



ADULT REDEPLOY ILLINOIS

Cook County - Adult Redeploy Illinois (ACT Court)

Goals and ARI background: *ARI provides financial incentives to local jurisdictions that design evidence-based programs to supervise and treat non-violent offenders in the community instead of sending them to state prisons. ARI is based on the premise that local jurisdictions can reduce crime and the costs of the criminal justice system by understanding and addressing the reasons why people commit crimes. Results expected with ARI include reduced prison overcrowding, lowered cost to taxpayers, and an end to the expensive and vicious cycle of crime and incarceration.*

Start date: October 2013; First enrollment: March 2014

Program model: Access to Community Treatment - Problem-Solving Court

Need for ARI in Cook County: A planning group of key stakeholders determined that while current specialty courts in Cook County successfully target many individuals with serious substance abuse disorders at both a high risk of reoffending and of being sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), many more justice-involved individuals would benefit from community-based services. The Access to Treatment Court (ACT) expands on the success of problem-solving courts in Cook County and begins treatment in the community instead of in a correctional setting. Key program components and assumptions include: substance abuse as a public health and criminal justice issue; incarceration of some low-level drug defendants results from an inability to post bond instead of a public safety risk; most drug possession defendants lack health insurance and access to treatment; the Affordable Care Act provides new access to treatment, initially through the Cook County Medicaid Waiver; early acknowledgement of substance abuse, rapid access to treatment, and decreasing time between arraignment to disposition are key components to the success of low-level substance abuse defendants.

Evidence-based/promising practices in use: Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) assessment, cognitive behavioral therapy, drug court

Target population and reduction goals: In recent years (2012-2014), Cook County committed an annual average of 6,819 ARI-eligible (non-violent, probationable) individuals to the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). The Cook County ACT Court target population consists of offenders newly arrested for Class 4 Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance or Class 3 and 4 Retail Theft offenses with criminal histories of at least three prior felony convictions, one prior IDOC commitment, and no disqualifying convictions. Through evidence-based interventions, Cook County pledges to reduce IDOC commitments from this target population by 25%, or by a minimum of 73 individuals a year.

Overview of jurisdiction: Located in the northeastern section of Illinois, Cook County is the second most populous county in the nation, with a population of over 5 million. The City of Chicago, the most densely populated Illinois city, has a population of nearly 3 million. The Circuit Court of Cook County is the largest of the 23 judicial circuits in Illinois, and one of the largest unified court systems in the world. It has more than 400 judges who serve the residents of Cook County within the City of Chicago and its 126 surrounding suburbs. Cook County jail annual admissions have exceeded 75,000 per year since 1991, and since 2000 at least half of all felony sentences to prison from Cook County were for the least serious felony crimes. More than 1.2 million cases are filed each year.

Program model:

In the post-plea ACT Court, participants meeting legal, criminogenic, and behavioral health criteria have rapid access to community-based treatment and enrollment in the Cook County Medicaid Waiver program. The 18-month program (with potential for early completion as early as 12 months) consists of court-supervision and community-based treatment and staff include a Judge, two probation officers, two Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC) Case Managers, a Resource Coordinator, an Assistant Public Defender, an Assistant State's Attorney, a Project Manager and community treatment providers. The program also includes the planning and integration of new case management technology, collaboration with the existing Justice and Health Initiative (JHI) through a leadership role in the JHI community provider advisory council, community service projects for court participants and the exploration of family involvement.

Pathways into program:

The ACT Court employs a multi-stage "triage" admission process consisting of (1) legal eligibility screen; (2) basic behavioral assessment to determine appropriateness for ACT and defendant's determination about whether or not to participate; and (3) in-depth clinical assessment to tailor treatment program. Defendants meeting all of the objective criteria for the program are offered the choice between the ACT Court and traditional criminal justice process. Defendants agreeing to enter the program typically begin at their first court date following arraignment.

Key partners:

Program agency and fiscal agent: Office of the Chief Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County

Key partners/stakeholders: Cook County Public Defender's Office; Cook County State's Attorney's Office; Adult Probation Department; Treatment Alternatives for a Safe Communities, Inc. (TASC); Cook County Sheriff's Office; Cook County Justice Advisory Council; Circuit Court of Cook County; community treatment providers; local and national court consultants.

Collaborating technical assistance, social service, and treatment providers: Center for Court Innovation; Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice; Gateway Foundation; Haymarket Center; National Center for State Courts; South Suburban Council on Alcoholism; TASC

ACT Court steering committee members: Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division (Chair); Director of Information Technology, Office of the Chief Judge; Court Administrator, Criminal Division; Director of Adult and Juvenile Services, TASC; Chief Probation Officer, Adult Probation; Executive Director, Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice; First Assistant, Public Defender's Office; Presiding Judge, ACT Court; Executive Director, Justice Advisory Council; Director of Provider Relations, CountyCare, Cook County Health and Hospital System; representative, Community Behavioral Health Care Association of Illinois; representative from the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association