models**

- Staffing levels, program practices, and location setup

**Translate complex processes from one context to another**

**Root service delivery in Trauma-Informed Practices**

- Build trust
- Provide options for clients
- Create welcoming space - allow for time to process

**Relationships are key**

- Foster collaborations with community partners
- Work across other agency departments and resources



# LESSONS LEARNED

## Mobile Court

### **The smaller the footprint, the bigger the impact**

- Staffing size impacts location options available for services

### **Critical to have dynamic, independent thinking staff**

- Improvising, genuine connections with clients, broad and general skillsets needed

### **Invest in data collection infrastructure at the front end**

### **As popularity grows, so does demand**

- Anticipate success of program and plan for growth
- If resources are limited, prioritize strategically about what can be implemented



# QUESTIONS?

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