

# FROM TAXI TO TAKEOFF:

*Planning and Implementing Early Diversion in Los Angeles and Beyond*

Inspired by learnings from LA County's Rapid Diversion and Prefiling Diversion programs – and grounded in the Center for Court Innovation's long history of launching and operating diversion programs – this guide summarizes recommendations for jurisdictions seeking to increase community-based care alongside criminal justice reform.



**Carefully consider how to make early diversion programming most impactful for participants.**



Best practices implore the use of broad inclusion criteria and early diversion.



**Create infrastructure to effectuate diversion at the early stages of a case.**

Embedding service navigators and clinicians in courthouses or booking stations means that participants can be connected to resources quickly and successfully.



**Prioritize the client profile over charge.**

Ideally, programs should seek participants based on their need and potential to benefit from programming rather than a rigid charge-based approach to eligibility.



**Each diversion site may operate differently.**

Even within the same jurisdiction, differences in operations and culture around diversion are to be expected; try to develop an adaptable model.



**Seek out cross-sector collaborations.**

Specifically in the program planning phase, gathering diverse perspectives can lead to inspired innovations and more wholistic programming.

**There are many recipes for success in diversion.**



Leveraging existing infrastructures, respecting local cultures, and building cross-sectional alliances can take many forms.

**Data should be used to promote equitable practices for diversion.**



Data should be used at all stages to ensure the target population is being served.



**Use relevant and detailed data at the planning stage.**

To ensure equity and effectiveness of programming, it is necessary to dig into not just aggregate data, but data reflecting the target population.



**Review program performance on an ongoing basis.**

To ensure the right people are being served, program data needs to be audited and reviewed frequently.



**Make data planning a team effort.**

Data collection typically involves inputs from a variety of stakeholders. Bringing all voices to the table as soon as possible will ensure data is accurate and complete when it's needed.



**Clarify roles and responsibilities around data management.**

Many decisions need to be made regarding data, including who is responsible for collection, cleaning, storing, and analysis.

**Planning for data is planning for success.**



Taking time to make sure that the processes surrounding data use and data collection are prioritized will set a program up for long term success.

**Full report available here:** <https://www.courtinnovation.org/publications/taxi-to-takeoff-early-diversion-los-angeles>

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