

Atlanta/Fulton County Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative Program Evaluation Request for Proposals

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Application Due: Friday, March 31st

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Overview

The Atlanta/Fulton County Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative (“PAD”) establishes a coordinated response between law enforcement and social service providers to divert people out of the criminal legal system who may be struggling with unmet mental health needs, substance addiction, or extreme poverty. The pilot program will launch in July 2017 in APD Zones 5 and 6 for the 24-month pilot, which incorporates South Downtown, and parts of Midtown and Old Fourth Ward, all in Fulton County.

The Initiative is modeled after similar successful programs (known as Law Enforcement Assisted diversion or LEAD) in Seattle, WA, Santa Fe, NM, Albany, NY, and Fayetteville, NC. Evaluations out of these jurisdictions show recidivism reduced by up to 60% and improved wellbeing for individuals and communities. Pre-arrest diversion is different from pre-trial diversion programs because it happens before a person has been arrested, booked, or spent time in court or jail. This saves money, certainly, but more importantly it saves that person from having an(other) arrest on their record and limits the disruption of their employment, housing and other life circumstances.

In the pilot program, the process will be that an officer sees someone and has probable cause to make an arrest – and uses their discretion to instead divert them away from booking, jail and prosecution and connect them with high quality treatment and support. The officer who makes the referral declines to arrest the person and instead calls a PAD Care Navigator who comes directly to the scene in a mobile unit. From there the Care Navigator does an intake with the person to determine the services the person needs and is their contact for the duration of their time in the program. These Care Navigators will hold a Housing First and Harm Reduction philosophy and will use all resources available to ensure participants find housing, access to recovery or mental health care, employment and education.

Pre-Arrest Diversion Partners

In December of 2015, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and the Atlanta City Council passed parallel pieces of legislation creating and authorizing a Design Team and planning process for the initiative. That process has engaged 62 criminal justice system and community stakeholders in 5 planning committees to design a high-quality program and plan for sustainability and rigorous evaluation.

Design Team members included Atlanta Police Department, as well as MARTA and GSU police departments, the Solicitor’s office and the District Attorney for Fulton County, our city and county public defender’s office, social service providers, medical experts, city council members, the city’s law department, community and neighborhood leaders, victims’ rights advocates and formerly incarcerated individuals.

In 2017, the operation and guidance of Pre-Arrest Diversion will be overseen by an Operational Coordinating Group, a Policy Advisory Committee, and a Law Enforcement Subcommittee.

Timeline

- March 17, 2017: Submit proposals
- March 31, 2017: Successful bidders informed
- April 2017: Memorandum of Understanding signed
- July 2017: PAD Pilot launches*
- June 2019: PAD Pilot ends

**Evaluation timeline for process, outcome and cost benefit analysis components will be determined with Evaluation partner. Base data collection may begin when contract is signed but the components may be staggered based on evaluation strategy and funding availability.*

Goals of Pre-Arrest Diversion

The goals of the initiative are to:

- **Improve participant and community quality of life** through research-based, health oriented, and harm reduction interventions, and transform the attitudes and responses to safety, disorder, and health-related challenges.
- **Sustain funding for health interventions and social services** in our communities by capturing and reinvesting criminal justice system savings.
- **Reduce the number of people entering and repeating the criminal justice system**, including the jails, for behaviors related to drug use, mental health, sex work, and extreme poverty.
- **Shift the culture of the police department** by giving line officers new tools, and heal tensions that exist between communities and law enforcement.

Intervention

The pilot geography (which may change lightly) includes Memorial Drive, Boulevard Avenue, Eight Street, and West Peachtree/Piedmont/Spring Street. PAD diversion hours have not yet been set, but will respond to both peak hours for applicable arrests as well as feasible service delivery hours. During contact with an offending individual, responding police officers shall determine whether to offer the option of Pre-Arrest Diversion. Determination shall be made according to program eligibility criteria as well as the officers' judgement of the individual's suitability for PAD. Individuals can accept or decline an offer to conduct an eligibility screening for the program. If the individual declines he/she/they will be arrested according to police procedures. If an individual accepts, responding officers shall contact a Care Navigator, who will arrive within 30 minutes in a PAD Mobile Unit to conduct an eligibility screening. Following this screening, individuals will either be accepted into PAD, or will be found ineligible or unwilling. Individuals not accepted into PAD shall be processed for their original charge.

Upon completion of the eligibility screening, the Care Navigator will conduct an initial screening to identify acute immediate needs and to schedule a full intake interview. The individual shall then be transported to a safe location and the Care Navigator shall address acute needs (e.g., housing, medical, and safety) that day. During the full intake interview, the Care Navigator will assess factors that may contribute to the individual's encounters with law enforcement, including chemical dependency, mental health problems, lack of housing, prior legal involvement and/or gang involvement, lack of previous employment, and/or lack of education. After acute needs have been addressed, the Care Navigator shall develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP) with each participant. Care Navigators will conduct bi-weekly Case Reviews with key operational partners to discuss participants' situation and progress.

Principles of Pre-Arrest Diversion

- Harm Reduction
- Housing First
- Intensive Case Management/Care Navigation
- Trauma Informed Care

Pre-arrest Program Participants

We anticipate serving 100-150 participants in a 24-month pilot phase. Funding is being sought to extend the pilot, and the evaluation of participant outcomes will be used to support future phases of the initiative.

Eligibility criteria for participants in the pilot phase include:

- Individuals who have had multiple contacts with the criminal legal system and are at high risk for recidivism;
- Individuals who are typically excluded or underserved by existing programs (including trans people, homeless people, immigrants, people with HIV);
- Individuals who are disproportionately impacted by racial disparities in policing, arrests and sentencing.

Exclusionary criteria include:

- The individual is under the age of 17 years old;
- The individual presents a substantial risk of harm to others;
- The individual has the following *pending charges*:
 - Violent offenses: Murder, felony murder, voluntary manslaughter, kidnapping with bodily injury
 - Sex offenses: Rape, aggravated sodomy, aggravated child molestation, incest
 - Other offenses: Armed robbery, hijacking, home invasion

Police Participants

All Atlanta Police Department, MARTA Police, and Georgia State University police personnel who are selected to participate will receive training on PAD Operational Protocol, and on applying harm reduction principles to addiction, mental illness, and homelessness.

Program Evaluation Goals

- Determine if the program was implemented as intended
- Determine the effectiveness of the program in producing promised outcomes
- Identify potential problems in implementation during the program
- Evaluate whether PAD is sustainable
- Rigorously estimate potential benefits and drawbacks of expanding PAD
- Determine the acceptability of PAD for police and other stakeholders
- Share information about PAD with other jurisdictions and municipalities that may lead to wider uptake of PAD programs

At a bare minimum, we hope to determine the effectiveness of PAD in meeting its promised outcomes. If PAD is successful, we hope it may influence the uptake of similar programs across the country. We also acknowledge that PAD, and similar programs, may become targets of ideological attacks, and that effective evaluation may be an essential tool for maintaining sensible gains brought by such programs.

Evaluation Components

We need to conduct process and outcome evaluations for this initiative. Proposals may focus on some or all evaluation needs. We will need to evaluate cost-benefits, recidivism, participant quality of life, police culture, and stakeholder perceptions of the initiative and of crime. The process evaluation should include a focus on fidelity, with attention to service quality and the referral process, and as well as to systemic bias. Possible evaluation components include, but are not limited to the following:

1.) Process Evaluation

Intervention Fidelity (Program service delivery)

We are interested in whether services are implemented and received in the way they are intended (e.g., fidelity). We are interested in assessing the delivery of services from first police referral through to continued engagement with service providers. Evaluators should assess multiple components of change, such as those described by [Saunders, Evans, and Joshi \(2005\)](#).

Program Context (Stakeholder perceptions)

Stakeholders in this initiative include participants, social service providers, the Atlanta Police Department, local government, businesses, and community.

Our key questions are:

1. To what degree do stakeholders feel involved and invested in the initiative?
2. To what degree do stakeholders feel the initiative is good for the neighborhood or Atlanta?
3. How do Black, other people of color, sex worker, drug using, and trans or gender non-conforming community members perceive the police?
4. Do marginalized community members in the pilot area feel safer around police after PAD is piloted?

Program Context (Capacity)

We are interested in evaluating organizational capacity to provide PAD services among those organizations with a PAD service contract (the PAD Social Services Network members). We are also interested in learning to what degree the available capacity of organizations meets the needs of PAD participants and the program as a whole. Analysis should include what gaps in need remain for participants and the program as a whole.

2.) Outcome Evaluation

Recidivism

We are interested in evaluating recidivism among participants, as well as within the geographic area of the pilot. Proposals should focus on analysis that is feasible with 24 months of pilot data. However, please know that we would like to conduct additional recidivism analyses after the initiative is expanded.

Police culture

We are interested in to what extent the culture of the police department improves by giving line officers new tools, and heal tensions that exist between communities and law enforcement. The new tools this initiative offers line officers hold promise to effectively reduce crime, if they are adopted. To heal tensions between communities and law enforcement, police officers must respect and value the communities they serve; they have to believe they are working alongside these communities for a greater good.

Participant quality of life

We are interested in the health and quality of life of participants. The evaluator will collaborate with the PAD Social Services Network to coordinate collection of data within the social service data management systems (per MOUs with PAD-affiliated providers). Validated quality of life and physical and emotional health measures should be used. We are especially interested in mixed methods research to highlight participant stories.

3.) Cost Benefit Analysis

We are interested in the direct and ancillary costs associated with criminal justice, social service, and other systems currently interacting with the PAD participant population; and the actual costs and benefits to these systems of serving PAD participants during the course of the 24-month pilot.

The Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) may refer to a preliminary PAD CBA report (to be completed in April 2017) that details initial data sets, assumptions, and projected costs/benefits. The final CBA for the pilot phase should include a determination of total marginal costs, with set of assumptions; costs, benefits, and net present value; appropriate sensitivity analysis and tests of assumptions; and a publicly facing report of results, including:

- text and tables
- set of summary metrics and full documentation of analysis
- narrative addressing what is driving costs and benefits, how implementation affected results, whether the results are transferable to other jurisdictions, how costs could be reduced and benefits enhanced
- policy recommendations for future systems cost savings/redistribution of funds

Expected Deliverables

Please note that although this request for proposals pertains to a two-year pilot of the initiative, we intend to secure funding so the initiative may be expanded. Outcome evaluations should focus on immediate outcome evaluation goals, but should also delineate intermediate and longer-term outcome evaluation goals and data. Process evaluations should be done quarterly and a plan for continuous quality improvement past the pilot should be suggested. The Cost Benefit Analysis should occur concurrently with process evaluation.

Because we intend for this evaluation to inform a possible expansion of PAD in Atlanta, and possible replication of PAD-like programs throughout the United States, we value academic peer-reviewed and public scholarship results dissemination. We consider such dissemination to be part of the evaluation expected deliverables.

Minimum expected deliverables include:

- Internal written report of findings (technical)
- Public-facing report of findings (community-friendly)
- Public-facing Cost Benefit Analysis report
- At least one publication of findings in a peer reviewed journal
- At least one presentation of findings at a professional conference (e.g., public health, criminology or city planning conference)
- Quarterly updates on the evaluation to the Operational Coordinating Group and Policy Advisory Committee
- Presentation of final findings to the Operational Coordinating Group and Policy Advisory Committee
- At least one meeting to present final findings to stakeholders and community

Please note that the evaluator does not have to do each of these individually, but should coordinate with PAD initiative staff and Operational Working Group members to ensure that each happens.

APPLICATION

Proposals may respond to any of the three evaluation components independently (process, outcome, or cost benefit), or may respond to all components. The committee may propose a collaboration between respondents based on proposals received.

In preparing your application please use 1-inch margins and a 12-point font. We are not setting any page lengths, but please be as concise and specific as possible.

Proposals are due no later than 5:00pm EST on March 17, 2017. Proposals should be submitted electronically in PDF format with accompanying excel workbooks to LeRoy Evans at lee@prearrestdiversion.org.

Specific questions regarding the content of the RFP or the selection process should be directed to Moki Macias at moki@prearrest.diversion.org.

Proposals will be evaluated for scientific merit by a Review Team of independent professionals.

Please prepare a cover sheet for your application. The cover sheet should identify your name, relevant affiliation, and contain phone and email contact information for follow-up questions.

Application Checklist

- Cover sheet (pdf)
- Application (pdf)
 - Background and CV
 - Analytic approach
 - Recommended process/outcome evaluation
 - Deliverables and dissemination plan
 - Timeline
 - Budget
- Evaluation Matrix (excel)
- Timeline (excel)
- Budget (excel)

Bidder Qualifications

The ideal evaluator will have prior experience working in a community-based research setting, experience communicating research findings to both community and academic audiences, and prior experience evaluating criminal justice and/or harm reduction-based service programs. Bidders must have a doctoral degree in which they received program evaluation training, **or** a master's degree in a relevant field (e.g., criminology, social work, public health) combined with a minimum of two years' program evaluation experience.

Other qualifications include:

- Academic and employment experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis or program evaluation
- Familiarity with concepts in health planning initiatives and/or criminology
- Commitment and experience with public scholarship/dissemination of research findings

- Experience/comfort working for racial justice, with trans and gender non-confirming individuals, and with sex workers
- Familiarity with harm reduction and trauma-informed care philosophies
- Connection to or familiarity with Atlanta
- Ability to commit at least two years to program evaluation
- Ability to coordinate with other evaluators, multiple initiative committees and staff, and diverse stakeholders
- An entrepreneurial, flexible and creative approach to complex problems

Background

Please provide an overview of your organization—if applicable—and yourself. Please describe your organization’s orientation to community relations, percent cut of incoming funds, resources that may assist with evaluation (e.g., students or staff), and involvement with trans and gender non-confirming people as employees and/or as clients. If you are with an organization other than an academic institution and department, please describe your organization’s evaluation experience. In providing your personal background, please address bidder qualifications as well as your experience and/or orientation to the Pre-Arrest Diversion goals and principles. Please include a CV with your application.

Analytic Approach

Please describe the aims of your proposed evaluation and provide an overview of your research design. Please explain your choice of research design and address issues of control comparison, research validity, and statistical power. Mixed methods proposals are encouraged, as is the use of validated measures.

Recommended Evaluation

Please describe the specific process, and/or outcome, and/or cost benefit analysis dimensions you recommend to evaluate, and how. Your proposal may address any combination of the three components or all three. Please provide an Evaluation Matrix that details specific research questions, how they relate to program goals and/or principles, as well as what data and analyses you will use to answer your research questions. Your Evaluation Matrix and narrative together should show the scientific merit of your proposed evaluation, as well as your intended scope of work.

Deliverables and Dissemination Plan

Please describe deliverables for your intended scope of work/proposed evaluation. Please also describe your plan for academic peer-reviewed and public scholarship results dissemination.

Timeline

We request that you provide your timeline as a standalone document. Evaluation timeline for process, outcome and cost benefit analysis components will be determined with Evaluation partner and may be staggered based on evaluation strategy and funding availability.

Budget

The anticipated budget range for all Evaluation components is \$70-90,000. The authorized indirect rate for academic institutions is 10%. Please prepare a spreadsheet showing a projected budget for this project. In your application narrative please justify your budget.