



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Frederick County Health Department

News Release

CONTACT: Cherish McMillan
Public Information Officer
Office of Planning, Assessment & Communication
301-600-3112
TTY: 800-735-2258
CMcMillan@FrederickCountyMD.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

JANUARY 3, 2022

Frederick County Launches LEAD Program

FREDERICK, MD -- The Frederick County Health Department and our agency partners are excited to announce the launch of a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program within the City of Frederick.

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is a pre-booking diversion program that diverts people out of the criminal justice system and into long-term harm reduction street-based peer case management. LEAD is a new tool for officers, allowing them to intervene and assist individuals in need through a collective response. Our agency partners include Frederick Police Department, Frederick County State's Attorney's Office, The City of Frederick and Office of the Mayor, Frederick County Office of the Public Defender and the Frederick County Division of Parole and Probation.

Andrea Walker, Director of Behavioral Health Services at the Frederick County Health Department announced, "After approximately four years of research into diversion programs and best practices, we are excited to launch this program and provide case management services utilizing a grant awarded to the health department by the Maryland Department of Health. Preliminary research into raw data from 2019 indicates that 90% of citations and 56% of arrests by FPD would have been eligible for LEAD services."

--more--

Barbara A. Brookmyer, M.D., M.P.H. ▪ Health Officer

350 Montevue Lane ▪ Frederick, MD 21702

Phone: 301-600-1029 ▪ Fax: 301-600-3111 ▪ MD TTY: 1-800-735-2258





Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Frederick County Health Department

Page 2/ Frederick County Launches LEAD Program

"Our officers are routinely called upon to deal with non-violent low-level offenses committed by individuals struggling with issues such as addiction, homelessness, and behavioral health problems. Arresting and prosecuting these people has proven time after time to be an ineffective way of deterring criminal activity and does nothing to help these individuals get their lives back on track. LEAD is not a free pass but rather provides an alternative solution to the criminal justice system in these cases. The goal of LEAD is to address the underlying cause of the problem, which will ultimately result in better outcomes for the individual, the police, and the community as a whole." said Chief Jason Lando, Frederick Police Department.

The State's Attorney's Office is excited for the launch of LEAD and is confident this program will reduce crime and recidivism, while providing the necessary treatment for substance use and mental illness in our community. Mayor Michael O'Connor, City of Frederick added, "The City of Frederick is proud to be a part of this partnership that acknowledges substance use and behavioral and mental health calls for service may better be handled through diversion opportunities first. Helping people avoid the stigma of a criminal record for low level offenses should work in the best interest of these individuals, the police, the court system, and our community." The Division of Parole and Probation is enthused to be a partner in Frederick County LEAD program, taking a proactive role in fulfilling our mission to restore lives, and support communities.

Questions about LEAD contact Jessica Ellis, LEAD Program Manager at 301-600-1702.

###