

LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION PROGRAM (LEAD) SLATED TO BEGIN IN CLACKAMAS COUNTY

The Clackamas County District Attorney's Office, working in conjunction with the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, Health, Housing and Human Services, and Central City Concern are scheduled to begin the new Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program (LEAD) in January 2019. LEAD is a pre-charging diversion program that seeks to reduce future criminal behavior by individuals involved in low level drug offenses in a targeted geographical area that has a higher population of the chronically homeless. The goal is to emphasize addiction treatment on the front end of the criminal justice process.

This is how it works. An individual is found to be in possession of a small amount of controlled substance by law enforcement officer. If the individual is determined by the law enforcement officer to be eligible for the LEAD program, the individual will not be taken to jail and a handoff is made by the deputy to an on call Social Services caseworker/case manager. The individual must then complete an in-depth assessment as directed by the case manager within 14 days of referral and sign a release of information allowing information to be shared by LEAD partners. The investigating officer will write an arrest report and forward it to the District Attorney's Office for review. A Deputy District Attorney will review the report to ensure compliance with program criteria. If the individual completes the in-depth assessment and follow up treatment and meets all other LEAD criteria, no criminal charges will be filed on the individual case. If the individual does not follow through, criminal charges will be filed. To be eligible, the individual cannot be involved in the sale of or possess substantial quantities of the controlled substance, and cannot be on probation or have any other active criminal cases.

This program has previously been implemented in King County, WA and has been successful in reducing recidivism among the population of individuals who have participated in the program. This is a pilot program in Clackamas County and the District Attorney's Office intends to track these cases so outcomes can be appropriately measured.