



Applying Evidence-based Practices to Obtain Officer Buy-in for Deflection and Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiatives

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Shaping the Future of the Policing Profession®

Speaker



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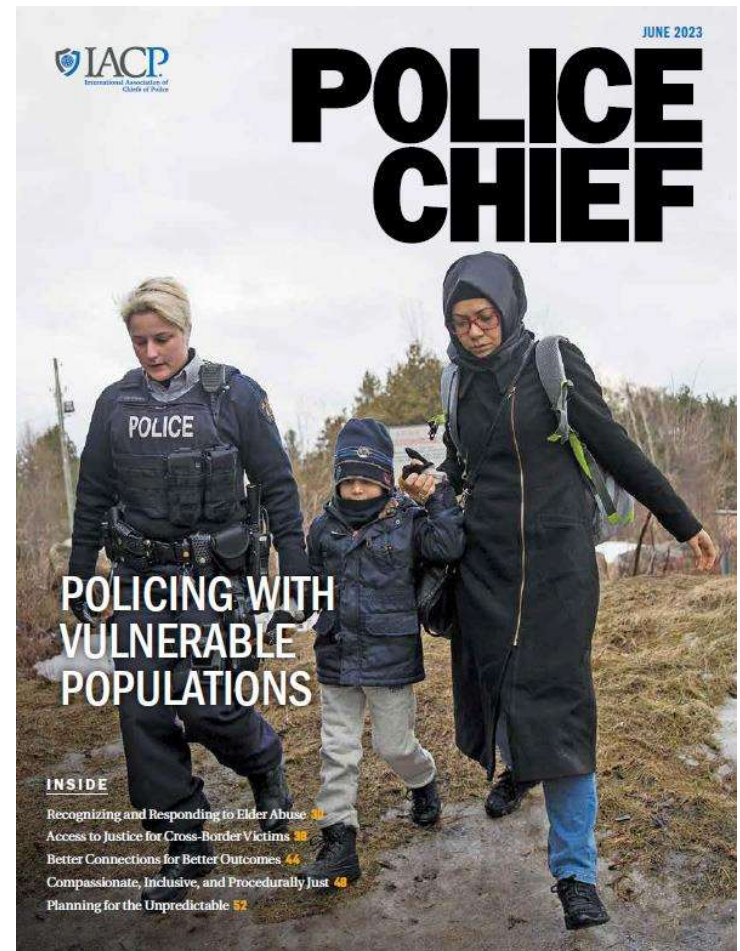
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About the IACP

- The IACP is a professional association for law enforcement worldwide, representing more than **34,000 members in more than 170 countries.**
- IACP membership is open to all **law enforcement** and those affiliated with the law enforcement profession.



Law Enforcement - First Responder Partnership Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Program

Funded by BJA's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP)

In partnership with TASC's Center for Health and Justice (CHJ)

- Provides training, technical assistance, and resources to communities to create programs that help reduce overdoses and address substance use disorder (SUD).
- Supports law enforcement agencies in developing pathways to treatment and services for individuals with SUDs.
- Promotes collaborations between public safety and public health stakeholders to increase community-based treatment and service capacity within communities and the justice system.



Learning Objectives

After viewing this webinar, attendees will be able to...

1. ...list four barriers to obtaining officer support for deflection programs and why it's important to understand those barriers.
2. ...list five strategies for gaining officer (and agency) support for their deflection programs and how to implement those strategies.
3. ...explain why it is important to meet officers where they are when it comes to buy-in for deflection, and what that entails.
4. ...explain strategies that have been successful in Oregon communities.

What the Research Tells Us: Obstacles to Obtaining Officer Buy-In

Officers might believe that...

- Addiction is a moral failing
- Deflection isn't real policing
- Arrests lead to promotions; referrals are not beneficial
- Making referrals takes more time than arrest

Officers may lack knowledge or understanding about availability of treatment and barriers to treatment

What the Research Tells Us: Facilitators for Obtaining Officer Buy-In

- Training on the science of addiction
- Conveying the results of the program
 - Knowledge that the program, ***and they***, made a difference
- Making it faster and easier to refer than to arrest
- Demonstrated support from executive leadership, including attending all program-related trainings

Checklist for Obtaining Officer Support for Deflection and Pre-Arrest Diversion Programs

1) Law enforcement-led programs

2) Programs led by non-law enforcement agencies

E.g., behavioral health, county, municipal

3) All programs



The drug epidemic in the United States has had devastating consequences for individuals, families, neighborhoods, and entire communities. There has been a surge in drug overdoses since 2019, with more than 109,000 overdose deaths reported in 2022.¹

This crisis has challenged communities to find innovative strategies to respond to people who have substance use disorders (SUDs) rather than relying solely on arrest and incarceration. The increase in deflection and pre-arrest diversion programs to address nonviolent crime related to substance use stems partly from a growing realization that traditional policing strategies alone won't solve the drug crisis. In some cases, they may even cause harm by increasing overdoses and stigmatization.² Conversely, police-led programs that deflect people with SUDs from the justice system can effectively prevent criminal offending and show promise for improving participants' health and reducing social and financial costs associated with processing drug-related offenses.³ Deflection can be seen as a long-term, root-cause solution as opposed to the short-term solutions of arrest and incarceration. Law enforcement officers are in a unique position to recognize people with SUDs and make the decision to refer them to community-based treatment and services. It is important to understand the factors that are likely to influence the willingness of officers to support a deflection program and make referrals.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The terms "deflection" and "pre-arrest diversion" are sometimes used interchangeably because both practices are at the intersection of first responders, treatment and service providers, recovery support, and community. But it is important to differentiate between them:

✔ **DEFLECTION** is the practice by which law enforcement or other first responders connect individuals to community-based treatment and/or services when arrest would not have been necessary, or in lieu of taking no action when issues of addiction, mental health, or need are present.

✔ **PRE-ARREST DIVERSION** is the practice by which law enforcement officers connect individuals, who otherwise would be eligible for charges, to community-based treatment and services in lieu of arrest, thereby diverting them from the justice system.⁴

For the purposes of this checklist, the term "deflection" will be used to represent both deflection and pre-arrest diversion programs.

Deflection programs led by law enforcement agencies and those administered by other types of agencies or organizations (e.g., prosecutors, behavioral health, nonprofit, etc.) share many of the same obstacles to securing officer support, but they also have their own unique barriers. This checklist offers evidence-based strategies to address common barriers to obtaining officer buy-in for deflection programs and strategies specifically targeted to police-led programs and those led by non-law enforcement organizations.



Checklist for Obtaining Officer Support for Deflection or Pre-Arrest Diversion Programs



Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for Law Enforcement-Led Programs

❑ Demonstrate executive leadership support



Encourage command staff participation in trainings and deflection efforts



Use referrals as a performance metric



Provide incentives for making deflection referrals

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for Law Enforcement-Led Programs

❑ Develop clear policies and procedures



Include line officers in developing policies and procedures



MAKE referring through the program easier and less time-consuming than arrest and booking



Develop clear eligibility requirements

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for Programs Led by Non-LE Agencies

- By necessity, deflection programs are highly collaborative.
 - HB4002 dictates that police agencies be involved in deflection programs.
- Lead organization should invite police agency leaders to the table **as early in planning process as possible** to provide input and help shape the program.
- ✓ Helps program leaders convey program goals/benefits to public safety
 - ✓ Allows for relationship building with other stakeholders
 - ✓ Allows police to provide input which creates a sense of ownership

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for Programs Led by Non-LE Agencies

- ❑ Hire or assign a dedicated **program manager** who can liaise with officers
 - ✓ Has a relationship with police or policing and is respected by officers
 - ✓ Can advocate for the program and train officers
 - ✓ Is able to build relationships between officers and others

- ❑ Include informal leaders—patrol officers and **first-line supervisors**—in program planning

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for All Deflection Programs

❑ **MAKE SURE** that referring through the program is easier and less time-consuming than arrest and booking

❑ **TRAINING:**



The science of
addiction



Adverse
childhood
experiences
(ACES)



The role of
relapse in
recovery



Historical context

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for All Deflection Programs

❑ EDUCATE agency personnel about treatment



Invite a treatment professional to talk about treatment, service capacity, and barriers to treatment



Include people who have lived experience with Substance Use Disorders (SUDs)



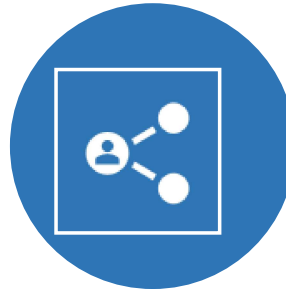
Inform officers about the post-referral process

Strategies to Obtain Officer Support for All Deflection Programs

❑ CREATE a feedback loop



Provide information to officers about individual referral outcomes or aggregate program data



Share program-related research or evaluation results



Through discussions with officers, ask for feedback and suggestions

.....and finally

Change is hard!!!!

Give your officers some grace and meet them where they are.

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IACP RESOURCES

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Officer Support for
Deflection or Pre-
Arrest Diversion
Programs



Comprehensive
Opioid Stimulant, and
Substance Use
Program (COSSUP)



Law Enforcement
Opioid Resources

Questions?