

# Breaking the Cycle of Veteran Incarceration and Homelessness

July 8, 2015





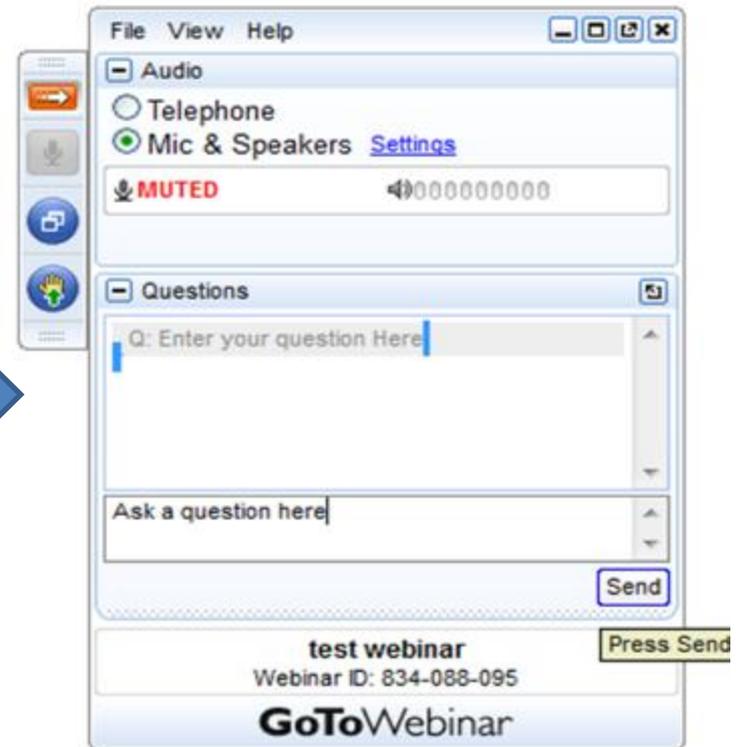
# Today's Webinar

- This webinar will last 75 minutes.
- Due to the relatively high number of participants, you are in “listen only mode.”
- Webinar slides and recording will be available on [usich.gov](http://usich.gov) and e-mailed to all registrants.
- Resources and contact information will be provided at the end.



# Questions?

Please submit your questions via the *Questions* function found in your GoToWebinar toolbar.





# Presenters

- Peter Nicewicz, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Jessica Blue-Howells, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Sean Clark, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Baylee Crone, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans



# Agenda

- Overview
- Sequential Intercept Model
- Veterans Justice Programs
- National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
- Q&A



# Opening Doors, as amended in 2015

- **Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans by 2015**
- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness by 2017
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness by 2020



Read the Amendment:

[http://usich.gov/opening\\_doors/](http://usich.gov/opening_doors/)

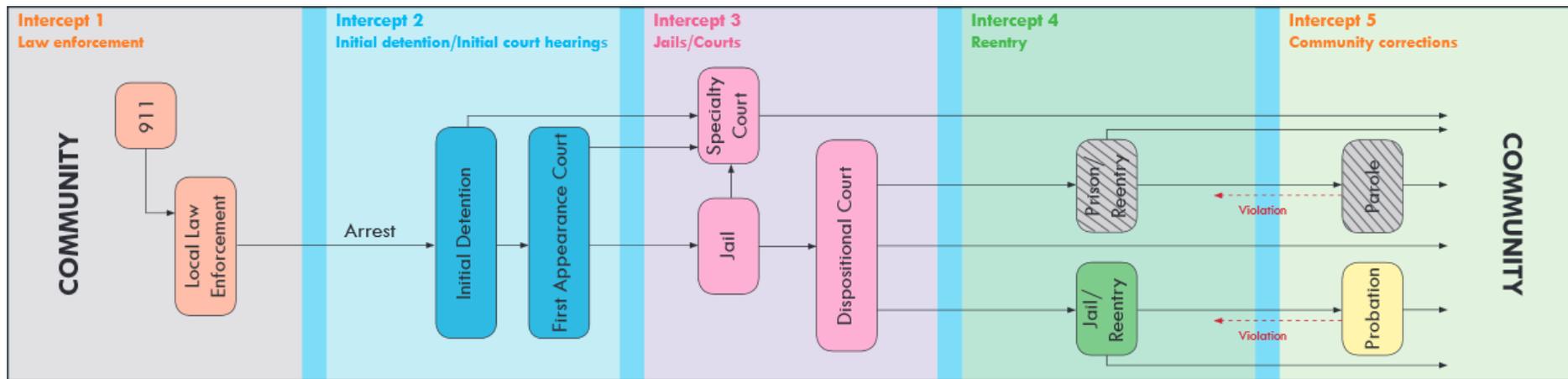


# What It Means to End Homelessness

**An end to homelessness does not mean that no one will ever experience a housing crisis again.** Changing economic realities, the unpredictability of life and unsafe or unwelcoming family environments may create situations where individuals, families, or youth could experience or be at-risk of homelessness.

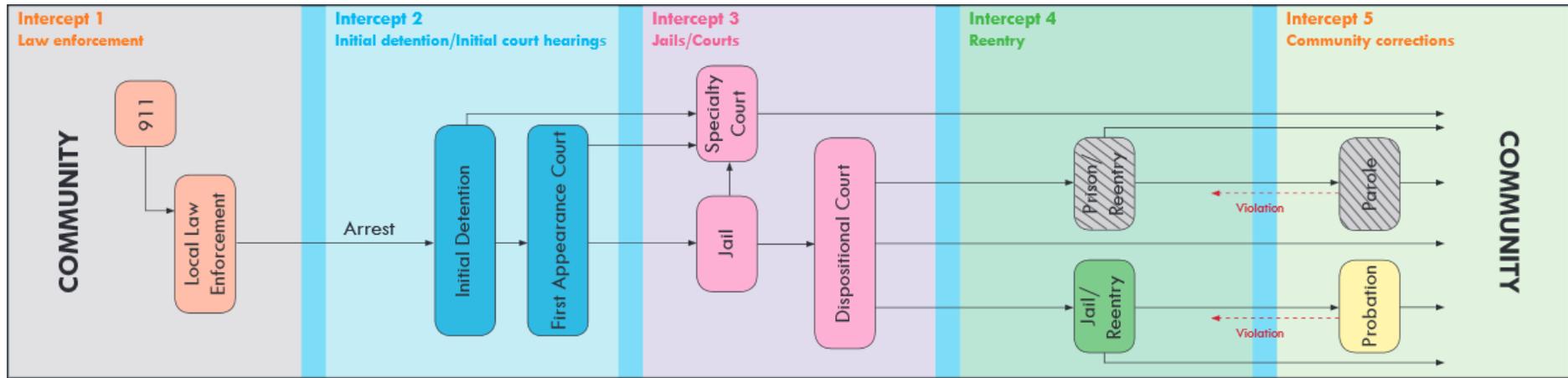
An end to homelessness means that every community will have a **systematic response** in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible or is otherwise a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

# Sequential Intercept Model



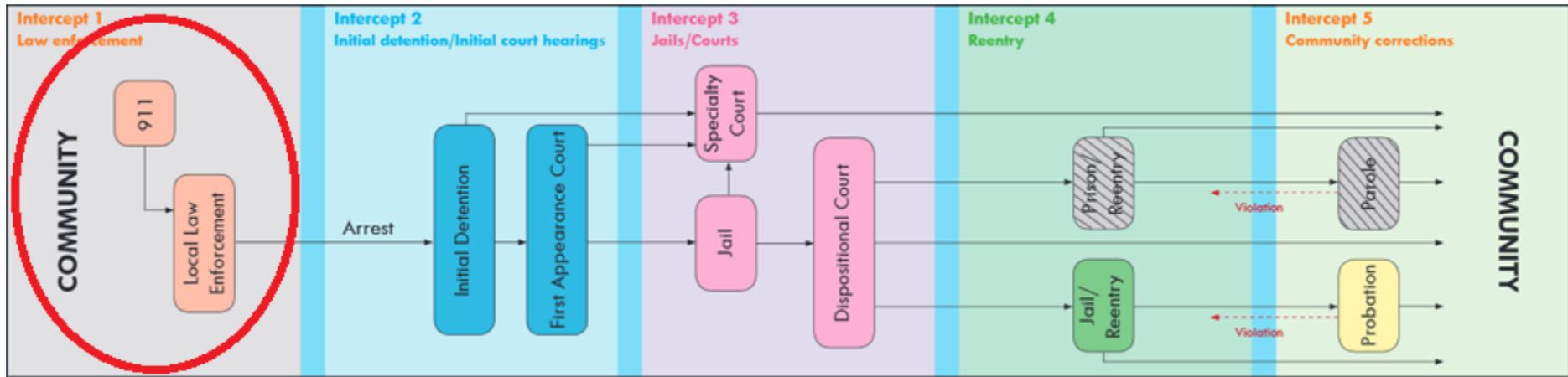
- Sequential Intercepts for Developing Criminal Justice and Mental Health Partnership (SAMSHA):  
[http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/integrating/GAINS\\_Sequential Intercept.pdf](http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/integrating/GAINS_Sequential_Intercept.pdf)
- Breaking the Cycle of Veteran Incarceration and Homelessness: Emerging Community Practices:  
<http://usich.gov/population/veterans/breaking-the-cycle-of-veteran-incarceration-and-homelessness/>

# Ultimate Intercept



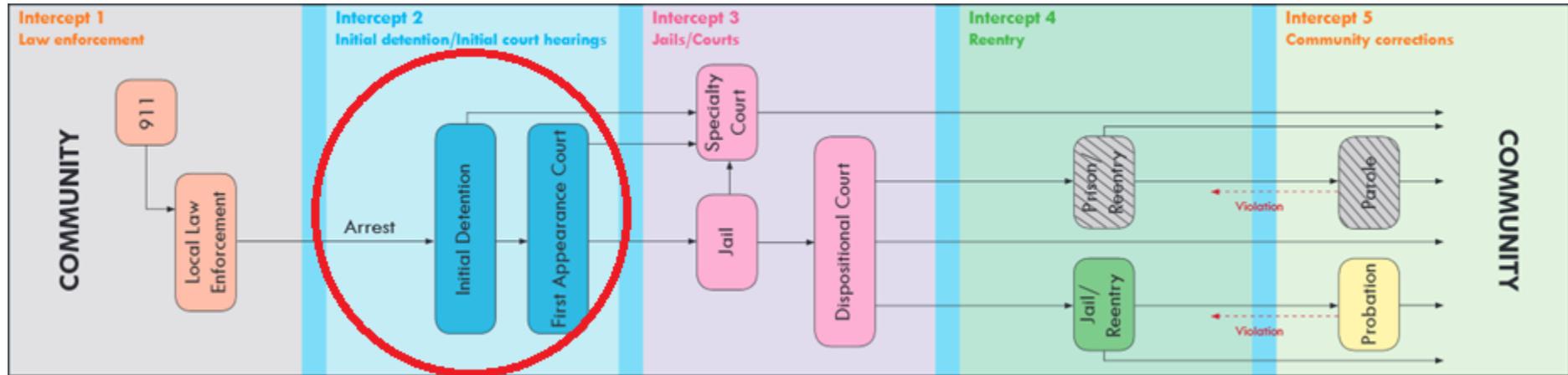
- Adopt policies and implement practices that avoid criminalizing behaviors associated with homelessness.

# Intercept Point 1: Law Enforcement



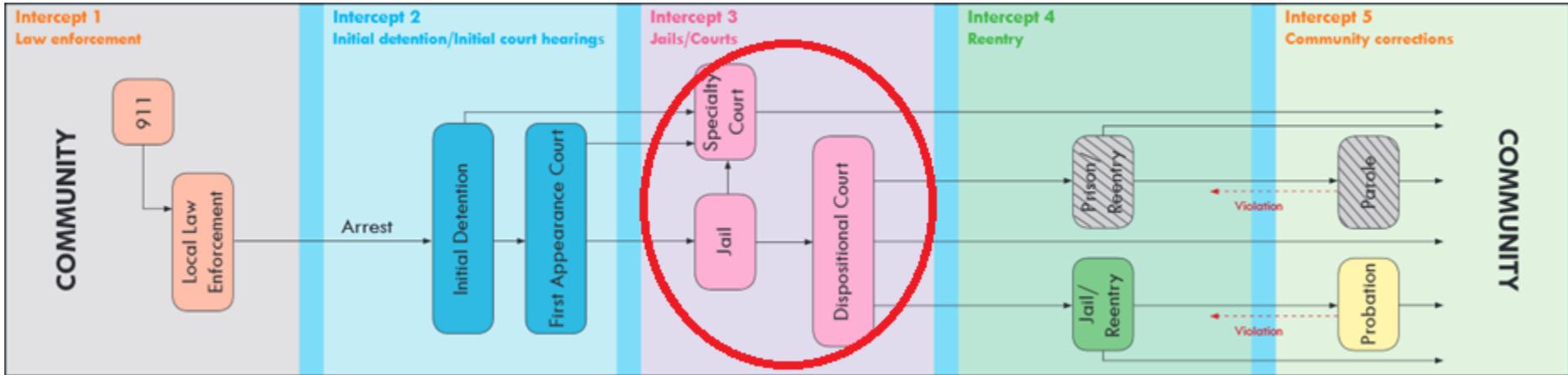
- Partner with law enforcement and emergency services to create a systematic response to ensure that Veterans and all people experiencing homelessness are assisted by being connected with housing assistance and supportive services, rather than being unnecessarily arrested.

# Intercept Point 2: Initial Detention / Initial Hearing



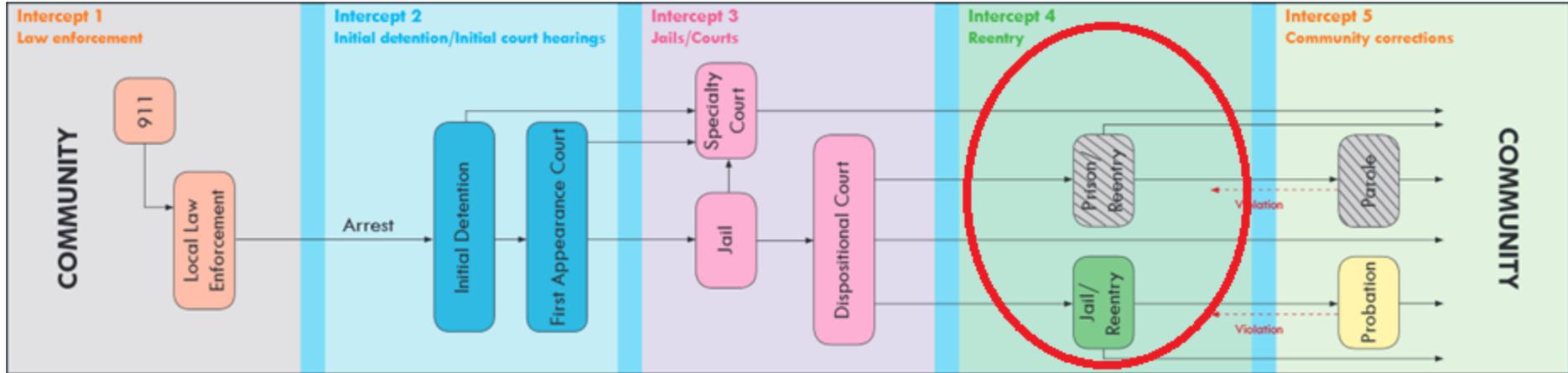
- Identify Veterans entering the criminal justice system,
- Screen all individuals for housing status and homelessness,
- Maximize opportunities for pre-trial release, and
- Formulate an action plan which addresses the individual's housing and service delivery needs.

# Intercept Point 3: Jails and Courts



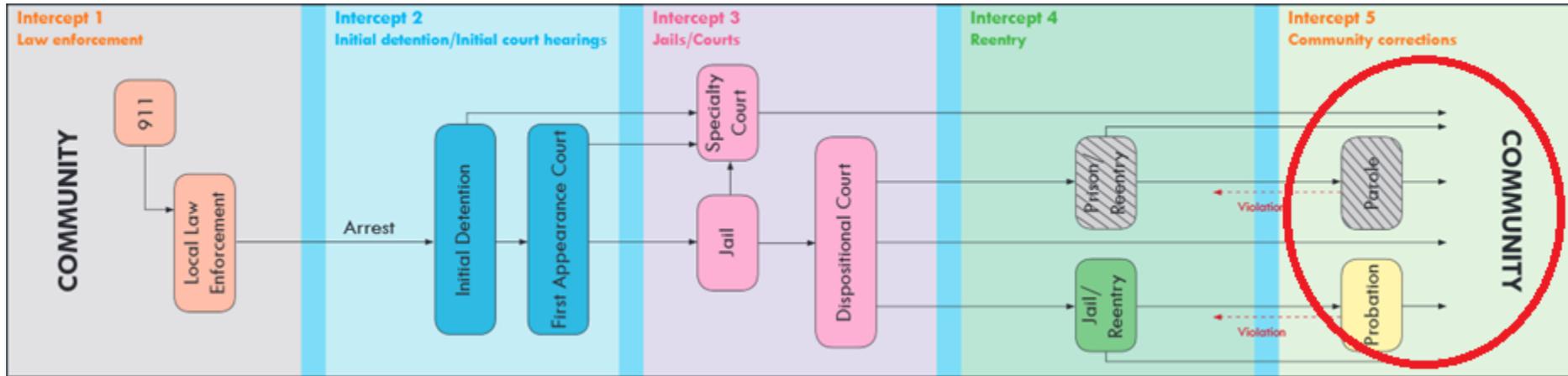
- Divert Veterans to problem-solving courts, such as Veterans Treatment Courts.

# Intercept Point 4: Reentry



- Build strong and collaborative reentry support systems to assist Veterans to leave prison or jail, reenter society, and follow their reentry plan.

# Intercept Point 5: Community Corrections



- Collaborate with corrections departments and VA's Veterans Justice Programs to connect Veterans to permanent housing and supportive services, including employment and training supports.

# Justice-Involved Veterans

Jessica Blue-Howells, LCSW

National Coordinator, Health Care for Reentry Veterans

[Jessica.Blue-Howells@va.gov](mailto:Jessica.Blue-Howells@va.gov)

<http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp>

Sean Clark, JD

National Coordinator, Veterans Justice Outreach

[Sean.Clark2@va.gov](mailto:Sean.Clark2@va.gov)

<http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp>

July 8, 2015

# Objectives

- 1) Understand the core components of Veterans Justice Programs
- 2) Understand the key outreach points along the justice system continuum
- 3) Expand awareness of the needs of justice involved Veterans

# Agenda

Mission

Strategic Goals

Services

Sequential Intercept Model

National Estimates

VA and Treatment Courts

VA Authorization Limits

Incarcerated Veterans: Offense  
Types

Homelessness Risk

Notable Developments

Veterans Reentry Search  
Service

CHALENG: consumers' needs  
Discussion

# VHA Justice Programs: Mission

To partner with the criminal justice system to identify Veterans who would benefit from treatment as an alternative to incarceration. VJP will ensure access to exceptional care, tailored to individual needs, for justice-involved Veterans by linking each Veteran to VA and community services that will prevent homelessness, improve social and clinical outcomes, facilitate recovery and end Veterans' cyclical contact with the criminal justice system.

# VHA Justice Programs: Strategic Goals

1. Improve Veteran identification
2. Build staff capacity/skill
3. Match Veterans to appropriate treatment
4. Reduce stigma
5. Develop systems for evaluation, research and knowledge

# VHA Justice Outreach Services

## Justice Outreach

- Gain access to the jail
  - Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
  - Conduct outreach, assessment, and case management for Veterans in local courts and jails
  - Provide/coordinate training for law enforcement personnel
  - Linkage to VA and Community Services/Resources
- 
- Number of VJO Specialists funded: 261
  - Number of 3,365 local jail facilities serviced: Not yet known
  - Number of Veterans receiving VJO services (Oct. 2009 – May 2015): 104,522

## Prison Re-Entry

- Gain access to the prison
  - Educate Veterans' groups about VA and VA services
  - Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
  - Reentry Planning
  - Linkage to VA and Community Services
- 
- Number of HCRV Specialists funded: 43
  - Number of state and federal prisons serviced: 1,008 (78%) of 1,295 US prisons
  - Number of incarcerated Veterans receiving reentry services (Aug. 2007- May 2015): 68,090

# Sequential Intercept Model

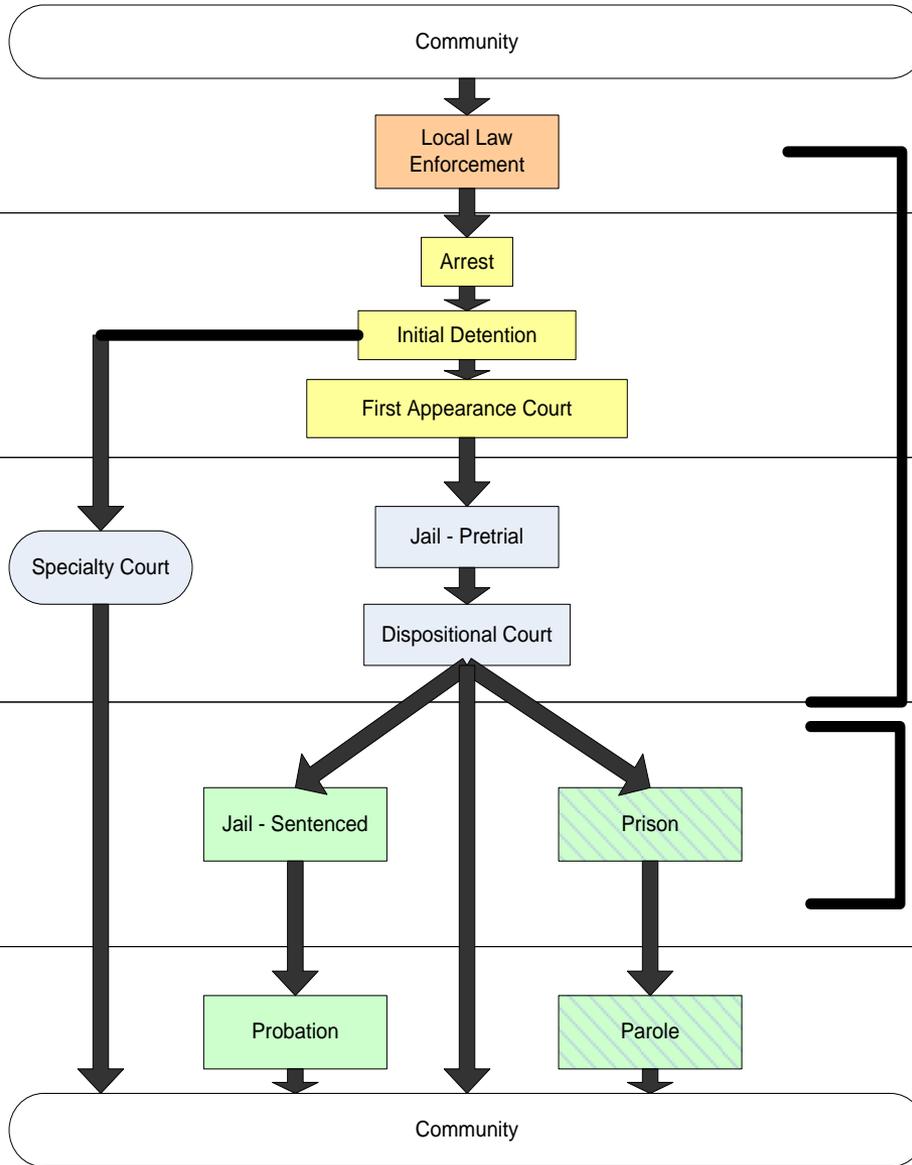
Intercept 1  
Law enforcement/  
Emergency Services

Intercept 2  
Initial detention/  
Initial court hearings

Intercept 3  
Jails/Courts

Intercept 4  
Reentry

Intercept 5  
Community corrections/  
Community support



**LAW ENFORCEMENT-  
COURTS-JAILS:  
VA Veterans Justice  
Outreach (VJO)**

**PRISONS:  
Health Care for Reentry  
Veterans (HCRV)**

# Justice-Involved Veterans: National Estimates from Bureau of Justice Statistics

	Number of U.S. residents, 2007	Percent reporting prior military service	Estimated number of military veterans, 2007
Criminal justice involvement			
Probation supervision <sup>a</sup>	4,293,200	9.3%	399,300
Parole or supervised release <sup>a</sup>	824,400	9.1%	75,000
Local jail custody <sup>b</sup>	780,600	9.3%	72,600
State prison custody <sup>c</sup>	1,315,300	10.4%	136,800
Federal prison custody <sup>c</sup>	197,300	9.8%	19,300
Total, correctional supervision <sup>d</sup>	7,328,200	9.6%	703,000
Adults Arrested <sup>e</sup>	12,078,000	9.6%	1,159,500



Veterans

Note: All counts are estimates, rounded to the nearest thousand.

a/ Probation and parole population counts based on BJS Annual Probation and Parole Surveys, 2007;

percentage of veterans based on SAM HSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2007.

b/ Local jail population counts based on BJS' Annual Survey of Jails, 2007; percentage of veterans based on BJS' Survey of Inmates in Local Jails, 2002.

c/ State and federal prison population counts based on BJS National Prisoners Statistics program, 2007; percentage of veterans based on BJS' Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004.

d/ Because some offenders may have multiple statuses, this total is less than the combined populations.

e/ Arrest count is taken from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, 2007; percentage of veterans based on SAM HSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2007.

# Incarcerated Veteran Offense Type

(sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000 [Jails], 2004 [Prisons])

Type of Offense	State Prison	Federal Prison	Jail
Violent Offenses	57%	19%	27%
Property Offenses	16%	11%	25%
Drug Offenses	15%	46%	17%
Public-order Offenses	12%	23%	31%
Other/unspecified	0%	1%	1%

# Important Context with BJS data

- Among adult males, the incarceration rate of Veterans (630 prisoners per 100,000) was *less than half* that of nonveterans (1,390 prisoners per 100,000)
- The calculated male violent offender rate for Veterans was 338 prisoners per 100,000 and for non-veterans was 595 per 100,000
- The non-veteran violent offender rate per 100,000 population is one and three quarters times higher than the Veteran rate
- This data DOES NOT support a view of Veterans as more violent population than non-veterans; in fact, the data supports the opposite view.

# VA Partnership with Veterans Treatment Courts

## Veterans Treatment Courts:

- Hybrid Drug and Mental Health Treatment Courts, serving Veteran defendants
- Volunteer Veteran Mentors
- 351 courts operating (up from 50 courts in January 2011)

## VA Contributions:

- VJO Specialist on treatment team; in courtroom when in session
- Linkage to health care services at VA medical centers
- Benefits assistance: VBA participation (both in and out of court)
- Partner with National Association of Drug Court Professionals to spread the model and established best practices
- Clark, McGuire, Blue-Howells in Drug Court Review (2010) - Early Development of Veterans Treatment Courts: Local and Legislative Initiatives

# Limits on VA Authorization

- Can provide:
  - Outreach, assessment, referral and linkage to services
  - Treatment for justice-involved Veterans who are not incarcerated
- Title 38 CFR 17.38 (c)(5) does not allow VHA to provide:
  - Hospital and outpatient care for a Veteran who is
    - Either a patient or inmate in an institution of another government agency
    - If that agency has a duty to give that care or services

# Homelessness Risk

Incarceration as an adult male is the single highest risk factor of ever being homeless (NSHAPC/Burt, 1996)

“Lengthy periods of incarceration in remote locations often attenuate the social and family ties that are crucial for successful reentry into the community.” (p. 9-5).

“...(E)ven short term incarcerations may disrupt lives and interfere with the ability to maintain employment and housing.” (p. 9-6).

(Metraux, Roman, and Cho on prison reentry/jail stays, National Symposium on Homelessness Research, 2007)

# Developments: Access to Legal Services

- VHA Directive 2011-034: VA medical centers making office space available for legal service providers to work with Veterans
- Legal services for homeless and at-risk Veterans through VHA Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program
- Promoting legal service providers' participation in SSVF as subcontractors (example: DoJ Access to Justice Initiative webinar)

# Developments: Video Outreach

- 1) “A Second Chance for Veterans” – for VA leadership/staff and community partners (includes an introduction by Secretary Shinseki)
- 2) “Suits: Support for Incarcerated Veterans” – direct outreach to incarcerated Veterans (includes a companion training video for correctional staff)
- Each is available online (<http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO.asp>)
- National dissemination:
  - Veterans Justice Outreach and Health Care for Reentry Veterans Specialists use copies of “Second Chance” in presentations to VA and community audiences
  - Justice Programs staff are working with the Association of State Correctional Administrators and other partners to get “Suits” aired in correctional facilities nationwide

# Developments: Police Training Initiative

- VA Police Training Initiative
  - Partnership between Veterans Justice Programs, VA Law Enforcement Training Center, VA mental health providers
  - Topics: verbal crisis de-escalation skills, mental health and other clinical issues, VA resources for justice-involved Veterans
  - Goal: train all VA Police officers by end of FY 2015

# Veterans Reentry Search Service (VRSS)

**Goal:** Build a system to identify all Veterans currently incarcerated/in courts

**Data source:**

- VA/DoD Identity Repository (VADIR)
- Universal data source on Veterans (25 million + entries)

**Status:**

- 58 active users and counting, including 32 state prison systems
- VRSS identifying approximately 8% of inmates with history of military service; improvement over self-report response rates of 2-5%

**Next Steps:**

- Add users from jails and courts
- National implementation

# Veterans Dorms

- Units in prisons or jails designed to house Veterans together to deliver services effectively, prepare for reentry, and reconnect with pride from military service
  - Services delivered by multiple partners, including direct prison services, state and county Veterans Affairs, non-profit behavioral health providers, state and local employment services, Vet Centers, outreach provided by VHA
- At most recent inventory (year end 2013), Veterans dorms were active in:
  - Federal prison: West Virginia
  - State prison: Colorado, Florida, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia
    - In development Maryland, Ohio, Texas
  - Local jail: Arizona, California, Georgia

# Unmet CHALENG needs, Veteran rated, 2014

**Legal issues remain rated among the highest UNMET needs among Veterans who are homeless or formerly homeless (rank is among top 10 unmet needs)**

## Male Veterans

- 3 Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure
- 4 Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues
- 5 Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License
- 7 Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines
- 8 Financial Guardianship
- 9 Military discharge upgrade

## Female Veterans

- 5 Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues
- 6 Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure
- 7 Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License
- 8 Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines
- 10 Financial Guardianship



**NATIONAL COALITION**  
*for* **HOMELESS VETERANS**

*Baylee Crone, Executive Director*

*[www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org)*

*[Bcrone@nchv.org](mailto:Bcrone@nchv.org)*

# Who We Serve

**Philanthropy;  
Other community partners**



**Social Service Agencies**

**VSOs**

# NCHV's Technical Assistance Center



Through the partnership, the TA Center is able to offer HVSP grantees the following resources:

**Peer Sheets, Guides, and Resources:** The TA Center has several resources for you, and many more on the way! These include manuals, guidebooks, and manuals to help you develop programs, as well as brief summaries of current research studies.

- [Local Grants](#)
- [Fiscal 2009](#)
- [Disasters](#)
- [Legislation Policy](#)

**Best Practices:**

**Continuum of Practice:** Your most reliable source of information for your program as well as other grantees, visit our VITA mail listervs, and your TA newsletters. The TA Center's Committee of Practice (CoP) second annual baseline survey to engage with and learn from each other. These 45-minute HVSP-only calls are held on 2nd Wednesdays of every month.

- **HVSP GRANTEES STAFF MEMBERS ONLY:** To receive other information and qualifications, visit resources with other grantees, email [ta@nchv.org](mailto:ta@nchv.org).
- For more than personal copy calls, email [knowledgenet@nchv.org](mailto:knowledgenet@nchv.org).

**Training Webinars:** The TA CENTER also has training and experts from across agencies and service sectors to increase how you work with your veteran clients, measure. These vary depending on service needs identified by grantees. These 60-minute training webinars occur on the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, except on a holiday.

- [Webinars](#) (ready to change)
- [Business Webinars](#)

**On-site and conference call program consults:** Could your program use some additional training? Call us and we will refer you to local or national experts on the topics most crucial to you. We can also do this 200+ in-person and 100+ callings, with request of your local letter of interest. Here are a few of the training topics we can cover:

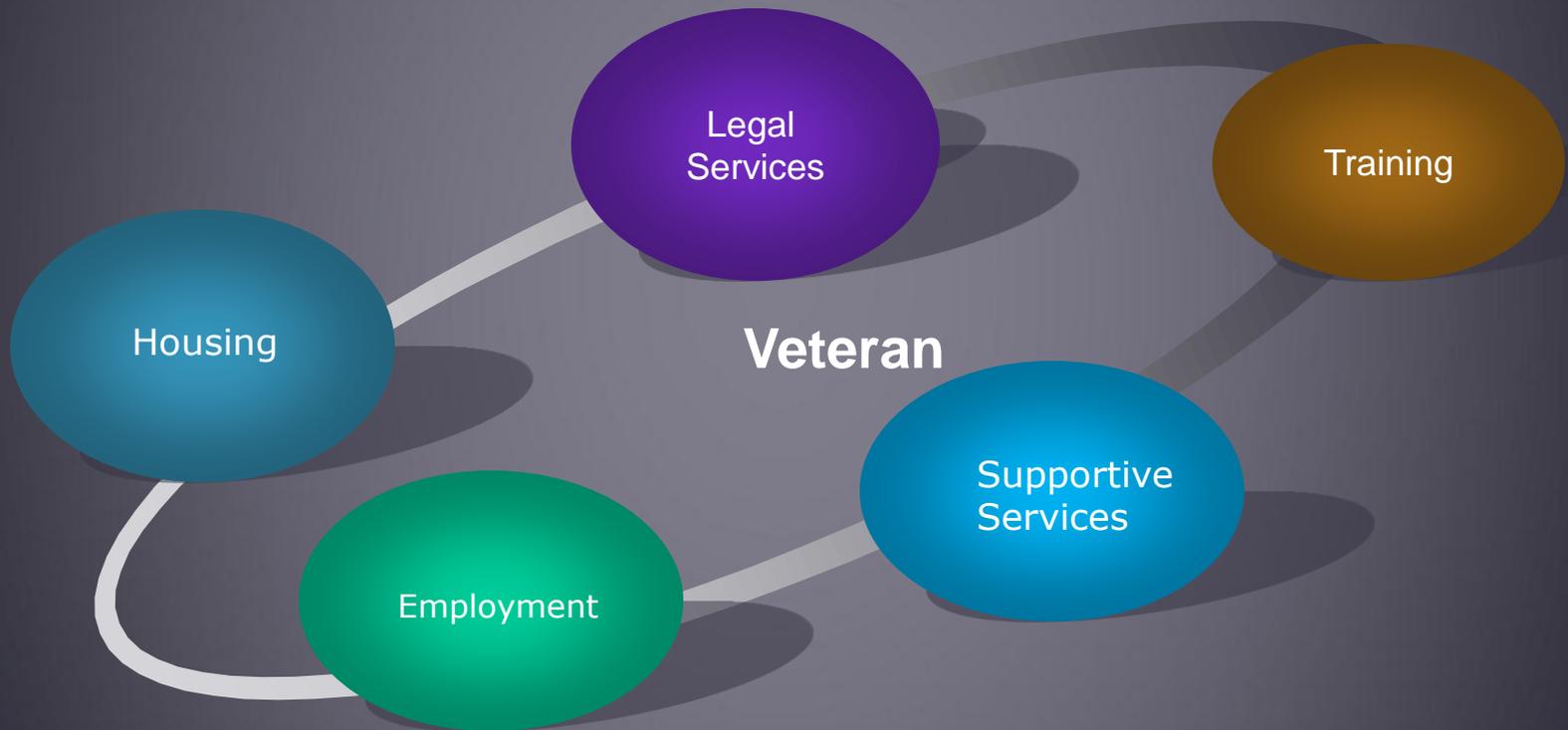
- Outreach, intake, and assessment
- Job Interview Training
- Placement and Employer Relationships
- Social populations



# Where the rubber hits the road



# Supporting Stability: Employment through HVRP



# What You Can Do

- **Connect**

- Conference
- Housing Summit
- Newsletter
- NCHV Blog:  
<http://nchv.org/index.php/coalitioncall>
- NCHV Facebook and Twitter
- NCHV Membership

- **Implement**

- Use Best Practices
- Use training services
- Use research for grant applications

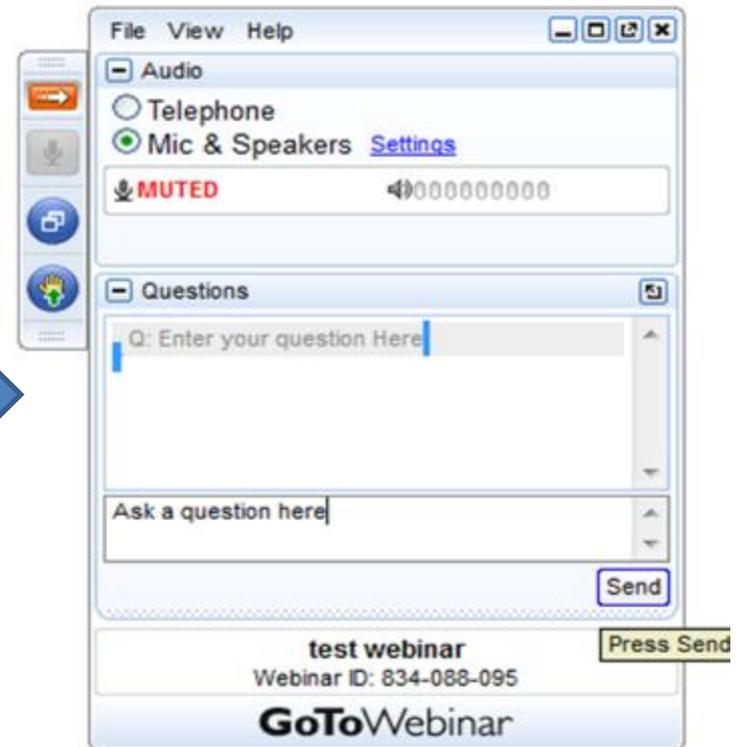
- **Advocate**

- Direct advocacy
- Subject matter expertise, and local programmatic knowledge
- **Issue awareness**
  - NCHV e-newsletter and policy updates



# Questions?

Please submit your questions via the *Questions* function found in your GoToWebinar toolbar.





# Resources

- *Opening Doors*, as amended in 2015: [http://usich.gov/opening\\_doors/](http://usich.gov/opening_doors/)
- 10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness: <http://usich.gov/population/veterans/10-strategies-to-end-veteran-homelessness/>
- Sequential Intercepts for Developing Criminal Justice and Mental Health Partnership (SAMSHA): [http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/integrating/GAINS\\_Sequential Intercept.pdf](http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/integrating/GAINS_Sequential_Intercept.pdf)
- Breaking the Cycle of Veteran Incarceration and Homelessness: Emerging Community Practices: <http://usich.gov/population/veterans/breaking-the-cycle-of-veteran-incarceration-and-homelessness/>
- No Safe Place: The Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities (National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty): [http://www.nlchp.org/documents/No Safe Place](http://www.nlchp.org/documents/No_Safe_Place)



# Resources (cont'd...)

- NCHV website: [www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org)
- Incarcerated Veterans Guide:  
<http://www.nchv.org/images/uploads/Planning%20for%20Yr%20Release%20Dec%202012.pdf>
- Stand Down overview:  
[http://www.nchv.org/images/uploads/Stand%20Down%20Overview%20-%20Updated\(5\).pdf](http://www.nchv.org/images/uploads/Stand%20Down%20Overview%20-%20Updated(5).pdf)
- HVRP Best Practices Project:  
[http://nchv.org//index.php/connect/story/hvrp\\_best\\_practices\\_resources](http://nchv.org//index.php/connect/story/hvrp_best_practices_resources)

# Stay Connected!



- U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness



Sign up for our newsletter at [usich.gov/signup](http://usich.gov/signup)



<https://www.facebook.com/USICH>



<https://twitter.com/usichgov>



<http://vimeo.com/usichgov>

- National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

<http://nchv.org/>

[hvrp@nchv.org](mailto:hvrp@nchv.org)

- VA's Homeless Programs

<http://www.va.gov/homeless/>

- VA's Veterans Justice Programs

Veterans Justice Outreach: <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO.asp>

Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp>