



PRESS RELEASE

FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National County Government Month: Delivering Quality of Justice Programs in Franklin County

April 12, 2019 – Chambersburg, PA – The Franklin County Commissioners proclaim April as National County Government Month. Led by the National Association of Counties (NACo), National County Government Month is an annual celebration of county government and the delivery of people-centered services. This year's theme is "Connecting the Unconnected" and Franklin County will be offering a series of news releases highlighting specific areas where local government acts as a link between individuals, entities and resources.

"The services provided by the county are all centered around promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all Franklin County residents," said Commissioner Chairman Dave Keller.

Franklin County strives to deliver the highest quality of service to meet the unique needs of local residents. To meet this goal, county leaders implement evidence-based programs and best practices. The following are some examples of these Franklin County programs:

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) - Started in 2015, CIT represents state and local law enforcement, first responders, crisis, jail officers/staff, probation/parole officers, hospital staff, mental health professionals and advocates. The team provides safer interactions for officers and community members with a focus on the well-being of the citizens involved. Training includes de-escalating situations in the community when encountering individuals who are experiencing behavioral health crises due to mental illness and/or co-occurring substance use disorders. It also provides the information necessary to guide officers in re-directing these individuals into emergency behavioral health facilities. The CIT program currently has over 150 graduates. Benefits of this program are a decrease in use of force, decreased arrests, and the development of community partnerships between law enforcement, mental health services and families living with mental health issues.

Co-responder Program – Through this program, individuals identified as being in crisis are diverted from the criminal justice system and connected with community-based supportive services and natural supports. When police are dispatched to an incident where the individual's behavior does not escalate to the level of police officer custody, the mental health co-responder is called to begin a screening and risk assessment process to determine the needed level of care. In addition to helping reduce criminal justice system involvement for individuals who may be living with a mental illness, intellectual or developmental disability, autism, and or co-occurring disorder, the program has the added benefit of helping to connect senior citizens with services. Over 350 individuals have been served through this program, and of those, 92% have had no additional law enforcement contact. Last year, Franklin County's Co-responder program was awarded a Justice Public Safety Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) and recognized as a model program.

For additional information on Franklin County visit www.franklincountypa.gov.

Jail To Community Treatment (Vivitrol) – In early 2017, the jail implemented the Jail To Community Treatment program to help incarcerated individuals with substance use issues. The jail staff meets weekly with representatives from Drug and Alcohol, Mental Health, Adult Probation and other departments to review potential participants. Program participants receive 4-6 weeks of counseling prior to beginning this form of medication assisted treatment. Treatment and medications are then continued into the community. This sets participants up for success upon their release due to the connections created and trust built with community providers. Franklin County community providers are measuring Franklin County's success rates at an average of 74%, which is 14% higher than similar programs. Last year, the Department of Corrections (DOC) representatives visited the jail to observe the program with plans to replicate the Franklin County model in other counties.

Good Wolf Treatment Court – The Good Wolf Treatment Court (GWTC) is an alternative to incarceration in Franklin County and provides meaningful treatment to defendants whose crimes are linked to substance abuse. GWTC assists substance users in the criminal justice system in becoming sober and stable members of our community while remaining crime-free. This program is a collaborative effort involving the criminal justice system and treatment providers. The participant must accept responsibility for criminal conduct and consent to a sentence that may include incarceration as well as treatment. Five individuals have successfully graduated the program. There are currently 31 participants.

Get Back Up – To address the opioid crisis, Franklin County District Attorney and Franklin County Drug and Alcohol Department partnered to offer the Get Back Up program. The goal of the program is to divert substance users to residential treatment instead of jail which improves public safety. Substance users, or families of substance users, can walk into any county police department and request help for their, or their loved one's, substance use without being charged for a crime. This is helpful for family members who want their loved one connected to services instead of arrested.

Franklin County works collaboratively with law enforcement, the courts, the jail and human services agencies to provide the highest quality of justice for Franklin County citizens. Visit www.franklincountypa.gov for more information.



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