

LOS ANGELES DIVISION OF YOUTH DIVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT

# COMMITMENTS FOR THE ETHICAL USE OF DATA

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YDD recognizes both the potential benefits and the potential harms of data. We believe that to best reach our goals, we must ensure our practices align with our core values and mission.

Since YDD cannot predict every potential future use of data, we've outlined considerations and fundamental commitments to inform all future data collection, sharing and analysis practices.

## 1. PROTECT AGAINST RISKS AND HARMS OF DATA

Participants in YDD's diversion program will avoid the collateral consequences of an arrest record. However, storing information on a youth's diversion experience is not without risks. Governments and their contractors have used administrative records to increase surveillance and restrict access to goods and services; hacks and unintentional leaks have exposed personal information stored in government databases; staff have misused or improperly shared sensitive data; and, private individuals and institutions have discriminated against others based on government records.

To protect youth, we will:

**Comply with local, state and federal data privacy regulations and pursue additional ways to prevent unauthorized access and use.**

**Evaluate the potential risks of all future proposed data practices and work to mitigate these risks.**

**Prevent government employees and agencies from using diversion records to reduce opportunities for youth.**

**Hold our contractors accountable to similarly protecting diversion data and encourage other partners to adopt similar practices.**

## 2. USE DATA TO DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE FOR YOUTH

Thoughtful data collection and analysis can help YDD monitor fidelity to its model, highlight areas where partners need additional support and identify where policy and implementation may need to change to improve outcomes. This can inform discussions and decisions that improve diversion for partners *and* for participating youth. Data analysis can also improve juvenile justice reform efforts in LA and beyond by highlighting effective and equitable alternatives to arrest.

Still, data analysis is not infallible. Flawed or biased analysis can lead to harmful policy decisions, a singular focus on data can devalue people's knowledge and lived experiences, and poorly crafted data-review can shift the focus to what can be measured- rather than what matters most.

To use data to drive change, we will:

**Collect and analyze data to measure progress towards our goals and inform program and policy changes.**

**Recognize the limits of quantitative data and supplement with qualitative information.**

**Engage program partners and participants in analyzing, interpreting and making decisions based on data.**

**Share partner and community-vetted analysis with others to promote diversion across LA County and beyond.**

**Review our research agenda with partners and participants to inform future evaluation work.**

## 3. RESPECT YOUTH'S OWNERSHIP OF DATA

In the spirit of youth development and empowerment, we recognize young people as the ultimate owners of their data who must consent to data uses. In order to truly consent, youth must understand the potential uses of their data and the potential risk of such practices. As data owners, youth are entitled to analysis based on their data.

To respect youth's ownership, we will:

**Clearly communicate to participating youth the potential uses and risks associated with their data.**

**Protect against uses and harms not communicated to youth.**

**Make data analysis accessible to young people and their communities.**

## 4. HOLD DATA DECISIONS ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

We believe these commitments will improve diversion and protect youth from potential harm. But publishing these commitments alone will not ensure that data practices match our values and mission.

To be accountable, we will:

**Consider these commitments in all data decisions and enshrine particular commitments into policy.**

**Document how data is collected, analyzed and shared in order to increase transparency.**

**Invite youth, their families and the community to share how we can better live up to our data commitments.**