Oklahoma County Detention Center Action Committee Population Reduction Focus Group

Recommendations Report

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The population reduction focus group has surely had our work cut out for us. Because of how poorly data was collected and maintained prior to the implementation of jail tracker, some of the information we need to perform adequately in our capacity has been diminished, delayed, or not yet made accessible. However, we have been hard at work, meeting every two weeks to identify the various issues we are facing, the information we need to solve them, and trying to find and design solutions.

Some of the items we have been looking at include but are not limited to:

● The medical population. Are they receiving adequate care? Do we have the capacity to care for them? Why are they here and how can we get them out?

● How to cut down time in the booking process.

● How long are people here before their case is considered complete (typically after trial and sentencing) and how do we decrease that time?

● Why are people here? Most are pretrial detainees. So, what point are they at in the judicial process? What is the most time consuming part in this process? How can we make that part more effective and time efficient?

● Intervention in the recidivism crisis of high utilizers (helping people find the resources they need to divert them from the CJ system)

● Who are the people, organizations, resources we can bring in to help people meet their needs and effectively reduce their recidivism rates and divert them from the system.

● DOJ and State Health Dept. reports in which they state that this facility does not meet their criteria or standards for a detention facility. The main goal we have set is to decrease the jail population to 1200

people or less by the end of 2021. This is important to promote the health and safety of staff and detainees, and to hopefully help get back into compliance with the DOJs and State Health Dept. expectations and standards. Though there are a lot of aspects of the jail population that are out of our control, we are working hard to make sure that we can positively impact all of the things that are.

Here are our **Recommendations** suggested to the Oklahoma County and Criminal Justice Authority to achieve these goals:

● Support Jail Administration its continued efforts to re-establish access to NCIC background checks in the jail to minimize booking, processing and release times. This includes securing necessary software, credentials, staff training and installation support.

● Work with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, and Oklahoma State Department of Health to ensure detainees who qualify for aid know how to and have access to SoonerCare, WIC, TANF, and other health and human services programs to alleviate food and healthcare insecurity and break the cycle that leads to repeat detention.

● Ensure Oklahoma Department of Corrections transfers are performed regularly and as soon as possible.

● Streamline Medical OR process to remove critically/terminally ill detainees from OCDC population.

● Provide Homeless Alliance and organizations like it with access to jail tracker. They manage the homeless management tool full of data for various cities in the state and can help mitigate recidivism rates.

● Allow Jail detainees access to their phones when they get arrested, prior to confiscation, so they can get important phone numbers and potentially arrange for bail.

● Perform Needs assessments performed at intake (ex: Midwest City Model).

● Improve intake and classification processes by adopting system similar to Cleveland County's questionnaire and classification system.

 ● Make recommendations for release based on intake and questionnaires filled out by arresting agencies and Jail staff.

● Explore the utilization of other inebriation solution methods (ex: Civil Protective Custody).

● Prioritize the best means and capacity to work with pretrial service programs available to help get and keep people out of our facility. These programs include Court Services conditional and OR bonds, The Bail Project, TEEM, Diversion Hub and North Care Day Reporting.

● Call upon Trust members and other members of this Subcommittee to use their individual power, connections, and voices to help advocate for population reduction in various ways to those whose work intersect with ours (ex: district attorneys, defense attorneys, judges, bondsmen, etc.). Our ideas to reduce jail population that would depend on outside participation from these groups/entities include:

- Add a Jail magistrate to eliminate delays and help judicial processes move more smoothly and time-efficiently.

- Family and juvenile court coordination to address the various needs of incarcerated parents, juveniles, or families going through the criminal justice system.
- Have bail hearing in/closer to the Jail, (this would be made easier with the implementation of a jail magistrate but is also possible without one.)
- Facilitate Homeless court, a more suitable solution for our homeless populations.
- End cash bail for non-violent offenders through judicial orders, cite and release programs, a revolving bail fund program for indigent arrestees, continued decrease of municipal offense incarceration.
- Remove ICE agents from the OCDC.

Outstanding questions relative to recommendations:

NCIC:
-How long does it take to get access/install?
-What is the cost associated with its implementation?
-Is there cost associated with moving that to a new jail building?

Bail scheduling:
Could there be more staff at intake and/bail payment so as to better allow organizations and individuals who pay bail to schedule that time and make it most efficient for the jail to release people?

Cash bail system:
Given the limitations of the Trust's power, can there be action/recommendations relative to the cash bail system?

Mental health:
Is there policy relative to turning away people based on mental health status?
What role does Turnkey play in this.

Hospital MOUs:
What happens when that hospital is full? Especially as we're thinking about COVID.

Overpopulation:
-Can people be turned away upon arrival at the Jail with law enforcement?
-Constitutionally, what does, "properly presented by law enforcement" mean/constitute?

Data:
-What Jail data do we have available especially with regard to people charged with statutorily nonviolent charges?

Juveniles:
-What is the long-term plan given the current decertification?

Private contractors by the trust:
-What were the recommendations and what are the metrics for success?

Jail capacity:

-What is the actual bed capacity limit we are abiding by? 1200 beds per common/historical understanding? 2400/2800 beds per recent Health Department audits? What does the Fire Department hold, is its number higher than the Health Department?

-What credible entity should be asked to do another audit that we can certainly abide by under federal and state law? Should the DOJ determine a capacity auditing entity for OCDC?

-Could we eventually explore denying entry of detainees after reaching full capacity?