

Building Effective Partnerships with Continuums of Care to Increase Housing Options for People Leaving Prisons and Jails

Second Chance Month Fieldwide Webinar

The Council of State Governments Justice Center

April 27, 2022

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The Council of State Governments Justice Center

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.



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Presentation Outline

- Welcome, Introductions, and Organization Overview
- Strategies for Working with CoCs to Prioritize People in Reentry
- Albany, NY: The Next Step Rapid Re-Housing Program for Returning Citizens
- Cuyahoga County, OH: Housing Responses for Familiar Faces Initiative
- Questions and Answers

Presenters

- Charles Francis, Project Manager, Behavioral Health, CSG Justice Center
- Liz Hitt, Executive Director, Homeless and Travelers Aid Society, Albany, NY
- Meghan Patton, Specialty Court Administrator, Cuyahoga County (OH) Common Pleas Court

Attendee Introductions

Please introduce yourself using the chat function:

- Name
- Agency/Jurisdiction

Strategies for Working with CoCs to Prioritize People in Reentry

The Council of State Governments Justice Center

Continuum of Care (CoC) Basics

Definition and Role	Coordinates local responses to homelessness, coordinates assessments and prioritization of resources, oversees some rental assistance (e.g., rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing)
Engagement	Work toward ensuring that everyone (at risk or experiencing homelessness) is assessed through the local Coordinated Entry process
	Leadership of CoC can and should include criminal justice stakeholders, including probation and parole
	Continuums of Care receive a competitive funding boost by having criminal justice agency partnerships through NOFO process

Coordinated Entry Assessment



- Assessment happens through Access Points using **standardized assessment tools** (often VI-SPDAT)
- Community-wide assessment process that leads to **prioritization for HUD-funded resources** based on housing/service need and community priorities
- **In-reach** often critical for assessment in corrections setting; also helps connect to other services

Coordinated Entry Prioritization



- Governed by **written standards**—required by HUD, but significant flexibility allowed
- **HUD-required and local priorities** determine who is prioritized for limited housing and supportive service assistance
- **Local Continuum of Care boards** responsible for setting prioritization policies

Coordinated Entry Prioritization (cont.)



- Ability to prioritize people in reentry can be **limited by some HUD policies:**
 - ❑ 90-day limit on stays in “institutions” (incarceration, in-patient psychiatric)
 - ❑ Definition of “chronic homelessness”
 - ❑ Many communities have found ways to address these barriers
- HUD requirements and guidance emphasize meaningful integration of **people with lived experience** into prioritization process and decisions

HUD Efforts to Support Prioritization

Despite some policy obstacles, HUD has also taken actions to help communities prioritize people reentering:

- ❑ Sec. Fudge's 2021 guidance encourages a reentry focus for **American Rescue Plan (ARP) Emergency Housing Vouchers**
- ❑ HUD has also issued guidance encouraging housing providers to **lower criminal record barriers**

Partnering with Your Local CoC



Key point: Criminal justice and housing agencies serve a **shared population** across systems



Think about what funding and other **resources you can bring to the table**



Focus on **long-term relationship building and partnership**

The Next Step Rapid Re-Housing Program for Returning Citizens

Homeless and Travelers Aid Society, Albany, NY

The Problem

- 36.5 percent of people on parole in Albany County, NY, are homeless upon arrival.
- People on parole have great difficulties accessing housing, perpetuating a cycle of incarceration and homelessness.
- Within Albany County, a significant portion of people on parole who are homeless stay at the Capital City Rescue Mission. The shelter does not provide case management, housing searches, or employment searches unless guests agree to enroll in a nine-month program called “New Life.”

Next Step Program Basics

- 6-bed single room occupancy (SRO) development
- Opened 9/24/18 with funds obtained through CoC re-allocation process
- Budget: \$60,000
- Uses a Housing First approach
- All applications go through Coordinated Entry system
- Target population: Men experiencing homelessness who have recently been released from NY state prison
- Case manager is a formerly incarcerated man

What's Working

- Partnership with Albany Housing Authority and their willingness to consider applications from people with a nonviolent history
- Excellent relationship with the Office of Parole

Obstacles

- Clients often present with no ID—unable to secure employment
 - ❑ 60 percent of people on parole in Albany County lack documentation needed to secure NY state issued ID upon release. Majority only have an ID card issued by the discharging prison.
- Lack of transportation during odd hours when low-wage or “starter” jobs are more easily available
- Substance use
- Landlord reluctance to rent to people with criminal records
- Lack of affordable studio and/or one-bedroom apartments

Takeaways

- Importance of maintaining and nurturing relationship with Parole
- Staff with lived experience make all the difference
- Housing First approach matters but must be balanced with the conditions of parole/probation
- Encourage employment at every turn
- Need to learn more about incarceration-related PTSD
- Never give up!

Questions?

Contact Information:

Homeless and Travelers Aid Society
Albany, New York

(518)463-2124 x 229 | www.hatas.org info@hatas.org

Housing Responses for Familiar Faces Initiative

***Better outcomes for people who are high utilizers of jail with
severe mental illnesses***

Cuyahoga County, OH

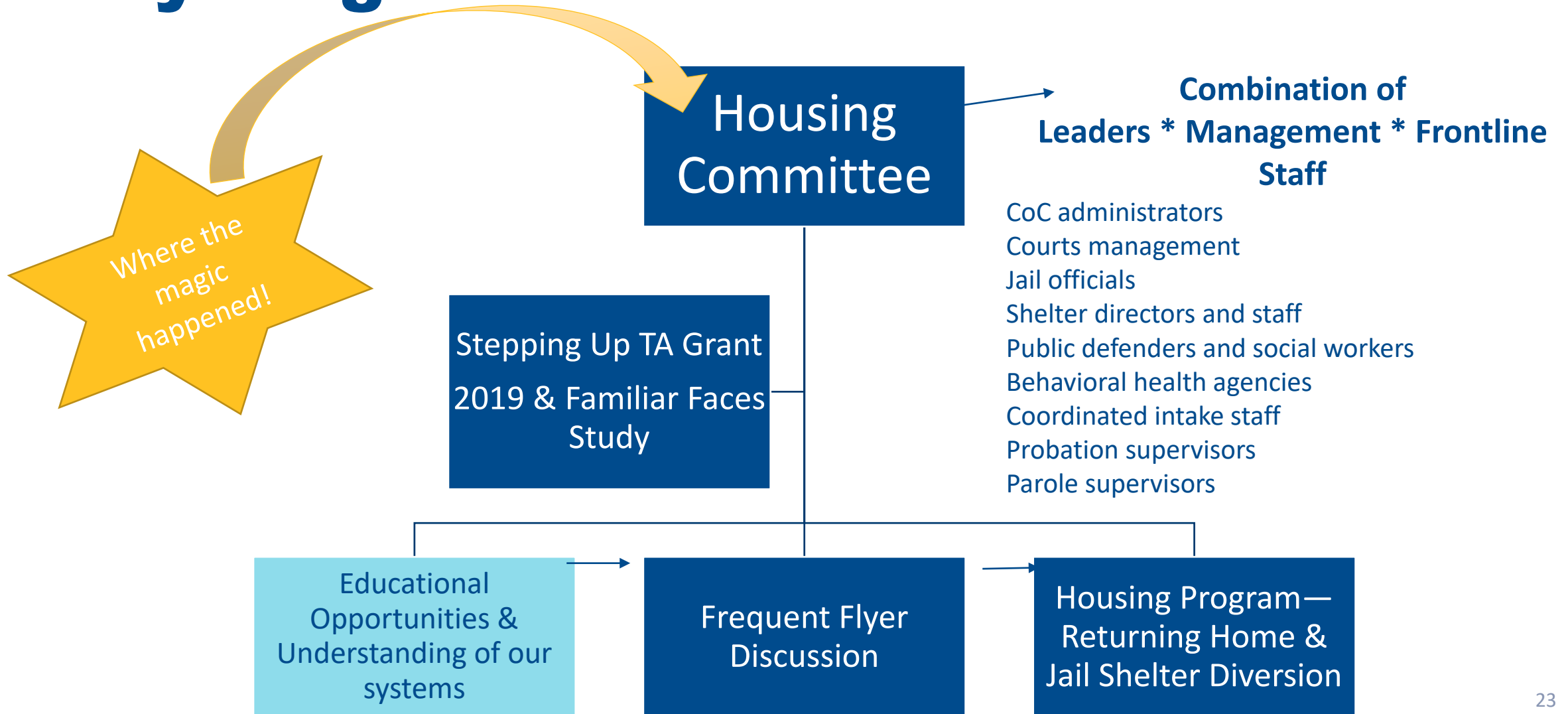
Cuyahoga County Stepping Up

Cuyahoga County's work with Stepping Up

- In 2017, Sequential Intercept Mapping workshop with stakeholder agencies
- Stepping Up Co-Chairs
 - **Honorable Hollie L. Gallagher**, Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Court Chair
 - **Robert Coury**, County Executive Office, Chief Officer of Public Safety
 - **Scott Osiecki**, ADAMHS Board, CEO
 - **Dr. Julia Bruner**, MetroHealth Correctional Medicine, Director
- Prioritized 5 areas of improvement
 - Area 1: Validated tool and screening process
 - Area 2: Information sharing
 - Area 3: Behavioral health linkage and discharge planning
 - Area 4: Psychiatric correctional improvements
 - **Area 5: Housing**
- Area 5: Housing
 - Committee began meeting in early 2018
 - Education and collaboration was KEY!



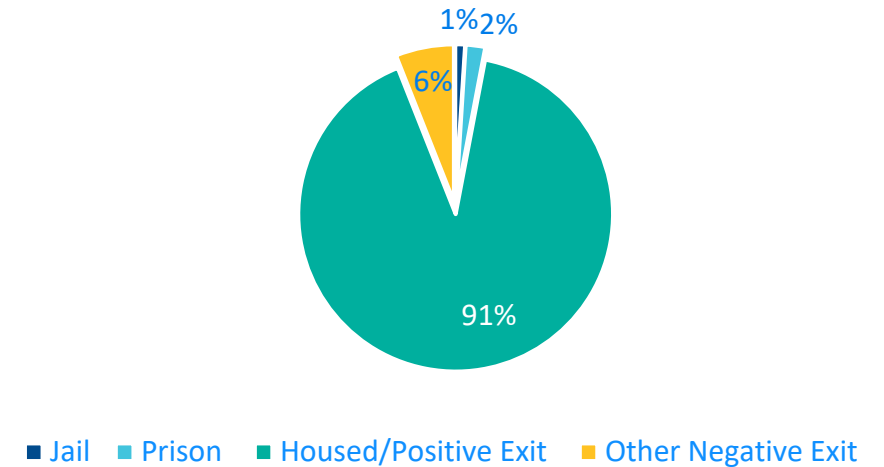
Development of Returning Home Cuyahoga



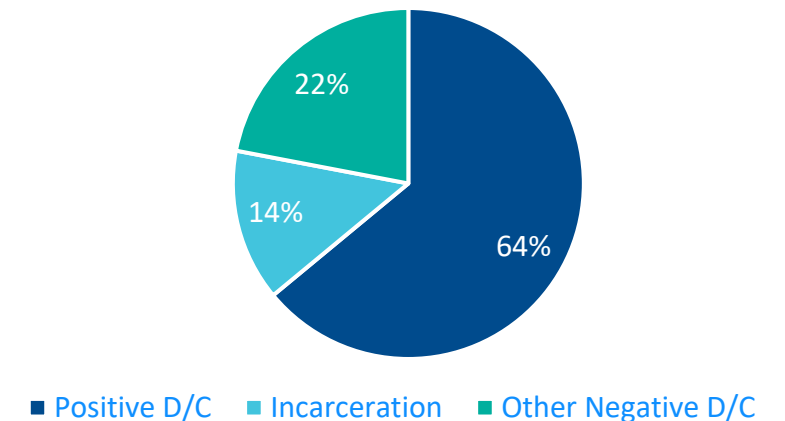
Returning Home Ohio FY2020 Outcomes

- Percentage of tenants who remained housed in the RHO program or exited for clearly positive reasons: 91 percent
- Percentage of tenants who made progress or achieved goals stated on their treatment plans: 89 percent
- Percentage of tenants with income (71), percent employed (32) and percentage with an increase in benefits (96)
- Percentage of clients participating in meaningful activities: 84 percent

Overall Recidivism



Recidivism of Total Discharges



Development of Returning Home Cuyahoga

Leverage the success of a similar program
from the state level

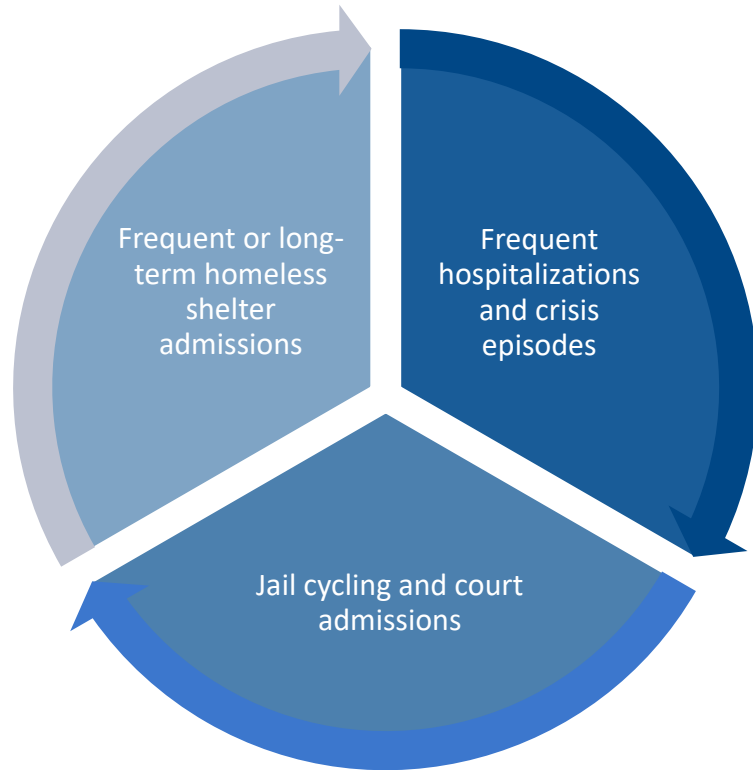
Presented the **problem and solution**
to mental health court judges and
administration

Identified partners
Funding
Creation of
contracts and MOUs



Returning Home Cuyahoga

A New Housing Program for MHDD clients *Identifying Familiar Faces*



Partnership with Frontline Services and EDEN Housing:

- 15 participants per year
- Housing First Model approach
- Independent apartment at scattered sites
- Wraparound intensive MH services



Returning Home Cuyahoga Prioritization of Referrals

How do we select individuals for the RHC Program?

- Prioritization Tool was developed to determine who most fits the program criteria/mission
- Tool focuses on our three risk areas (incarceration, hospitalizations, and homelessness)
- Additional considerations:
 - Focus on number of incarcerations in the last year and duration, as some people's court processes are lengthy
 - Consideration of length of homelessness as a priority scoring option is still ongoing
- Monthly meetings with stakeholders (MH agency, probation, court) to review scores and choose new participants

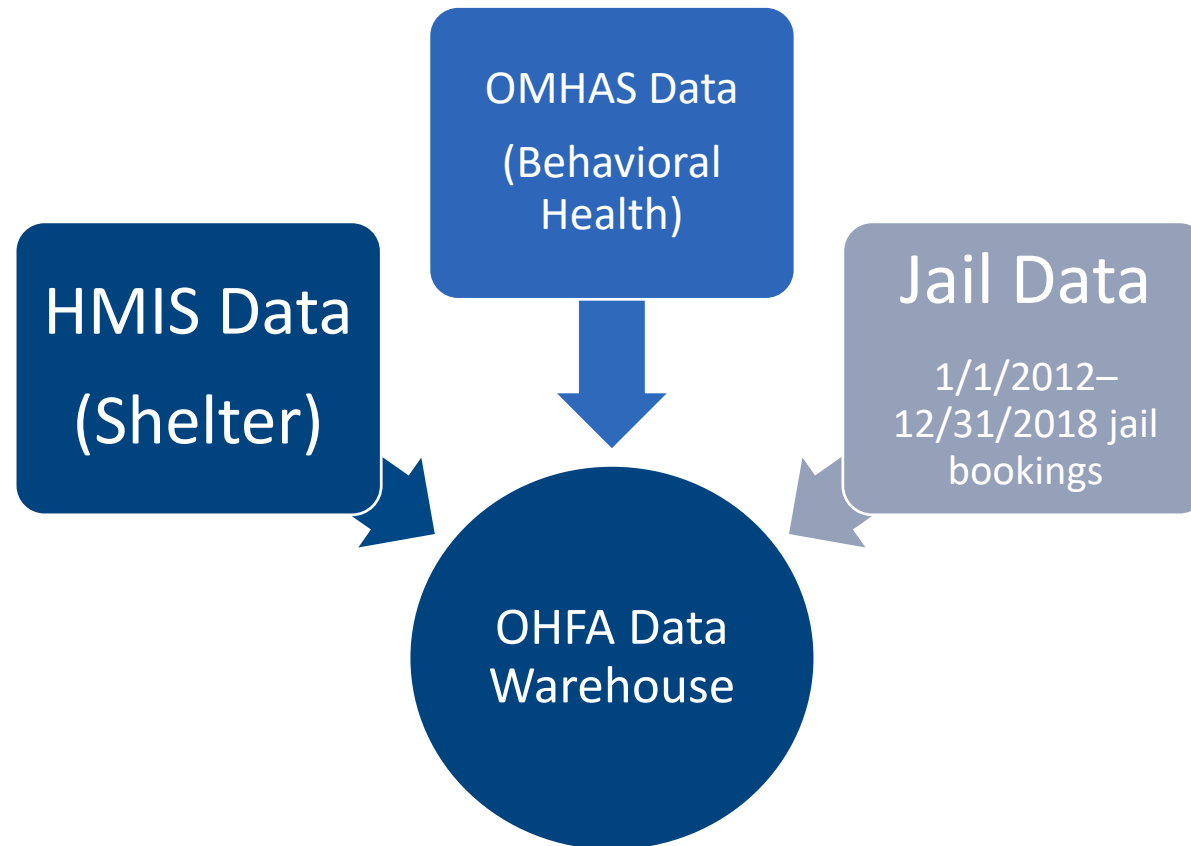
Prioritization Score	
Please check off the most appropriate answer	Points Awarded
Incarceration History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Currently in Jail •In CCJ 3-6 times in the past year •In CCJ 7 or more times in the last year •In CCJ for 3-6 months during the past year •In CCJ for 7-9 months during the past year •In CCJ for 10-12 months during the past year <p>*If in CCJ 7+ times, only check box for 7+. If in CCJ for more than 7 months, only check off the most appropriate answer reflecting the total amount of months</p>	1 1 2 1 2 3
Hospital Utilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2 or more hospitalizations in the past year 	1
Homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Currently couch surfing/doubled up •Currently in Shelter or on the Streets 	1 2
Total Score (max of 9 points)	—

Returning Home Cuyahoga

First brief look at outcomes over 7-month period:

Progress Indicator	Before Participation in RHC	During Participation in RHC
Incarceration	15 total jail cycling episodes (year prior)	0 experienced incarceration
Jail Days	616 total jail days in 2019	0 experienced incarceration
Hospitalizations	23 previous hospitalizations (year prior)	0 experienced hospitalizations
Homelessness	4 clients experienced chronic homelessness (year prior)	0 experienced homelessness

Companion Initiative: Cuyahoga County Familiar Faces Data Match Pilot Study



Goal of Research Study:

To inform our county regarding the intersection of shelter, behavioral health, and criminal justice trends to better create policy, service coordination and resource allocation.

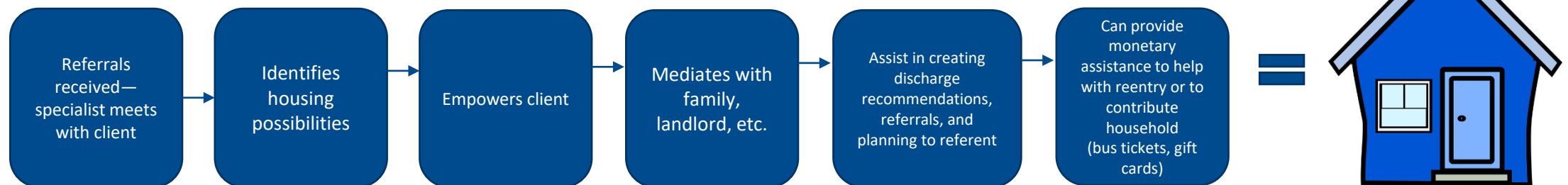
Companion Initiative: Jail Shelter Diversion

Bringing shelter diversion techniques and mediation directly into the jail setting to divert people from entering the shelter system

- The court has partnered with Cleveland Mediation Center to incorporate shelter diversion and mediation techniques when discharge planning for individuals rather than waiting until they are in the community.
- **This short-term intervention can have long-term impact in preventing a person from entering the shelter system.**
- **Target population:** Incarcerated, currently homeless, or in unstable housing and on pretrial or probation
- **Who can refer:** Bond investigators, pretrial officers, probation officers, judges/bailiffs, attorneys, incarcerated people
- **What to expect:** The specialist can assist the client in figuring out better or other alternatives than entering the shelter system.



Cleveland Mediation Center
A Program of FrontLine Service



Questions?

Contact Information:

Meghan E. Patton
Specialty Court Administrator
Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court
(216) 443-5468 | cpmep@cuyahogacounty.us

Questions and Answers

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info@nationalreentryresourcecenter.org



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