

# Yolo County Proposition 47 Preliminary Evaluation Report

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**Prepared by:**

**Resource Development Associates**

**August 15, 2019**





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This report was developed by Resource Development Associates under contract with the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency.

Resource Development Associates, 2019

## **About Resource Development Associates**

Resource Development Associates (RDA) is a consulting firm based in Oakland, California, that serves government and nonprofit organizations throughout California as well as other states. Our mission is to strengthen public and non-profit efforts to promote social and economic justice for vulnerable populations. RDA supports its clients through an integrated approach to planning, grant writing, organizational development, and evaluation.





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## Executive Summary

In June 2017, Yolo County was awarded \$5.97 million in Prop 47 funds over 38 months to develop and implement the Steps to Success Program.<sup>1</sup> Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is the lead agency managing Steps to Success, with program partners including local community-based organizations (CommuniCare, Empower Yolo, and Legal Services of Northern California), the Yolo County District Attorney's Office, the Yolo County Probation Department, and the Yolo County Public Defender's Office. Of the \$5.97 million in funding received by Yolo County, \$4 million (67%) is "passed through" to local community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide direct services to program participants.

Steps to Success is a voluntary diversion program that uses restorative justice and trauma-informed care principles and practices to provide treatment and wraparound services to Yolo County residents who are facing misdemeanor or low-level felony criminal charges related to their mental health and/or substance use condition. Through these services—which span case management, behavioral health treatment, civil legal services, employment, and housing assistance—participants receive intensive supports to address their behavioral health needs, increase self-sufficiency, and reduce justice system involvement.

### Accomplishments and Strengths

From the beginning of program implementation in June 2018 through March 2019, Steps to Success has accomplished the following achievements:

- ❖ Provided 48 individuals with intensive case management and wraparound services
- ❖ Engaged seven participants in restorative justice conferences, with five participants successfully completing the restorative justice process and two still engaged
- ❖ Provided civil legal services to 42 participants and Know Your Rights workshops to 120 individuals to eliminate barriers to community integration
- ❖ Assisted 24 participants with non-permanent housing and placed 8 participants in permanent housing

Through interviews and focus groups with program leadership, community-based service providers, program participants, and partners, stakeholders identified the following program strengths:

- ❖ **Wide array of available services.** Participants appreciate the variety of additional services available through Steps to Success, which include life skills, credit help, transportation assistance, and access to documents and basic necessities (e.g., food, hygiene products). The ability to receive a suite of services from one program—and the ease of service access—was particularly valuable.
- ❖ **Supportive and accessible program staff.** Participants' positive, trusting relationships with program staff are key to supporting their progress and increased self-sufficiency. Staff work with participants to develop individualized case plans, support participants to meet case plan goals, and make themselves accessible to participants for informal check-ins.
- ❖ **Strong communication and collaboration across program partners.** Program partners have a shared vision about the goals and objectives of Steps to Success and proactively communicate to address gaps and barriers when they arise.

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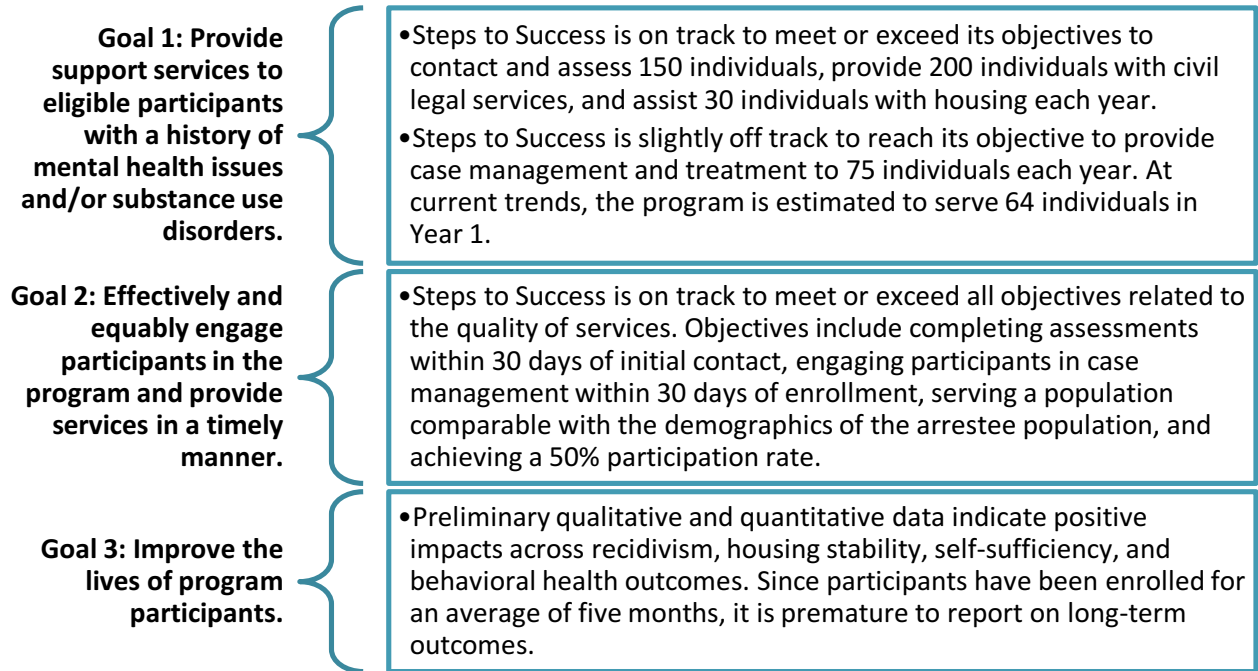
<sup>1</sup> Yolo County accepted a 12-month no-cost extension to extend the grant through August 2021,



## Program Progress

As evidenced by Yolo County’s progress towards each of its objectives during the program’s first nine months of implementation, Steps to Success is working as intended and on track to meet each of its goals.

**Figure 1. Progress Toward Steps to Success Goals and Objectives**



## Program Challenges and Barriers

Through a collaborative approach, Yolo County is actively refining Steps to Success to ensure it is serving the population that can benefit most from its services, meets the needs of program participants, and operates smoothly and efficiently. Key barriers the program has addressed or is working to mitigate are:

- ❖ **Serving the target population.** Individuals with serious mental illness, or who are chronically homeless, were initially referred to the program at high rates. Though Steps to Success still serves individuals with severe behavioral health needs, there is now a shared understanding across partners that the program is not designed to serve individuals with high behavioral health needs and additional pathways have been developed to ensure these individuals access services with more intensive supports.
- ❖ **Aligning data systems.** Program partners use separate data systems, thereby limiting their ability to easily obtain a cross-system, up-to-date understanding of participant eligibility and progress. To mitigate these barriers, partners have developed data sharing tools (e.g., referral forms, status updates) and are working on aligning data systems to strengthen coordination.
- ❖ **Finding affordable housing in the current housing market.** A lack of affordable housing creates challenges for participants to obtain and maintain stable housing. To mitigate this barrier, Steps to Success provides housing placement support, financial housing assistance, and individualized civil legal services related to housing discrimination.



## Introduction

### Program Background and Overview

In November 2014, California voters approved Proposition (Prop) 47, which reclassified certain low-level, nonviolent felonies as misdemeanors. Due to the expected decrease in the State’s prison population, the California Legislative Analyst’s Office estimated annual state correctional savings between \$150 million and \$250 million. Prop 47 requires these savings to be placed in the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund and mandates the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to allocate 65% of the Fund for mental health and substance abuse treatment to reduce recidivism, 25% for crime prevention and support programs in schools, and 10% for trauma recovery services for crime victims.

In addition to the array of partners involved in Steps to Success implementation, Yolo County established a Prop 47 Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to provide strategic guidance and oversight of Steps to Success. The LAC includes representatives from public agencies—including social services and law enforcement—and CBOs (see full list in Appendix A).

### Steps to Success

Steps to Success is a voluntary diversion program that uses restorative justice and trauma-informed care principles and practices to provide direct wraparound services to individuals who are facing criminal charges related to their mental health and/or substance use condition. Through these services—which span case management, behavioral health treatment, civil legal services, employment, and housing assistance—participants receive intensive supports to address their behavioral health needs, increase self-sufficiency, and reduce justice system involvement. Individuals are eligible for Steps to Success if they have an open misdemeanor or low-level felony case, live in Yolo County, and have mild-to-moderate mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders that contributed to their criminal behavior.<sup>2</sup> More detail about the specific services provided to participants can be found in the *How Much Did We Do?* section on page 7.

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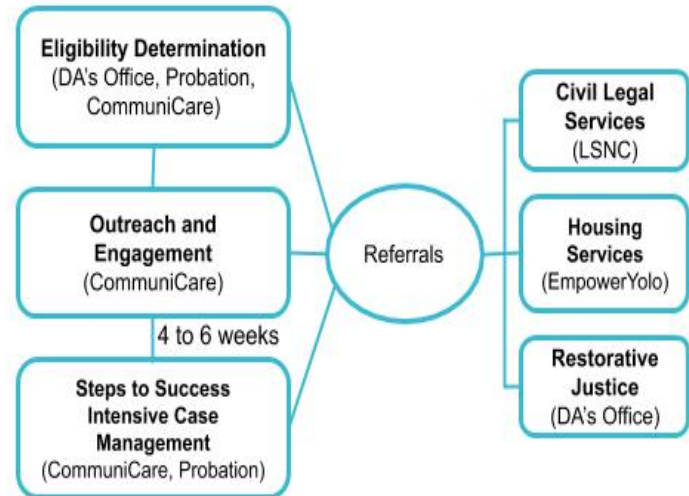
<sup>2</sup> Individuals that are gang members or registered sex offenders, have strike convictions, or are facing specific charges (i.e., child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, driving under the influence) are not eligible for Steps to Success.



### Steps to Success Enrollment Process

The majority of Steps to Success referrals come from the Yolo County Superior Court’s arraignment calendar, which staff from the District Attorney’s (DA) Office review to identify individuals who appear eligible for Steps to Success based on the individual’s charge(s) and criminal history. In addition to the arraignment calendar, referrals can also come from other sources (i.e., Public Defender’s Office, local law enforcement agencies, and CBOs). Individuals identified as eligible for Steps to Success are invited to a program orientation, which takes place three days per week at different locations across the County. At orientation, staff from the Probation Department and CommuniCare—the CBO providing case management and wraparound services—provide an overview of the program and a probation officer conducts the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) to determine the potential participant’s risk level.

**Figure 2. Steps to Success Process and Services**



After orientation, CommuniCare engages in a four- to six-week outreach and engagement process to assess the needs and strengths of potential participants through evidence-based assessment tools (Level of Care Utilization System, Adults Needs and Strengths Assessment, and American Society of Addiction Medicine Placement Criteria). At any point during the eligibility determination or outreach and engagement process, potential participants may be referred to civil legal services or housing services funded through Prop 47, as well as the County’s other diversion programs.

After concluding the outreach and engagement process, eligible individuals are offered the opportunity to enroll in Steps to Success intensive case management. Steps to Success intensive case management participants meet with CommuniCare’s program team to develop a comprehensive, individualized case plan. Participants receive intensive case management and behavioral health interventions combined with, as needed, linkage to civil legal services, employment assistance, and support to obtain and maintain safe and appropriate housing. Individuals receiving intensive case management are supervised collaboratively between CommuniCare case managers and a Steps to Success probation officer, who provide regular status updates on participants’ progress to the DA’s Office.

### Program Goals and Objectives

Steps to Success aims to improve the lives of program participants by expanding the number of participants who successfully complete diversion, thereby decreasing their criminal justice involvement and increasing their housing stability, physical and behavioral health, and self-sufficiency. Utilizing a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework, Yolo County developed three Steps to Success goals and



19 associated objectives that address RBA’s three evaluative questions: (1) *How much did we do?*, (2) *How well did we do it?*, and (3) *Is anyone better off?* (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Steps to Success Goals and Objectives**

Goal	Objectives
Provide support services to eligible participants with a history of mental health issues and/or substance use disorders. <i>(How much did we do?)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>150 people will be contacted and assessed during outreach each year</li> <li>75 people will be provided with case management and treatment each year</li> <li>200 people will be provided with civil legal education and/or services each year</li> <li>30 people will be provided with rapid re-housing assistance each year</li> </ul>
Effectively and equably engage participants in the project and provide services in a timely manner. <i>(How well did we do it?)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of potential project participants will have an assessment completed (ORAS, LOCUS, ASAM, ANSA, and/or VI-SPDAT as appropriate) within 30 days of initial engagement</li> <li>50% of individuals who are contacted through outreach and determined to be eligible for the program will choose to voluntarily participate</li> <li>90% of project participants will be engaged in case management and treatment services within 30 days of enrollment in the project</li> <li>Demographic makeup of project participants will be comparable to demographic makeup of overall arrestee population in Yolo County</li> </ul>
Improve the lives of project participants. <i>(Is anyone better off?)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of participants will not recidivate while engaged with the program</li> <li>75% of participants will not recidivate within 12 months of graduating the program</li> <li>50% fewer days in jail for participants while in the program</li> <li>50% fewer arrests/tickets for participants while in the program</li> <li>70% of participants will secure and/or maintain permanent housing</li> <li>80% of participants who secure permanent housing will remain housed at 6 months</li> <li>50% fewer emergency care visits while in the program, as compared to year prior to enrollment</li> <li>75% fewer days in psychiatric hospitalization while in the program, as compared to year prior to enrollment</li> <li>60% of participants will secure monthly income</li> <li>90% of those eligible will enroll in CalFresh</li> <li>100% of those eligible will enroll in health insurance</li> </ul>

## Evaluation Methodology

To assess the implementation and impact of Steps to Success, Resource Development Associates (RDA) conducted a mixed-method process and outcome evaluation. A mixed-method design maximizes validity and provides different perspectives on complex, multi-dimensional issues. An evaluation design that uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches offer insights that might be overlooked by one approach alone. Individual-level and aggregate quantitative data were analyzed to calculate both process and outcome measures, including service receipt and recidivism outcomes. Descriptive analyses provide an overview of the population served and the services provided, such as the average risk level and duration





of service enrollment. Qualitative data were also collected from program administrators, program staff, program partners, and participants to provide key insights and perspectives into the facilitators, barriers, and outcomes of Steps to Success.

This preliminary report describes program implementation and participant outcomes from the beginning of Steps to Success implementation in June 2018 through March 2019 and assesses the program's progress in reaching its intended goals and objectives over this time period.

### **Qualitative Data**

RDA analyzed qualitative information in order to provide in-depth knowledge and insight into the Steps to Success program. Data collection methods included interviews and focus groups with program leadership, community-based service providers, program participants,<sup>3</sup> program partners, and members of the LAC. Interviews and focus groups focused on program implementation, strengths and challenges, services provided to participants, and the perceived impact of the program on the participants.

### **Quantitative Data**

RDA requested administrative data from CommuniCare, the DA's Office, the Probation Department, HHS, Empower Yolo, and Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) to report on the services provided through Steps to Success, the participants receiving Steps to Success services, and the preliminary outcomes. Data were requested from the beginning of program implementation through March 2019.

Quantitative analyses included program retention and completion rates, number of participants utilizing each service such as housing, civil legal services and employment services, recidivism outcomes, and participant demographics.

### **Limitations**

Though RDA made efforts to collect qualitative data from a range of Steps to Success stakeholders, participation in interviews and focus groups was voluntary and therefore may not be representative of all program staff, participants, and partners. Since Steps to Success is a new program—only launching in June 2018—there is limited data to date regarding program outcomes. As of March 2019, there have been no program graduates; therefore, all outcome data should be viewed as preliminary. The final evaluation, to be submitted in September 2021, will provide a comprehensive assessment of program outcomes.

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<sup>3</sup> Seven program participants took part in the focus group and were provided with gift cards as compensation for their time.



## Steps to Success Performance

Below is an overview of Steps to Success implementation to date, assessing progress in relation to the program’s stated goals and objectives, structured in alignment with the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework’s three evaluative questions: (1) *How Much Did We Do?*, (2) *How Well Did We Do It?*, and (3) *Is Anyone Better Off?* The first section “How Much Did We Do?” details the Steps to Success process flow, including a description of the types and number of services that were provided to Steps to Success participants. The second section “How Well Did We Do It?” assesses the quality of the program (e.g., timeliness of services, level of communication and collaboration, and whether the program is serving the target population). The final section “Is Anyone Better Off?” reports on preliminary program outcomes based on recidivism data analyses and stakeholders’ perception of program impact.

### How Much Did We Do?

This section describes the services and activities provided through Steps to Success’s five stages and service areas: (1) Outreach and Assessment, (2) Diversion Program, (3) Intensive Case Management and Treatment, (4) Civil Legal Services, and (5) Permanent Housing Assistance. It begins with an update on Yolo County’s progress toward its stated *How Much Did We Do?* Objectives, and then provides an overview of the services provided and number of participants served through Steps to Success from the start of program implementation in June 2018 through March 2019.

#### Progress Toward *How Much Did We Do?* Objectives

Yolo County identified four objectives related to the utilization of services and activities, shown in Figure 3. As noted below, the County is on track to meet or exceed three of its four *How Much Did We Do?* objectives (see more detail in Appendix B).

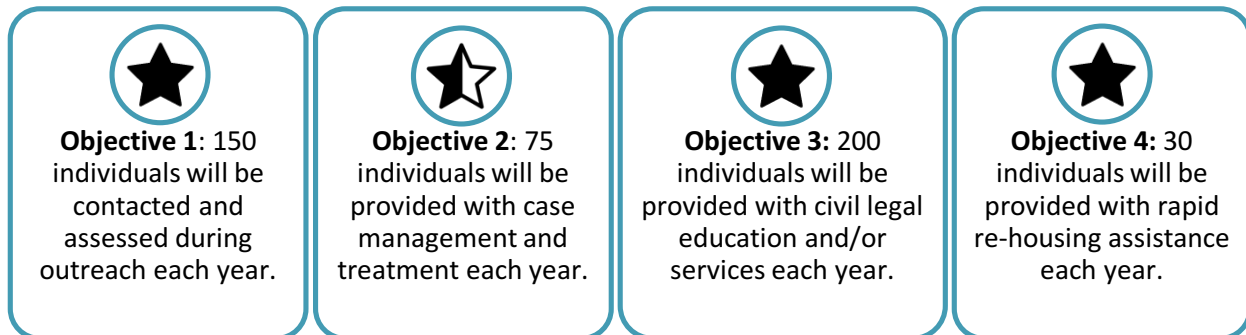
**Figure 3. *How Much Did We Do?* Objectives**



On Track



Off Track





**Outreach and Assessment**

From the inception of the program through March 2019, approximately 576 individuals on the Yolo County Superior Court arraignment calendar were identified by the DA’s Office as potential Steps to Success participants at an average rate of 64 individuals per month.<sup>4</sup> A small number of those individuals ultimately enrolled in Steps to Success intensive case management. Of the total identified individuals, approximately three-quarters did not appear in court at arraignment and therefore could not be offered participation in Steps to Success. Of those that were offered the opportunity to participate at arraignment, approximately 80% indicated interest. After the initial eligibility and risk assessment, CommuniCare received 172 referrals for Steps to Success intensive case management. Of these referrals, CommuniCare was able to contact 112 individuals (65%). **With 112 individuals contacted during the first nine months of program implementation, Steps to Success is on track to meet its objective of 150 individuals contacted and assessed each year.**

**Figure 4. Steps to Success Intensive Case Management Referral Process**

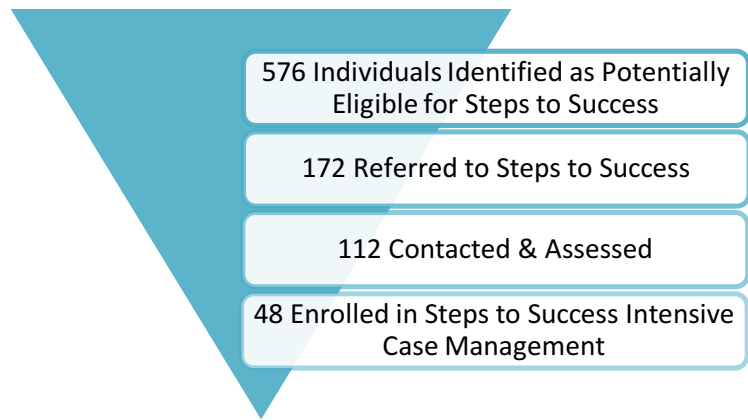
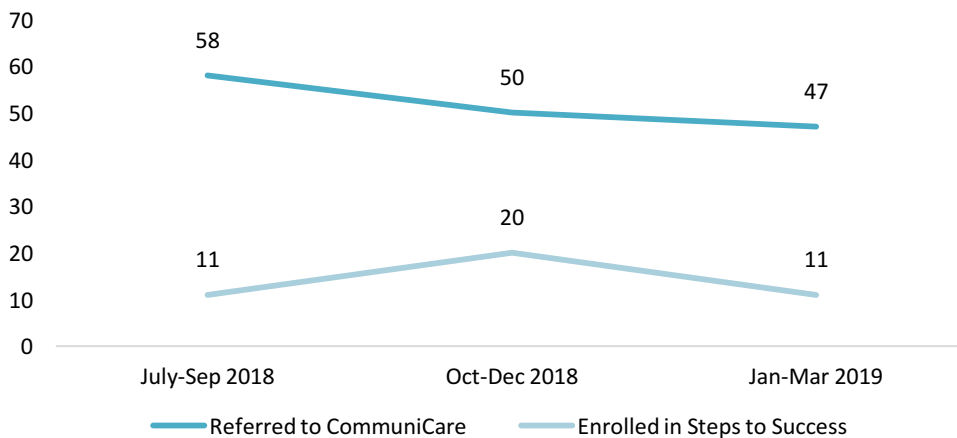


Figure 5 presents the number of individuals per quarter from July 2018 through March 2019 who were referred to CommuniCare and enrolled in Steps to Success. The number of referrals has declined slightly over time, with the number that subsequently enrolled fluctuating between approximately four to six individuals per month.

**Figure 5. Steps to Success Referral and Enrollment Over Time**



*Note: Prior to July 2018, 16 individuals were referred to Steps to Success and 6 individuals enrolled.*

<sup>4</sup> In addition to the arraignment calendar review (which identified 576 individuals as potentially eligible), referrals can also originate from police departments, the Public Defender’s Office, and local CBOs.



Since the first enrollment in June 2018, six individuals have been discharged from Steps to Success. Two of these individuals required a higher level of care or were accepted to another County wraparound service. The remaining four individuals either declined services or stopped engaging. Among the six that have exited the program, the average time to exit was 70 days. As of March 2019, no participants had yet completed all program requirements for successful discharge.<sup>5</sup>

### **Diversion Program**

Steps to Success is a diversion program and all participants who enroll in the program must participate in a restorative justice process to successfully graduate from the program. Restorative justice provides the opportunity for Steps to Success participants to engage in a facilitated conference with trained community member facilitators as an alternative to the traditional court process. Yolo County's restorative justice model takes a holistic approach to repair the harm caused by crime, focusing on the needs of the victim and utilizing a three-step framework that (1) recognizes the injustice committed, (2) restores equity/makes things right, and (3) clarifies future intentions. Restorative justice conferences result in the development of an agreement that addresses the harms caused by the crime and emphasizes connection and engagement with community resources and services. Individuals who successfully complete the restorative justice process have their charges dropped or dismissed and will not have to disclose the case on most job applications.

**Seven Steps to Success participants (15%) have participated in restorative justice. Five participants have successfully completed the restorative justice process, with two participants still engaged** in restorative justice panels. The seven participants who have participated in restorative justice began, on average, approximately four months after enrolling in Steps to Success.

### **Intensive Case Management**

CommuniCare provides intensive case management and wraparound support to all Steps to Success participants. CommuniCare's Steps to Success team consists of a program manager, two behavioral health clinicians, two case managers, two peer advocates, and an employment specialist. In addition to the CommuniCare staff, a housing case manager from another CBO (Empower Yolo) and a probation officer are part of the Steps to Success team co-located in the CommuniCare office.

CommuniCare's Steps to Success team works with each participant to develop an individualized case plan which includes treatment services and external referrals. Staff provide intensive case management services; connect participants with basic necessities, documentation, and health insurance; offer peer mentorship; provide transportation to appointments; and create an accessible support network. The employment specialist supports participants with applying for jobs, driving participants to job appointments, and assisting participants in locating volunteer opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> Two graduations took place in May 2019, after the evaluation reporting period.



Of the 113 individuals who were referred to Steps to Success and then contacted by CommuniCare, 48 individuals (42%) eventually enrolled in Steps to Success.<sup>6</sup> **If enrollment continues at the current pace, Steps to Success is projected to provide case management to 64 individuals within the first year of implementation, which is slightly lower than its objective of 75 individuals.** All Steps to Success participants receive case management and the majority (87%) were referred to or enrolled in other services such as housing, primary care, civil legal services, mental health and substance use treatment, and employment services.

### **Civil Legal Services**

At any point during the Steps to Success eligibility determination, outreach and assessment, and enrollment stage, participants with civil legal issues can be referred to the Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) to receive individualized legal assistance. LSNC helps participants address any non-criminal barriers to accessing services such as housing, healthcare, employment, and government benefits. **Civil legal services were provided to 42 individuals.** Half of legal services (50%) were related to housing (e.g., federal subsidized housing, private landlord/tenant disputes, housing discrimination), with the remaining services related to supplemental security income (SSI), debt collection, and criminal record expungement. Most participants (59%) received counsel and advice for civil legal issues.

Through Prop 47, LSNC also offers civil legal classes for the community, including Know Your Rights workshops addressing hiring (criminal records and employment records), housing (tenant screening, credit reports, criminal background checks, and access to housing), public benefits, and driver's license reinstatement. Between July 2018 and March 2019, LSNC provided **14 workshop sessions to 120 individuals.** These workshops took place at CommuniCare, Empower Yolo, and the Yolo County Day Reporting Center.

**With a total of 162 individuals receiving civil legal services through Steps to Success during the first nine months of implementation, Steps to Success is on track to meet its goal of providing civil legal services to 200 individuals each year.**

### **Housing Program**

At any point during the Steps to Success eligibility determination, outreach and assessment, and enrollment stage, individuals experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, or requiring other housing support may be referred for housing services through Empower Yolo. Using a rapid re-housing model, Empower Yolo strives to connect participants to some form of permanent housing with tailored packages that include time-limited financial assistance and other supportive services. Empower Yolo has provided **housing or other supportive services to 43 individuals** through Steps to Success, with the majority (65%) of the participants referred through CommuniCare.

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<sup>6</sup> An additional 23 individuals (19%) are currently in the outreach and enrollment stage. The remaining 41% did not enroll.



**Empower Yolo has provided 24 participants with non-permanent housing, including motels and transitional housing, and has placed 8 individuals in permanent housing. This puts Steps to Success on track to meet its objective of providing 30 individuals with rapid re-housing assistance each year.** Across all participants, financial housing support totaled \$155,769, including rental assistance (\$102,503), motel stay assistance (\$22,438), security deposit assistance (\$13,875), practical housing assistance (\$12,297), and utility assistance (\$4,643) through March 2019.

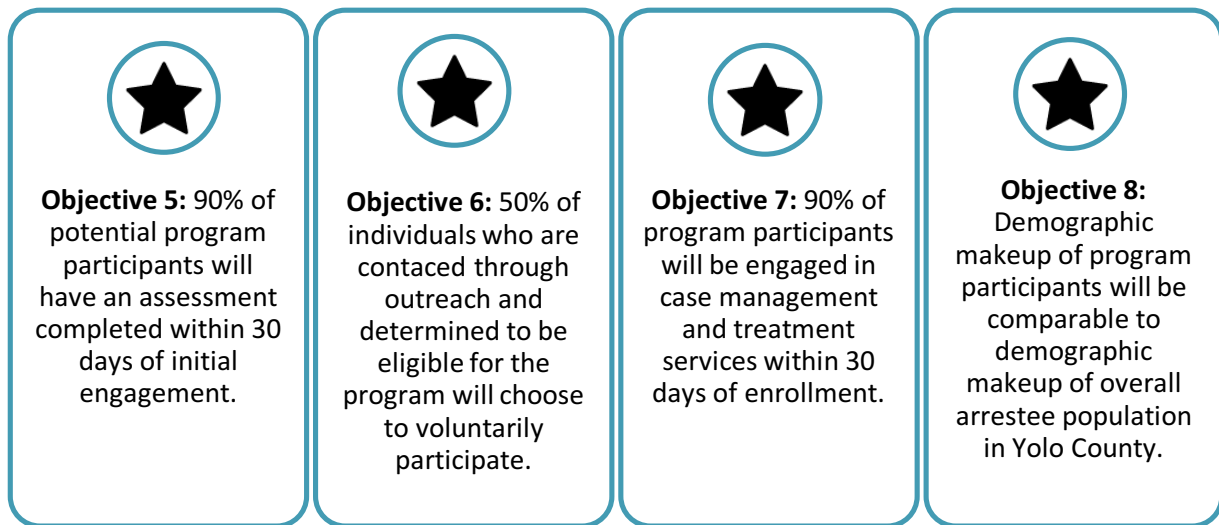
### How Well Did We Do It?

This section assesses the strengths, challenges, and other factors that impact the quality of services and highlights key modifications and refinements made to Steps to Success since program start. It is comprised of three sections: an update on Yolo County’s progress toward its stated *How Well Did We Do It?* objectives, a description of the demographics and needs of program participants, and an assessment of key strengths and challenges affecting program performance and progress.

#### Progress Toward *How Well Did We Do It?* Objectives

Yolo County identified four objectives related to the quality of services, shown in Figure 6. As noted below, through March 2019, the County is on track to meet or exceed all of its *How Well Did We Do It?* objectives (see more detail in Appendix B).

**Figure 6. *How Well Did We Do It?* Objectives**





### Participant Profile

Through March 2019, Steps to Success has enrolled 48 participants. As shown in Table 2, the highest proportion of participants were Non-Hispanic White (38%), with an average age of 36. The participant population is almost evenly distributed across gender.

Overall, the composition of the participant population is similar to the demographic distribution of the arrestee population of Yolo County (48% White, 32% Hispanic, 13% Black, and 7% Other/Multiple Races); though Steps to Success has a slightly higher proportion of Black participants (19% compared to 13%) and a lower proportion of White and Hispanic individuals (38% compared to 48% and 25% compared to 41%, respectively).<sup>7</sup>

The sizeable majority (80%) of Steps to Success participants have been assessed as moderate or high risk to recidivate using the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS). Slightly more than half (58%) of participants had prior open cases before to Steps to Success referral, many of which included a history of open cases that span multiple years. Approximately half of open cases included drug charges. These characteristics indicate a population with extended criminal histories and moderate or high risk of recidivism.

Steps to Success is designed for individuals with mild-to-moderate mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders. However, behavioral health diagnoses and assessment score results indicate that Steps to Success may be serving individuals with more acute behavioral health needs than the program is designed to address. As shown in Table 3, between 30-40% of participants had a severe mental health and/or severe substance use disorder. The majority of participants (74%) had co-occurring disorders, with both behavioral health and substance use diagnoses. Seven individuals had at least one psychiatric hospitalization within one year prior to Steps to Success enrollment.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 2. Participant Characteristics**

Participant Characteristics	
<b>Race / Ethnicity (n=48)</b>	
Non-Hispanic White	38%
Hispanic	25%
Black	19%
Other / Multiracial / American Indian	12%
Asian	6%
<b>Gender (n=48)</b>	
Male	52%
Female	48%
<b>Average Age (n=46)</b>	36
<b>Risk of Recidivism (n=47)</b>	
High	40%
Moderate	40%
Low	19%

**Table 3. Behavioral Health Diagnoses (n = 46)**

	Mental Health	Substance Use Disorder
Severe	32%	39%
Mild-Moderate	57%	44%
Mild	2%	0%
None Reported	9%	17%

<sup>7</sup> In comparison to the total Yolo County population, Black individuals are overrepresented in the arrestee population (13% of arrests, compared to 3% of the population).

<sup>8</sup> Since all participants' health records are not captured in the County's electronic health record system (AVATAR), this number may be underreported.



Participants receive a number of assessments to develop level of care recommendations and case management plans. Assessments include the Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS), Adult Needs and Strength Assessment (ANSA), and American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Placement Criteria. **Since the implementation of Steps to Success, 93% of individuals referred to CommuniCare have received at least one assessment within 30 days of initial engagement**, meeting its objective of 90% of individuals receiving an assessment within this time frame.<sup>9,10</sup> As shown in Table 4, approximately half of Steps to Success participants have a need for more intensive residential or inpatient services.

**Table 4. Assessment Domains for the Steps to Success Participants**

Assessment Domains	%
ASAM Assessment Domains (n = 35)	
Early Intervention or Outpatient Services	60%
Residential or Inpatient Services	40%
LOCUS Assessment Domains (n = 31) <sup>11</sup>	
Recovery & Low Intensity of Community-Based Services	29%
High Intensity Community-Based Services	23%
Some Level of Residential Substance Support	48%

### Strengths and Challenges

Steps to Success is on track to meet or exceed almost all of its objectives, but has encountered some challenges with reaching enrollment targets. This section describes Steps to Success’s strengths in addition to challenges and barriers affecting program progress and performance. Findings are presented in three areas: Outreach and Engagement, Communication and Collaboration, and Service Delivery.

#### *Outreach and Engagement*

**Yolo County has refined the Steps to Success participant identification process to support a shared understanding across all partners about the individuals who can benefit most from the program.** Steps to Success is designed for individuals with mild-to-moderate mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders. Individuals with higher mental health needs, or who are chronically homeless, were initially referred at high rates into Steps to Success. Though the program still serves individuals with severe behavioral health needs, there is now a shared understanding across program partners that Steps to Success is not designed to serve individuals with high behavioral health needs and additional pathways have been developed to ensure these individuals access services with more intensive supports. Specifically, if a potential Steps to Success participant is assessed as having a serious mental illness, they will be referred to the County’s Navigation Center to determine the most appropriate treatment and services.

<sup>9</sup> Assessment dates and scores were not available for all individuals for each of the assessments. Missing assessment information may be attributable to individuals stopping engagement prior to the scheduled assessment.

<sup>10</sup> These assessments include the ORAS, LOCUS, ASAM, and ANSA.

<sup>11</sup> While the LOCUS was administered to all participants, scores were only available for 31 participants.





**Steps to Success is on track to reach its annual outreach target, but enrollment challenges have resulted in the program being slightly behind in reaching its enrollment target of 75 participants per year.** The majority of potential participants are informed that they may be eligible for Steps to Success at arraignment. However, 75% of individuals identified by the DA's Office as potentially eligible for the program do not show up to arraignment. Though a high percentage (~80%) of individuals who are offered the program at arraignment indicate that they are interested, a small proportion ultimately enroll.

Participants are oftentimes unclear about what Steps to Success entails until they start the program, potentially leading to lower enrollment levels due to lack of understanding about the program. To address this information gap, peer advocates now attend some Steps to Success orientations to help explain the program to potential participants.

*The individuals are shocked when they start the program because they did not know people are here to help them. Sometimes they have no concept about the program; the breakdown is they're not getting enough of frontload information about what the program is about.*

–CommuniCare Staff

*It would be nice to have an outline of what really happens in the program, not knowing what to expect can hinder people from wanting to join the program.*

–Participant

### *Communication and Collaboration*

**Strong communication and collaboration within and across program partners—including community-based partners and public agencies—facilitates problem solving to strengthen Steps to Success and support participants holistically.** Across the County, key program partners have a shared vision about the goals and objectives of Steps to Success. The Steps to Success team proactively communicates to address gaps and barriers when they arise and have developed structured check-ins through weekly staff meetings, weekly phone conferences with the DA's Office, and monthly program meetings.

### *Service Delivery*

**The lack of affordable housing creates challenges for participants to obtain and maintain stable housing.**

Though Steps to Success provides housing placement support, financial housing assistance, and individualized civil legal services

*“Working with CommuniCare has shown the good collaboration between law enforcement and community agencies. Steps to Success has brought us all together for the common goal of providing services for the participants.”*

–Probation



related to housing, the tough housing market—particularly for individuals with criminal justice involvement—creates barriers to participants’ maintaining housing stability.

**Participants appreciate the individualization of services to address their specific needs and the array of wraparound services and supports available through Steps to Success.** Participants highlighted how

Steps to Success supports their behavioral health, employment, and housing needs through direct services and additional supports including life skills, credit help, transportation assistance, and access to documents and basic necessities (e.g., food, hygiene products). The ability to receive a suite of services from one program—and the ease of service access—was particularly valuable to participants.

*“Once I got into the program and had everything offered to me, it really made a huge difference. I cannot believe all the help that I got; they helped me get my birth certificate and social security card that they paid for and they helped me get my ID and helped with jobs. This is the only program and place I can get all these services done for me so easily.”* –Participant

While participants appreciate how Steps to Success is tailored to address their individual needs, some participants suggested that additional clarity regarding graduation requirements would assist them in understanding how to measure their progress, in addition to providing greater awareness of all the services available through the program (e.g., referrals to civil legal services).

**Participants’ positive, trusting relationships with CommuniCare staff are key to supporting their progress and increased self-sufficiency.** Participants value how Steps to Success case managers work with them to develop individualized case plans, support them to meet their case plan goals, and make themselves accessible. The availability of staff and willingness to assist with small tasks (e.g., replacing a light bulb, receiving hygiene products) was particularly meaningful to participants.

*“The peer support has really been awesome and has helped with transportation and getting my birth certificate. If I need to reach out to somebody if I am in a crisis or I am having a breakdown, I call my peer support to help me and they take me to meetings or just talk to me.”*

–Participant

*“The Steps to Success team have been there for me and have gotten me the help and services that I need. I feel better after meeting with a case manager and just being able to talk to them...Talking to the counselor has been helpful, I was able to get recommended to a psychiatrist and that has been really helpful for me.”*

–Participant



## Is Anyone Better Off?

This section describes the preliminary impacts of the Steps to Success program. Since Steps to Success has been implemented for less than a year, it is premature to report on long-term outcomes. However, preliminary results indicate positive impacts and program participants and staff identified an assortment of positive impacts including increased housing stability, self-sufficiency, and behavioral health outcomes. The Steps to Success final evaluation report, which will capture three years of program implementation, will provide a more comprehensive understanding of short- and long-term participant outcomes.



**Recidivism:** From program implementation in June 2018 through March 2019, 48 individuals have enrolled in Steps to Success. These participants have been enrolled for an average of five months. **Of the 48 participants, only one (2%) has recidivated since enrolling in the program.**<sup>12</sup> During approximately the three years prior to program implementation, 43 participants had arrests, 12 participants spent time in jail, and 10 participants received tickets/citations. After referral to Steps to Success, seven participants were arrested, three participants spent time in jail, and one participant received a ticket/citation. Though the different time period pre- and post-enrollment in Steps to Success prevents a direct comparison, initial trends indicate a decrease in arrests, jail time, and tickets/citations.



**Housing:** Steps to Success provides housing placement and financial assistance to participants including rental assistance, security deposit assistance, and utility assistance. **Through March 2019, eight individuals were placed in permanent housing.** Three participants have been off financial support for six months and all of them (100%) have maintained permanent housing after this financial support ended.



**Participant Perspectives:** Staff and participants identified a host of ways in that Steps to Success has positively impacted participants' behavior and lives in the areas of housing stability, mental health, day-to-day functioning, self-sufficiency, and justice involvement.

*"This program has done so much for my life...I am now able to have that confidence and function as an individual on a daily basis. Since I started the program, my mental health has improved, I am so hopeful, my nightmares have stopped...and I have increased productivity. This program has helped me overcome my drug addiction and even improved my health."—Participant*

<sup>12</sup> Recidivism is defined as the commission of a new offense that resulted in a conviction of a felony or misdemeanor.



## Conclusion and Recommendations

Yolo County has invested its Prop 47 funding in Steps to Success, a diversion program with comprehensive, wraparound services to address participants' behavioral health needs, increase their self-sufficiency, and reduce future justice system involvement. Through a collaborative approach, Yolo County is actively refining the program to ensure it is serving the population that can benefit most from its services, meets the needs of program participants, and operates smoothly and efficiently. As evidenced by Yolo County's progress towards each of its objectives, Yolo County is currently meeting each of its goals:

Steps to Success Goals

- Provide support services to eligible participants with a history of mental health issues and/or substance use disorders.
- Effectively and equably engage participants in the program and provide services in a timely manner.
- Improve the lives of program participants.

Yolo County is proactively strengthening and enhancing Steps to Success, with planned improvements including increasing staff capacity (i.e., hiring, trainings), developing internal communication protocols and tools, implementing new participant assessments, and expanding the group services available to participants. Based on evaluation findings, additional areas of opportunity are:

1. **Refine the participant eligibility and orientation process.** Currently, a small proportion of individuals who are identified as potentially eligible for the program appear at arraignment, are able to be contacted, and ultimately enroll. Developing tools and processes to target individuals who are most appropriate for the program could help increase the efficiency of the eligibility and orientation process. Program participants suggested that engaging successful program graduates as program ambassadors to explain the program at orientation would also increase interest in Steps to Success.
2. **Increase the visibility and understanding of Steps to Success.** While key partners understand who Steps to Success is intended to serve and how it compares to other diversion and behavioral health programs, broadening awareness and promoting the program (e.g., through a website, flyers, newspaper articles, and program summary documentation) to potential referral partners and participants can help increase appropriate program referrals and provide stakeholders a clear understanding of program services.
3. **Create more ways for the LAC to be more involved in supporting program implementation.** Though the LAC has provided high-level oversight of the program, there is opportunity to capitalize on the group's expertise by engaging them more directly to troubleshoot issues to improve the program. Identifying a clear issue for the LAC to address and providing data to support decision-making can help maximize the LAC's involvement.
4. **Build data capacity to support program coordination.** Program partners use separate data systems, thereby limiting their ability to easily obtain a cross-system, up-to-date understanding of participant eligibility and progress. Partners have developed data sharing tools (e.g., referral forms, status updates) to mitigate these barriers, but there is still a need for additional data alignment to increase program efficiency and coordination.



## Appendix A. Local Advisory Committee Member List

Name	Job Title/Role	Agency/Organization/Affiliation
Lisa A. Baker	Chief Executive Officer	Yolo County Housing
Sue Barton, Ph.D., Psy.D.	Emerita Clinical Professor of Family and Community Medicine	University of California, Davis, School of Medicine; City of Davis Resident
Amanda Berlin	Assistant City Manager	City of West Sacramento
Danin Fruchtenicht	Chief Probation Officer	Yolo County Probation
Michael Green	Lieutenant	UCD Police Department
Bill Habicht	Pastor	Davis Community Church
Karen Larson, LMFT	Mental Health Director; Drug and Alcohol Administrator	Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency
Garth Lewis	Superintendent of Schools	Yolo County office of Education
Sally Mandujan	Mental Health Advocate; Community Advocate	Yolo County Local Mental Health Board; Yolo County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness; City of West Sacramento Resident
Lisa Medina	Peer Support Advocate; Community Advocate	City of Woodland Resident
Tracie Olson	Public Defender	Yolo County Public Defender's Office
Jennifer Perez	Community Resident	City of West Sacramento Resident
Darren Pytel	Chief of Police	City of Davis
Jeff Reisig	District Attorney	Yolo County District Attorney's Office



## Appendix B. Goals and Objectives

As of March 2019, Steps to Success has been operational for 9 months. As such, program objectives for one year are expected to be approximately 75% complete. The following table describes progress towards the program objectives.

Goal	Objective	Status
Provide support services to eligible participants with a history of mental health issues and/or substance use disorders.	Objective 1: 150 people will be contacted and assessed during outreach each year	112 individuals have been contacted and assessed through March 2019. At 75% of the objective, Steps to Success is on track to reach this objective at one year.
	Objective 2: 75 people will be provided with case management and treatment each year	48 individuals have received case management and treatment. At 65% of the objective, Steps to Success is slightly behind schedule to reach this objective at one year.
	Objective 3: 200 people will be provided with civil legal education and/or services each year	162 individuals have received civil legal education and/or services. At 81% of the objective, Steps to Success is on track to reach this objective at one year.
	Objective 4: 30 people will be provided with rapid re-housing assistance each year	32 individuals have received rapid re-housing assistance. At 107% of the objective, Steps to Success has completed and exceeded this objective.
Effectively and equably engage participants in the project and provide services in a timely manner.	Objective 5: 90% of potential project participants will have an assessment completed within 30 days of initial engagement	Of the 112 individuals contacted by CommuniCare, 104 individuals (93%) had at least one assessment within 30 days of first contact. Steps to Success is currently reaching this objective.
	Objective 6: 50% of individuals who are contacted through outreach and determined to be eligible for the program will choose to voluntarily participate	Of the 112 individuals contacted by CommuniCare, 48 (43%) voluntarily enrolled in Steps to Success. While this is slightly lower than the stated objective, 19% of these individuals are still in outreach and engagement with ongoing efforts to enroll these individuals.
	Objective 7: 90% of project participants will be engaged in case management and treatment services within 30 days of enrollment	All participants (100%) receive case management and connection to treatment as part of the enrollment process.
	Objective 8: Demographic makeup of project participants will be comparable to demographic makeup of overall arrestee population in Yolo County	The arrestee population in Yolo County is 48% White, 32% Hispanic, 13% Black, and 7% Other/Multiple Races, which is similar to the Steps to Success participant population (38% Non-Hispanic White, 25% Hispanic, 19% Black, 6% Asian, and 12% Other/Multiracial/American Indian).
	Objective 9: 75% of participants will not recidivate while engaged with the program	98% of Steps to Success participants have not recidivated (defined as an arrest resulting in new conviction for a felony or misdemeanor) while engaged in the program.



Improve the lives of project participants.	Objective 10: 75% of participants will not recidivate within 12 months of graduating the program	As of March 2019, no participants have graduated Steps to Success; therefore, this objective is not currently applicable.
	Objective 11: 50% fewer days in jail for participants while in the program	Three years prior to Steps to Success implementation, 12 participants spent time in jail (3,824 days). After referral to Steps to Success, three participants spent time in jail (215 days). Participants have not been enrolled in Steps to Success for a long enough period to conduct a pre/post analysis.
	Objective 12: 50% fewer arrests/tickets for participants while in the program	Three years prior to Steps to Success implementation, 43 participants had arrests and 10 participants received tickets. After enrollment in Steps to Success, 7 participants have been arrested and 1 participant received a ticket. Participants have not been enrolled in Steps to Success for a long enough period to conduct a pre/post analysis.
	Objective 13: 70% of participants will secure and/or maintain permanent housing	Eight participants secured permanent housing through Steps to Success.
	Objective 14: 80% of participants who secure permanent housing will remain housed at 6 months	Of the three participants who secured permanent housing for more than six months, all (100%) maintained permanent housing for six months after housing assistance from Steps to Success ended.
	Objective 15: 50% fewer emergency care visits while in the program, as compared to year prior to enrollment	Data on the number of participants with emergency care visits was not available for the preliminary evaluation but will be reported in the final evaluation. Participants have not been enrolled in Steps to Success for a long enough period to conduct a pre/post analysis.
	Objective 16: 75% fewer days in psychiatric hospitalization while in the program, as compared to year prior to enrollment	The County's electronic health record system documents seven participants having psychiatric hospitalization in the past year prior to enrollment in the program, though this number may be underreported. None of the participants reported psychiatric hospitalization after enrollment in the program. Participants have not been enrolled in Steps to Success for a long enough period to conduct a pre/post analysis.
	Objective 17: 60% of participants will secure monthly income	Data on participants who secured monthly income was not available for the preliminary report but will be reported in the final evaluation.
	Objective 18: 90% of those eligible will enroll in CalFresh	Data on participants who enrolled in CalFresh was not available for the preliminary report but will be reported in the final evaluation.
Objective 19: 100% of those eligible will enroll in health insurance	Data on participants who enrolled in health insurance was not available for the preliminary report but will be reported in the final evaluation.	



## Appendix C. Steps to Success Logic Model

Process			Outcom
Inputs <i>What do we contribute to accomplish our activities?</i>	Activities <i>What activities does our program area do to accomplish our goals?</i>	Outputs <i>Once we accomplish our activities, what is the evidence of service delivery?</i>	Short- & Middle-Term <i>What changes do we expect to see during engagement period?</i>
<b>Funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSCC Prop 47 grant funding</li> <li>Leveraged funds</li> </ul> <b>Leadership, Oversight, and Staffing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Human Services</li> <li>Probation</li> <li>District Attorney</li> <li>Law Enforcement</li> <li>CBOs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Local Advisory Committee</li> <li>Dedicated staff               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 HHSA Analyst</li> <li>1 Paralegal</li> <li>1 Probation Officer</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 County vehicles</li> <li>1 passenger van</li> </ul> <b>EBPs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivational Interviewing</li> <li>Integrated Behavioral Health Treatment</li> <li>Seeking Safety</li> <li>Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAP)</li> <li>Moral Reconciliation Therapy</li> <li>12 Step Facilitation Therapy</li> <li>Housing First model and Rapid Rehousing</li> <li>Family Psychoeducation</li> </ul> <b>Program Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of diversion program eligibility criteria</li> <li>Law enforcement training</li> </ul>	<b>Outreach and Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referrals by law enforcement or other agencies (DA's Office, Probation) to diversion program</li> <li>Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS)</li> <li>Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS)</li> <li>American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Placement Criteria</li> <li>Vulnerability Index and Service Prioritization Decision</li> <li>Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)</li> <li>Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA)</li> <li>Self Sufficiency Matrix (SSM)</li> </ul> <b>Diversion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversion courts &amp; programs</li> <li>Restorative justice activities (e.g., case conferences, accountability circles)</li> </ul> <b>Intensive Case Management and Treatment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case management</li> <li>Substance abuse treatment</li> <li>Mental health treatment</li> <li>Permanent housing search and placement assistance</li> <li>Peer mentorship</li> <li>Employment assistance</li> </ul> <b>Civil Legal Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civil legal assistance to address issues that may pose a barrier in accessing basic necessities</li> <li>"Know your rights" educational workshops</li> </ul> <b>Permanent Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rental subsidies</li> <li>Financial assistance with deposits, utilities, and household items</li> </ul>	<b>Outreach and Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># referrals, by referral source</li> <li>Offense type</li> <li># of each assessment conducted/date completed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>150 people contacted and assessed during each year</li> <li>90% of all potential participants have all assessments completed within 30 days of initial engagement</li> </ul> </li> <li>ORAS scores</li> <li>Demographics of individuals who received assessment</li> <li>Referrals to 1) restorative justice &amp; civil legal services and 2) restorative justice only</li> <li># eligible for diversion w/ intensive supports &amp; w/o intensive supports</li> <li>Demographic breakdown of participants               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant demographics comparable to overall arrestee demographics in Yolo County</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Diversion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># choosing to participate in diversion program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% of individuals who are eligible will participate</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Intensive Case Management and Treatment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># participants receiving case management &amp; treatment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75 people provided with case management and treatment/yr.</li> <li>90% of participants engaged in case management &amp; treatment within 30 days of enrollment</li> </ul> </li> <li># receiving each type of service and assistance (mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, peer mentorship, securing ID &amp; documents, enrolling in benefits, housing placement)</li> </ul> <b>Civil Legal Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># participants receiving each type of civil legal assistance service (criminal records, landlord disputes, educational sessions)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200 people provided with civil legal education and/or services/yr.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Permanent Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># receiving housing supports services and # per service &amp; value of each service (security deposit assistance, utility payment assistance, moving assistance)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 people provided with rapid re-housing assistance/yr.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Criminal Justice (CJ) Involvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># completing &amp; not completing diversion program</li> <li>CJ involvement for participants engaged in the program:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of participants will not recidivate</li> <li>50% fewer days in jail</li> <li>50% fewer arrest/tickets (for felonies &amp; misdemeanors)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Behavioral and Physical Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement in behavioral and physical health treatment</li> <li># successfully completing case plan</li> <li># stepping down to lower level of care</li> <li># connected to primary case</li> <li>Reductions in emergency care visits               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% fewer emergency care visits while in the program as compared to year prior to enrollment</li> </ul> </li> <li>Reductions in psychiatric hospitalization               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% fewer days in psychiatric hospitalization while in the program as compared to year prior to enrollment</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Self-Sufficiency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge of supportive resources such as legal, financial, and health</li> <li>Access to basic necessities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of those eligible will enroll in CalFresh</li> <li>100% of those eligible will enroll in health insurance</li> </ul> </li> <li>Increased employment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60% of participants will secure monthly income (employment or permanent benefit)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Housing Stability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># placed in stable housing               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of participants will secure and/or main permanent housing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

How much did we do?  
 How well did we do it?

Is



\*Outputs and Outcomes in red denote Yolo County objectives