

CT LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION (LEAD)



Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion is a new program that was developed with the community to address low-level drug crimes in Hartford and New Haven. It is a pre-booking diversion program that allows officers to redirect low-level offenders engaged in drug activity to community-based services instead of jail and prosecution. LEAD participants begin working immediately with case managers to access community-based treatment and support services – including housing, healthcare, job training, substance use treatment and mental health support -- instead of processing them through traditional criminal justice system avenues. A unique coalition of law enforcement agencies, public officials, and community groups collaborated to create this pilot program. These groups make up LEAD’s Policy Coordinating Group, which governs the program.

LEAD’s goals are to reduce the harm a drug offender causes him or herself, as well as the harm that the individual is causing the surrounding community; to improve public safety and public order, and to reduce the criminal behavior of people who participate in the program.

This public safety program has the potential to reduce recidivism rates for low-level offenders and preserve expensive criminal justice system resources for more serious or violent offenders.

LEAD is an evidence-based practice that initially began as a collaboration among diverse stakeholders in Washington State. Collaborators included the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, the Seattle City Attorney’s Office, the Seattle Police Department, the King County Sheriff’s Office, the King County Executive, the Mayor’s Office, The Washington State Department of Correction, The Defender Association, the ACLU of Washington, and community members.

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