Thurston County LEAD FAQ Sheet

What is LEAD?
Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is a diversion program designed to provide intensive case management services to people who have committed low level drug crime and “nuisance crimes” due to behavioral health. LEAD is designed to reduce the harm a drug offender causes to themselves or the community. LEAD’s purpose is to reduce the recidivism rate for low-level offenders and preserve expensive criminal justice resources for those individuals who are violent or sexual offenders.

How does LEAD Work?
LEAD is used through a Harm Reduction Model. Instead of jail and referral for prosecution, clients will be engaged by a BHO Contracted provider serving as the Mobile Outreach Team (i.e. Telecare). Telecare will access:
- Factors that led to the individual engaging in drug activity, misdemeanor crimes of public disorder attributed to behavioral health issues.
- Confirm the person agrees to be in treatment
- Signs release of confidentiality.
Initial crisis intervention will be offered with Intensive Case Management for ongoing treatment. Individuals will be considered to be in LEAD if they complete an intake session within 30 days of referral, signed a release of information allowing the sharing of information on an as-needed basis among the LEAD Operational Partners. LEAD trained officer will complete the report needed to refer the case to the County Prosecutor – the incident report will be reviewed by the arresting officers supervisor and indicate that the case has been referred to LEAD.

What is a Harm Reduction Model?
A Harm Reduction Model is when individuals will not be penalized if they do not achieve abstinence. The goal is to reduce as much harm done to themselves and to the surrounding community through problematic drug or mental health related activities.

Who Makes the Decision?
LEAD trained law enforcement officers and their sergeants will make the decision if individuals can be offered LEAD. They will make a series of decisions about the individuals they contact to determine whether or not those individuals are appropriate to go to jail, or to the community-based program. The LEAD trained officer has sole discretion on a participant's entrance into the LEAD program.

What Makes Participants Eligible?
Adults (18+) suspected of felony possession VUCSA crimes and misdemeanor crimes of public disorder attributed to behavioral health issues will be eligible, this includes:
- Urinating in public
- Disorderly conduct
- Harassment
- Malicious mischief
- Alcohol violations (no DUI)
- Trespassing
- Noise violations
- Use of drug paraphernalia
- Loitering/ pedestrian interference

**What Makes Participants Ineligible?**
- Amount of drug for simple possession is over 7 grams or 6+ pills
- Arrests for delivery or possession with intent to deliver all controlled substances
- Individual does not appear amenable to diversion
- Individual is not so intoxicated or have serious mental health concerns that they cannot make an informed decision to do so
- Individuals who are arrested/ warrant on a DOC violation can be referred to L.E.A.D.
- Individual has disqualifying criminal history in the following:
  - Murder 1 or 2, arson, robbery 1 or 2, assault 1,2, 3 kidnapping, any sex offense, burglary 1 or residential burglary
  - Unless more than 5 years have elapsed since conviction on any of the following;
  - Assault 4- DV, violation of a domestic violence no contact order, violation of a domestic violence protection order, or burglary 2.

**How Does LEAD Differ From Other Drug Programs?**
LEAD works with various stakeholders in the community to implement a new approach to address drug and low-level crime. LEAD is made during pre-booking in the hopes to reduce expenses and time to book, charge and require court appearances of an individual. LEAD provides individuals with case management services and access to additional resources not available through existing public programs.

**Why LEAD?**
King County and Seattle PD have seen positive results with their LEAD program and a reduced recidivism rate of -58% compared to people who are not in the LEAD program. The LEAD program will provide much needed services to individuals such as case management to help assess what issues are driving their criminal behavior. LEAD will result in less law enforcement contact and have less “repeat” offenders using resources and actually receiving helpful treatment. LEAD is based on client centered philosophy, community transparency and accountability.

**Is LEAD Being Offered Elsewhere?**
There are multiple cities and counties around the country that are already operating their LEAD programs, these include:
- Seattle, WA
- Portland, OR
- Santa Fe, NM
- Huntington, WV
- Baltimore, MD
- Fayetteville, AR
- Albany, NY

LEAD programs are being explored and developed throughout the entire country, places like Honolulu, New Orleans, Madison, Wisconsin, Los Angeles, and Brooklyn are developing programs based on their community’s needs.