



# Homeless Court Update

March 8, 2016



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- Most offenses committed by the homeless aren't a threat to public safety, may be eligible for diversion, & don't require extensive punitive measures to be helped.
- Homeless courts tend to help individuals after they have entered the justice system rather than diverting them from it.
- A specialty court would not provide the tailored support that the homeless need.



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- Understanding the need
  - FY2014 – 294 homeless individuals booked in jail
  - 20% received 5 or more bookings
  - 58 unique “Front-End Users” (FEU) in FY2015
  - 76% of FY2015 offenses committed by FEUs were misdemeanors
  - 90% of FY2015 incidents were nonviolent
  - 70% of FY2015 offenses were nonviolent misdemeanors
  - 49% of FY2015 offenses were “public order” offenses
- Charge Type (FY2015) – 340 total charges for FEUs
  - 90 – Nonviolent
  - 76 – Misdemeanor
  - 70 – Nonviolent Misdemeanor
  - 50 – Public Order



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- Alternate approaches to establishing homeless court:
  - MeckFUSE is a 45 unit Housing First Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program for individuals experiencing homelessness with at least four arrests in the last five years.
  - The creation of a Homeless Justice Team (HJT) consisting of a licensed mental health clinician, a senior social worker, & a peer support specialist.
    - The HJT will divert the homeless from the justice system when possible by meeting them where they are, and connecting them with resources to help prevent low-level offenses.
- If diversion is not possible, HTJ will work with the courts & the jail to help the individual exit the system.



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