



CITY OF EL PASO

Diversion Center Services

Goal 2: Set the Standard for A Safe & Secure City
Assistant Chief Juan F. Briones

Content

- Purpose
- Diversion Center
- Procedure for Diversion Center
- Offenses that Qualify -Examples
- Benefits
- Interlocal Agreement and Services



Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to provide diversion center services. The Diversion Center would be committed to meeting the evolving needs of the community, Emergence Health Network (EHN) specializes in providing services for individuals dealing with mental health challenges and substance use disorders, among others. The Extended Observation Unit (“EOU”), which offers immediate treatment for those in a mental health crisis, has served 4,190 individuals with low acuity in the past five years. Of those individuals, 42% were brought to the unit by law enforcement. This strategic expansion aims to reduce dependence on law enforcement and emergency room services by facilitating the diversion of individuals to alternative treatments, aligning with EHN's commitment to supporting the community's diverse needs.



Diversion Center

A Diversion Center will allow for our El Paso Police Officers to divert people taken into custody for low level offenses, rather than booking them into jail. This will be in line with our Strategic Plan for finding alternatives to incarceration as well as TX CCP Art. 16.23. The Diversion Center will also allow for our officers to be back on the field in a shorter amount of time than it would take if they have to book a person into jail. Most important, these people being diverted can get into a treatment plan which will help them to prevent from re-offending.

Procedure for Diversion Center

Officers may divert that person to the Diversion Center in lieu of Jail when Officers have detained a person for a low-level offense and meet the criteria necessary per Art. 16.23 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and the person is not in a mental health crisis that would require an emergency detention, but is in need of mental health and/or substance abuse treatment and the offense committed appears to be a result of a mental health illness.

Officers will exercise discretion in deciding if a person is eligible for diversion, considering the totality of the circumstances.



Offenses that qualify for Jail Diversion - Examples

- Graffiti/Tagging
- Littering
- Issued Bad Check
- Public Intoxication
- False Alare or Report
- Criminal Trespass

Benefits

- Diversion from criminal justice systems.
- Offering central drop off location.
- Preventing unnecessary delays in evaluations.
- Freeing up emergency room hospital beds.



SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED BY EHN

The Diversion Center will operate a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week unit, welcoming law enforcement drop-offs and walk-ins. It employs a systematic triage and care coordination process, facilitating appropriate referrals and delivering evidence-based interventions through the Sequential Intercept Model to promote recovery and overall well-being. This initiative embodies Emergence Health Network's commitment to redefining approaches to justice-involved individuals, fostering resilience, and building a safer, healthier community. We intricately plan key operational components to achieve several overarching objectives.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED BY THE CITY

The City agrees to work collaboratively with EHN and the El Paso County District Attorney's Office on diversion efforts to:

- Provide monthly list of encounters with individuals brought to the Diversion Center.
- Perform initial safety assessment on individual and ensure that diversion is from an allowable offense.
- Transport individual(s) to the Diversion Center or supervision of the individual
- Complete necessary documentation to ensure physical hand-off to EHN staff.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED BY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

- El Paso County District Attorney's Office agrees to work collaboratively with EHN and the City on diversion efforts.
- Continuously monitor list of charges eligible for diversion services.

Questions?



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MISSION



Deliver exceptional services to support a high quality of life and place for our community.

VISION



Develop a vibrant regional economy, safe and beautiful neighborhoods and exceptional recreational, cultural and educational opportunities powered by a high performing government.



VALUES

Integrity, Respect, Excellence,
Accountability, People

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