

# Treatment Facilities for Justice Involved Individuals

AB 900, the Public Safety and Offender Rehabilitation Services Act of 2007 (Chapter 900, Statutes of 2007), provided a total of \$1.2 billion in revenue bonds, notes, and bond anticipation notes to finance the acquisition, design, or construction of approved local jail facilities.

AB 900 authorized the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, a participating county, and the State Public Works Board to enter into a construction agreement in order to acquire, design, and construct a local jail facility. AB 900 emphasized anti-recidivism and rehabilitation efforts, including requiring all new State prison beds to include substance abuse treatment, work programs, academic and vocational education, and mental health care.

Los Angeles County's "Care First, Jail Last" model seeks to scale alternatives to incarceration and diversion so that care and services are provided first, and jail is a last resort. As recently reported, in recent years the County has diverted minor offenders with mental health needs into treatment and housing programs. However, the County still needs a minimum of 1,500 inpatient mental health beds and 4,000 permanent supportive housing units to meet this population's current need.

In keeping with AB 900's anti-recidivism and rehabilitation emphasis, this proposal would allow Los Angeles County to use its AB 900 grant award of \$100 million towards facilities that would provide treatment, including behavioral health and other rehabilitative services to justice-involved populations. Expanding the allowable use of the AB 900 grant award could help Los Angeles County meet unfunded and unmet needs for the many people who suffer from mental illness and substance use disorders who languish on our streets and in our jails due to the void left by the historical closures of State Mental Health facilities.



**Proposal to allow Los Angeles County to use its AB 900 grant award towards facilities that would provide treatment, including behavioral health and other rehabilitative services to justice-involved populations.**

## Los Angeles County's AB 900 Grant Background

In March 2012, the County was conditionally awarded \$100 million in AB 900 funds under the Phase II (Construction or Expansion of County Jails funding program) to develop a female detention facility at Pitchess Detention Center. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors decided to not move forward with using the AB 900 grant award for that project, as well as projects at other locations. Because the current AB 900 authority for Phase II financing is limited to jail construction funding, the County is at risk of losing eligibility for the grant award unless funds are dedicated to jail construction.

Los Angeles County is leading the State in shifting the model from incarceration to providing care to individuals with underlying trauma and physical health, mental health, and substance use disorders. To that end, Los Angeles County needs to build an infrastructure that addresses jail over-crowding, dilapidated jail facilities and increasing service needs. For instance, the Men's Central Jail is in a state of disrepair and currently houses over 4,000 inmates. Current data indicates that approximately 42.8 % of inmates in the County Jail system have behavioral health disorders (mental health) with co-occurring substance use disorders. Studies have shown that behavioral health needs are better addressed in therapeutic settings than in jails.

Existing State funding is insufficient to meet the capacity needed to move individuals out of the jails and into treatment and community services. In addition to the increased need for therapeutic treatment alternatives for the custody population, there are a significant number of unhoused individuals, roughly 66,000 in Los Angeles County, that could also benefit from facilities that provide therapeutic treatment. Without modification to the restrictions on the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD), the ability to fund service provision in any new behavioral health facility will also be a challenge.



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