



# Preparing for Change: Laying the Groundwork for Implementation of Legal and Evidence Based Practices

## Travis County Pretrial Services

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# Introductions

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- Your presenters
  - Irma Guerrero
  - Ron Morgan
  - Other Travis County Pretrial Services staff in the audience
- Our goal today...

# Timeline for Our Process

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- Late 2005: Adult Probation begins EBP Implementation & Pretrial Services begins communicating with Dr. Ed Latessa on formulating a Risk Assessment Tool
- 8/2006-10/2006: Pretrial Staff collects data using risk-based questions sent by Dr. Latessa
- 12/2006-12/2007: Pretrial Staff collects data on court appearance and sends data to Univ. of Cincinnati for use in formulating risk assessment tool

# Timeline for Our Process (Cont'd)

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- 6/28/08: Pretrial Services receives a grant to partially fund a site-visit and program assessment
- 11/18-11/19/08: Dr. Marie VanNostrand conducts a training for Pretrial Staff on LEBP
- 1/26-1/29/09: Dr. VanNostrand returns to conduct site-visit and program assessment and strategic planning session
- 3/20/09: Site Visit and Program Assessment Report completed

# Evidence Based Practices...a Primer

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- “What Works”
- Pretrial Legal and Evidence Based Practices
  - EBP within a Specific Legal Framework
    - Presumption of Innocence
    - Right to Counsel
    - Right against self-incrimination
    - Right to due process of law
    - Right to equal protection under the law
    - Right to bail that is not excessive

# The Beginning of the Process

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- Travis County Pretrial Services and Travis County Adult Probation
- Implementing EBP at Adult Probation
- Identifying & Involving Stakeholders
  - Judges
  - Prosecutors
  - Defense Bar, including Mental Health Public Defender
  - Law Enforcement
  - Other County Elected Officials
  - Other County Agencies (ITS, Planning & Budget, Criminal Justice Planning, Counseling & Education)

# Seeking Outside Support: NIC Funding and Technical Assistance

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- Don't be afraid to ask for help...it is out there
  - The National Institute of Corrections as a source for funding assistance through Technical Assistance (TA) Grants
  - Travis County's experience with this process

# Softening the Ground: The Importance of Communication & Education

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- Keep an open line of communication with staff by making the goals of the process clear (department-wide meeting)
- Providing training on Legal and Evidence Based Practices for Pretrial Services Staff **and** Stakeholders in the Criminal Justice System Travis County

# Moving Forward: Site Visit and Program Assessment

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- Preparation in advance
- The importance of institutional courage and honesty
- The role of staff and stakeholders in the process
- What a site visit looks like
  - Strategic Planning Element of the Site Visit
- Results of a Site Visit
  - The Site Visit Report

# The Site Visit Report: A Road Map for Change

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- Strengths
  - Integration/role in the CJ system
  - Good work environment
  - Solid infrastructure
  - Exposure to LEBP
- Opportunities for Advancement
  - Modifications to the Interview Process
  - Modifications to the Supervision Practices
  - Implementation of Risk Based Strategies
  - Obtaining and Providing Additional Training for Staff
  - Modifications to Personnel Practices (Evaluations)

# Getting Ready to Implement: Core Planning Committee and Subcommittees

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- A method to implement that promotes participation and buy in – The Vertical Slice
  - Pretrial Services' Core Planning Committee
- What our Core Planning Committee looks like
  - Membership
  - Meetings

# Areas of Focus for the Core Planning Committee and Subcommittees

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- Using the Results of the Site-Visit to Guide the Change Process
- Our Subcommittees and Their Focus:
  - Central Booking
  - Case Management
  - Risk Assessment
  - Training
  - Evaluation
  - Coordinating

# Current Steps Underway

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- Contact with Vendors who could provide MI Training
- Create implementation strategies for the Risk Assessment
  - The Pretrial Risk Assessment – collaboration with Dr. Ed Latessa at the University of Cincinnati, Division of Criminal Justice
- Modify our interview process to make it work more effectively
- Use of the Organizational Readiness for Change Survey
  - Created by the Institute for Behavioral Research at Texas Christian University in order to assess the environment in our office concerning change

<http://www.ibr.tcu.edu/pubs/datacoll/commtrt.html>

# Looking Forward

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- Moving down the road to change...
  - Subcommittees address each individual charge in a strategic, measured manner with a recommended means of implementing changes
  - Plans for implementation are presented to the Core Committee for discussion and then recommended to Administration
  - Administration approves the individual implementation plans, bringing stakeholders on board as needed to assure success
  - The plan is successfully implemented

# Comments by other Travis County Staff

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# Conclusion/Time for Questions

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## Travis County Pretrial Services

*a division of the Adult Probation Department*

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# Presenter's Contact Information

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