

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE, MENTAL HEALTH, AND  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE REINVESTMENT  
GRANT RFA#02L04GN1**

**PROPOSAL SUMMARY TO  
FROM THE  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

**EXECUTIVE PROGRAM SUMMARY**

- PROJECT TITLE:** **A Turning Point:** An expansion of the Office of the Public Defender's Pinellas County Jail Diversion Program
- LEAD ORGANIZATION:** Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit
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- PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS/ROLE:** **WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc.**  
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Licensed behavioral health services provider of shelter, treatment, case management, transitional housing, and continuing care

**PROGRAM ABSTRACT:** The Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit and its partner, WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc., propose to work in partnership with Pinellas County and the Public Safety Coordinating Council to administer a CJMHPA Reinvestment Grant of \$1.2M over 36 months. The proposed program, **A Turning Point (ATP)**, is an expansion of the Office of the Public Defender's Pinellas County Jail Diversion Program.

This unique diversion project will offer a structured shelter/treatment program to up to 100 unduplicated individuals annually (300 over 36 months). The population of focus is adults who have a substance use disorder or co-occurring mental health condition and have been charged with a crime. The primary goal of ATP is to divert high-risk individuals (high systems users) from arrest, prosecution, or incarceration to treatment and support services. Anticipated outcomes include a decrease in recidivism, relapse, and risk factors/behaviors; and increases/improvements in employment, housing stability, self-sufficiency, overall health, and social connectedness, among others.

The proposed expansion is needed because the Office of the Public Defender reports that the number of eligible individuals (chronic inebriates with co-occurring behavioral health disorders) outnumbers the capacity of its current Jail Diversion program. If selected, the Office of the Public Defender will make supporting data available for inclusion in the grant proposal to establish a strong needs statement and justification for funding.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM AND RELATED ACTIVITIES:** The Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit and its partner, WestCare Gulfcoast-Florida, Inc. propose to work in partnership with Pinellas County and the Public Safety Coordinating Council to implement **A Turning Point (ATP)**, an expansion of Office of the Public Defender's Pinellas County Jail Diversion Program.

ATP is a unique diversion program that will offer a structured shelter/treatment program of up to 90 days to male and female adults (18+) who reside in Pinellas County. Eligible participants will have a substance use disorder (many will be chronic inebriates) or a co-occurring mental health condition, have been charged with a crime, and consent to participate in a shelter/treatment program in lieu of serving jail time.

Upon identification and referral by a Forensic Diversion and Recovery Specialist assigned by the Office of the Public Defender, individuals will be admitted into WestCare GulfCoast-Florida's A Turning Point shelter where they will reside for up to 30 days (depending on individual need and progress). During the participant's stay at A Turning Point, he/she will experience withdrawal from substances (in a social model environment). Once the participant is physically and mentally able (typically 5-7 days), he/she will participate in the following services:

- Integrated screening and assessment
- Health assessment conducted by a licensed practical nurse (LPN)
- Individualized health and wellness planning (includes discharge/re-entry planning)
- Mental health evaluation and medication management (coordinated by the Office of the Public Defender)
- Individual and group counseling to explore substance abuse and criminal thinking
- Education and support groups (e.g., substance abuse, co-occurring, criminal thinking, etc.)
- Comprehensive case management services
- Access to medical care
- Individualized vocational/employment counseling and services
- Relapse prevention programming/services

The services identified above will be provided in Phase I of the program. Phase II of the program includes a guided transition into transitional housing at WestCare's Mustard Seed Inn (MSI) Transitional Housing program or transition into another form of stable housing (e.g., family home, halfway house, etc.). Grant funds will be used to pay for the first two (2) months in transitional housing at MSI. Once discharged from the shelter facility, and residing in stable housing, WestCare will offer all participants outpatient relapse prevention and support services, as well as assist clients in securing/sustaining part-time or full-time employment. The total length of the program is up to 90 days based on individual need and progress.

WestCare will assign a Coordinator/Navigator and two (2) paid Peer Recovery Advocates to work in conjunction with the Public Defender's Forensic Diversion and Recovery Specialist to maintain contact with participants for at least one year following discharge.

The proposed project will utilize evidence-based programs and practices featured in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) including, but not limited to, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Motivational Enhancement Therapy, and Seeking Safety. ATP will also utilize promising practices such as peer-based recovery support to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of treatment services for adults who have a mental illness, substance abuse disorders, or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders, and who are in, or at risk of entering, the criminal justice systems.

**NUMBER AND POPULATION SERVED:** The population of focus for the proposed program is homeless male and female adults (18+) who reside in Pinellas County, have a substance use disorder (many will be chronic inebriates), as well as, a co-occurring mental health condition, have been charged with a crime, and consent to participate in a shelter/treatment program in lieu of serving jail time. These adults will present one or more risk factors associated with relapse and recidivism (e.g., homelessness, trauma, involvement in the criminal justice

system, unemployment, etc.). The program will serve up to 100 unduplicated individuals annually or up to 300 individuals over a 36-month period.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:** The lead organization and its partner understand that the primary goal of the CJMHSA Reinvestment Grant is to divert high-risk individuals from arrest, prosecution, or incarceration to treatment and support services. Process and outcome data related to the performance measures will be collected and reported on over the 36-month program period to ensure the goal is achieved. To this end, the lead organization and its partner will include a plan in the grant application for how the project will monitor the achievement of performance measures and overall project effectiveness. An information system will also be developed to track individuals during their involvement with the program and for at least one year after discharge, including but not limited to, arrests, receipt of benefits, employment, and stable housing. The lead organization will work with Pinellas County and the Public Safety Coordinating Council to facilitate data sharing. In the grant application, the lead organization and its partners will outline the methods for collecting data on the outcomes listed below:

- The percent of participants will not be arrested while enrolled in the program.
- The percent of participants will not be arrested within one year following program discharge.
- The percent of participants not residing in a stable housing at program admission will reside in a stable housing environment within 90 days of program admission.
- The percent of participants will reside in a stable housing environment one year following program discharge.
- The percent of participants not employed at program admission, and who are physically and mentally able to be employed, who will be employed full or part time within 180 days of program admission.
- The percent of participants who are physically and mentally able to be employed will be employed full or part time one year following program discharge.
- The percent of participants who will be assisted in obtaining social security or other benefits for which they may be eligible but were not receiving at program admission.
- The percent of participants who will be diverted from a State Mental Health Treatment Facility.
- The percent of participants who will exhibit one or more decreases in risk domains (i.e., housing, employment, health, substance abuse, finances, etc.) at discharge as evidenced by a pre-and post-risk assessment tool administered by the treatment provider.

**PROGRAM BUDGET:** The Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit and its partner(s) possess the ability to comply with all requirements of RFA02LO4GN1, including match, for all three years of the grant. In regards to match, the lead organization will ensure that resources are made available in an amount equal to the total amount of the grant. The Office of the Public Defender and its partner(s) will provide match equal to 100% of funds expended.

Project partners understand that grant funding must be spent within 36 months from the date of the award letter, and that Implementation and Expansion Grants will not be renewed at the end of the 3-year grant period. The Office of the Public Defender and WestCare will work together to propose strategies to promote service sustainability at a level that continues to deliver the intended project benefits of the initiative after the termination of a grant award.

**GRANT WRITING CAPACITY:** The lead organization, Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit, and its partner, WestCare Gulfcoast-Florida, Inc. guarantee that a full grant application, in response to RFA02L04GN1, will be provided to the County by March 30, 2020, to allow for a full final review and submission by the County. WestCare will assign a full-time grant writer to the project who has extensive experience leading the preparation of state and federal grant applications, including several federal grant applications written in partnership with the Sixth Judicial Circuit for Pinellas County. A full-time staff member from the Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit, will also be assigned to assist with grant preparation activities. Both the lead organization and WestCare have extensive experience administering local, state, and federal grants.

**ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS:**

**Lead Organization: Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit:** The Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit, has three offices and represents Pasco and Pinellas Counties. Since 1997, the office has been led by Bob Dillinger. The primary function of the Public Defender's Office is to provide legal representation for indigent adults facing criminal charges and to juveniles involved in delinquency, dependency or crossover cases. Under Mr. Dillinger's leadership, the office provides many other services as well including Jail Diversion, Homeless Outreach, Mobile Medical Unit programs. The Public Defender's Office employs three Master's level LMHCs, three Master's level therapists/social workers, and one Bachelor's level disposition specialist. [www.wearethehope.org](http://www.wearethehope.org)

**Partnering Organization: WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc.:** Since 2001, WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc. has exhibited excellence in the provision of behavioral health and human services to residents of Pasco and Pinellas Counties. The organization is part of the national WestCare network of nonprofit, community-based organizations operating in 17 U.S. states and 3 U.S. territories (founded in 1973). WestCare's workforce possesses an in-depth understanding of the major contributing factors to behavioral health disorders, as well as, the effective, evidence-based methods to ameliorate these issues. WestCare specializes in helping people who are indigent, have co-occurring disorders, or are involved with the criminal justice system. WestCare's programs including outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment, emergency shelter, youth programs, rapid rehousing, transitional housing, and permanent housing. [www.westcare.com](http://www.westcare.com)

**The lead organization and its partner are pleased to provide any additional information requested.**