

Douglas County

Involuntary Mental Health Certification Diversion from the Criminal Justice System - Civil Court Development

JAG 2024
7/1/2025 to 6/30/2026

ID: Grant # 2023-DJ-24-08-29-1
App # DJ-24-53

Budget Total: \$61,250
Awarded: \$61,250
Grantee Revisions

SAM Expiration Date: July 29, 2026
County

Please click the "Edit" button in the top right corner of the page to edit to review your Budget & Statement of Work, Accept your Awards, Make any Requested Changes, Update Project Officials (as needed), and complete the Pre-Award Questionnaire.

Grantee Revisions

This project has been returned for additional revisions. Please make revisions to your project and submit to DCJ as soon as possible.

Instructions:

Please revise the following parts of the application to reflect the change in focus, as needed.

- Project Title
- Duration Date
- Project Description
- Goals and Outcomes
- Implementation Plan
- Evaluation Plan
- Budget and Budget Narrative

▼ Acknowledgement

I have received notification concerning my application to the JAG program, and:

Status**Grantee Revisions****▼ Table of Contents**

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Acknowledgement

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▼ Organization Information & Project Officials

Organization: Douglas County

Project Director: Laura Ciancone

Signature Authority: Douglas Debord

Financial Officer: Abby Fithian

Primary Contact: Laura Ciancone

▼ - Project Overview

Please be descriptive of the project to be funded and do not label it merely "JAG 2025 project." If this is a continuation application, please use previous project Title but add the year of funding, i.e., Year #2. (maximum length = 60 characters)

Project Title: Involuntary Mental Health Certification Diversion from the Criminal Justice System - Civil Court Development

The project period will be **October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026** If you anticipate an abbreviated project period (such as 6 months) or are a continuation grant which has been extended, you can adjust the start and/or end dates accordingly. NOTE: Grant award periods for continuation projects may differ. Call DCJ staff if you have questions.

Start Date: 7/1/2025

End Date: 6/30/2026

 Start Date must be on or after 10/01/2025.

Select the best description of your request for funds: Purchase of Goods, Program/Project; Program/Project and Purchase of Goods; Continuation.

Project Type: Program/Project and Purchase of Goods (skip continuation questions 10, 11, 12)

Indicate the appropriate Purpose Area for this project to ensure that the project falls within the parameters identified. Only one option can be chosen.

Purpose Area: 08 - Mental Health Programs

Placeholder for text

Accept SCIP Funding:

Continue with JAG Funding Only

Project Summary:

Douglas County, the 23rd Judicial District (JD) and other agencies are developing a civil court docket for individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI) meeting criteria for short-term certifications (CRS 27-65-109). Individuals with SMI are undertreated and disconnected from needed services leading to psychiatric deterioration, subsequent criminal justice system penetration, reliance on emergency systems, and overall poor health outcomes. This issue is evidenced by daunting waitlists for competency evaluations while in jail and, subsequently, waitlists for inpatient restoration. Beginning April 2024, stakeholders developed processes and programmatic expectations. While the court finalizes its ability to host hearings, stakeholders intend to launch a community-based pilot. The long-term impacts of this project are preventing engagement with criminal justice systems, diverting individuals with low-level crimes from the criminal justice system to treatment, and reducing recidivism.

▼ - Problem Statement**Problem Statement:**

Across the Nation, almost 2 million people with mental illnesses are held in jails yearly (Criminal Mental Health Project, Miami-Dade County Eleventh Judicial Circuit). In Colorado, individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI) are 12x more likely to be incarcerated than they are to be hospitalized (Treatment Advocacy Center). The Behavioral Health Administration, in line with Colorado legislation (HB22-1278), defines justice-involved individuals with chronic behavioral health needs, such as those who are deemed incompetent to stand trial and those with SMI as priority populations who are considered underserved. Generally, individuals with SMI are undertreated and disconnected from appropriate services and supports that would address the complexity of their needs and treatment preferences. Currently, it is rare to obtain meaningful, long-term inpatient stabilization for individuals living with SMI. It is estimated that approximately 247,762 adults in Colorado live with SMI (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); however, there are only 92 civil mental health beds that exist at the Colorado Mental Health Hospital at Fort Logan (Colorado Department of Human Services). The State recognizes the systemic challenges with holistically engaging and treating this population, which leads to mental health deterioration and reliance on the criminal justice system for intervention and safety measures.

One way this issue has manifested in Colorado is through an increase in competency proceedings. There has been an 80.4% increase in court orders for inpatient restoration treatment and overall 132.78% increase for both outpatient and inpatient restoration between FY 2017-18 and FY 2021-22 (Office of Civil and Forensic Mental Health; OCFMH). This has resulted in lengthy jail stays for individuals who are awaiting trial, which may result in further psychiatric deterioration, barriers to housing and employment, and increased difficulty with progressing towards recovery and overall wellness. This violation of civil liberties, as identified in a federal lawsuit brought on by Disability Law Colorado against the State of Colorado, has resulted in the State paying fines when there are unreasonably lengthy wait times to be evaluated and restored.

Often the route to engage treatment non-adherent individuals with SMI outside of the criminal justice system is through the civil involuntary treatment processes, both inpatient and outpatient. The civil mechanism for an involuntary mental health hold beyond the 72-hour hold, often referred to as a mental health certification, is an imperfect process. Douglas County has approximately 88 active inpatient and outpatient Short-Term Certifications (STC). There are challenges with providing meaningful care to individuals on an outpatient STC due to lack of adherence and accountability procedures in the current mental health system. There are significant issues along the trajectory of the certification process from identifying people who would benefit from a STC to successfully managing certifications in the community have been identified, e.g., challenges with executing pick-up orders, lack of continuity of care between inpatient and outpatient providers, insurance barriers, and lack of information sharing. In fact, representatives from the County's 50+ organizational member Mental Health Initiative have mapped the STC process and documented pain points and areas of opportunity along the pathway. Community members, leaders, and professionals in Douglas County have highlighted this process as "broken" and failing to meet the needs of people with SMI and their families who continue to fall between the cracks of the system. This failure more often than not results in costly engagement with the criminal justice system involvement and reliance on emergency systems of care.

This problem is a pain point in Colorado's behavioral health system. It is worth addressing because the alternative is continuing to accept crises, recidivism and poor health outcomes that ripple to criminal justice, law enforcement, county government, families, communities, and individuals living with SMI.

The County is requesting funds for this project because other funding opportunities do not exist at this time through general fund or the 23rd Judicial District (JD). While a formal request for funding has not been made, the County is generally not expanding its budget while awaiting clarity on the impact of property tax, and the

23rd JD has tight financials. For these reasons, the County is submitting this request for funds on behalf of its partners in this effort. The intent is to develop a civil court docket for individuals with SMI who meet criteria for STC, involuntary medication orders (IMOs), who are at risk for STC and/or IMO, and to explore opportunities for a competency diversion court docket.

▼ - Goals and Outcomes

Goals and Outcomes: These are the elements against which the project will be evaluated and which will be used to report quarterly and final progress. In addition, funded applicants will be required to report quarterly on specific performance measures developed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Using the format below; provide project/program goal(s), objectives/outcomes, measurement, and timeframe.

Note: There is one on-line system for quarterly narrative and financial reports (Fluxx) and a separate Federal on-line site for reporting performance measures (<https://bjapmt.ojp.gov/>).

Goals: Goals are logical, sensible, clearly written and directly tied to the project. Write one or more goals you will focus on this project. Goals are broad statements (i.e., written in general terms) that convey a project's overall intent to change, reduce, or eliminate the problem described.

Outcomes: Outcomes are realistic and able to be accomplished in the time frames described. Outcomes identify the amount of intended change expressed as a rate, percent or whole number. Include measures that will sufficiently document any change that occurs.

Please write at least one measurable objective/outcome for each goal. Outcome statements should include:

- The specific type of change or improvement that will occur
- The number or percent of individuals impacted (where appropriate)
- The expected magnitude, on average, of the expected change
- If client based, include Outcomes reflecting the number of clients to be served

Measurement: Measurement is the description of what data will be collected to measure the change. Please describe the specific measurement tool(s) you will use to collect data for each Outcome. If you do not have a tool, please state TBD (To Be Determined).

Timeframe: The quarter in which the Outcome will be completed.

Select the number of goals associated with this program. You are required to have at least 1 goal with an objective, outcome, and measurement.

The dropdown menu will show up to 7 goals, but you may not select more than 3 for the Justice Assistance Grant Program.

Number of Goals: 3

GOAL 1

Goal 1:

By August 2025, Douglas County and key stakeholders have a unique, enhanced process to manage individuals on civil mental health certifications and/or involuntary medication orders (IMO).

Outcome 1.1

Outcome:

Douglas County convenes a stakeholder group with mental/behavioral health, county, state, payor, regulatory, lived experience, advocacy, and justice/judicial representation. Stakeholders are parties to a MOU and utilize a Universal Release of Information (U-ROI).

Measurement:

Roster of participants, executed MOU, final U-ROI.

Timeline:

April 2024 – August 2025

Outcome 1.2**Outcome:**

Douglas County contracts with a licensed secure behavioral health transport entity to provide rides for pilot clients.

Measurement:

Copy of the RFP, copy of the contract including scope of work.

Timeline:

Upon grant execution (approximately July 1, 2025).

Outcome 1.3**Outcome:**

Pilot clients want to participate and continue to attend their scheduled appearances.

Measurement:

Attendance, distribution of incentives.

Timeline:

Upon pilot launch (approximately August 2025) through end of grant contract.

GOAL 2**Goal 2:**

Seventy-five percent (75%) of pilot clients, particularly those living with severe mental illness and with Anosognosia as a symptom, are successfully engaged in the pilot.

Outcome 2.1**Outcome:**

Douglas County and key stakeholders participate in the LEAP Institute's evidence-based communication skillset LEAP Training. The training has core competencies and learning objectives.

Measurement:

Attendance, LEAP program evaluation report.

Timeline:

Approximately August 2025 – December 2025

Outcome 2.2**Outcome:**

Pilot care team and other stakeholder professionals will be empowered with the education and tools to effectively address the #1 reason people with severe mental illness (SMI)

refuse help and a radically different approach that leads to trust, treatment, and recovery.

Measurement:

Attendance, LEAP program evaluation report.

Timeline:

Approximately August 2025 – December 2025

GOAL 3**Goal 3:**

The pilot demonstrates a reduction in hospitalizations, crisis contacts, and risk for justice involvement, and an increase in treatment follow through.

Outcome 3.1**Outcome:**

Douglas County contracts with a vendor for third party program evaluation.

Measurement:

Evaluation plan and final report.

Timeline:

Upon contract execution (approximately July 1, 2025)
through the grant term.

▼ - Program/Project Implementation Plan**Implementing Agency**

The Implementing agency is the agency that is responsible for the actual implementation of the project and may be the same as the applicant agency, a component of it, or another agency entirely. For example, the applicant agency is the county, but the sheriff's office is the implementing agency, or if the city is the applicant agency but a non-profit organization is the implementing agency. Provide the agency name if it is different from the applicant agency.

Same as Applicant?

No

Implementing Agency:

Colorado 23rd Judicial District

Implementing Agency: The field does not wrap, so scrolling is required. (maximum length = 255 characters)

Implementation Plan

What do you plan to do? What are the steps in your process? Your response should address the 6 questions below:

1. Describe what this project will do, how funds will be used and what will be different for your agency, community, population to be served as a result of these funds.
2. Aside from these requested grant funds, what other resources are available to support this project? Include collaborations within the community with other agencies and organizations and/or any funding that others will dedicate to support the project.
3. Outline the steps that will be taken to implement this proposed project throughout the grant period.

4. Who will be responsible for this project overall and who will be responsible for individual steps, if different?
5. How will you evaluate your progress throughout the grant period to know if you are on track or if changes need to be made due to unexpected challenges?
6. Provide a realistic and concrete plan to reduce reliance on federal JAG funds.

Implementation plan:

The purpose of this project is to launch an enhanced civil mental health certification management pilot, and eventually bring the model into the 23rd Judicial District (JD) as a specialty court docket. Individuals eligible for the pilot are those on civil mental health certifications and involuntary medication orders (IMO). Those with risk factors for certification and IMOs will be monitored as part of the pilot. This project will also assess opportunities for synergy with a competency diversion court for individuals who meet criteria for short-term certifications per HB 23-1138. This is in alignment with the JAG Board's priority to support behavioral health programming that prevents and/or reduces criminality related to substance use disorder and/or mental health disorders. The pilot brings together judicial, law enforcement, local government, treatment and community-based services systems to enhance the support available to individuals on certifications and IMOs and, once active in a court setting, would be one of the first (if not the first) in Colorado to do so. This funding request is for operational costs associated with the pilot and training fees for the stakeholders.

People living with SMI and disconnected from care are at disproportionate risk of penetrating the criminal justice system. These funds would help launch a precedent for best practices in non-criminal mental health proceedings in Colorado. The pathway to certifications and the management of those orders is fraught with pitfalls and lack of accountability. This pilot will establish accountability among critical systems who coordinate care for individuals on mental health certifications, IMOs and, eventually, competency orders.

Aside from the funds requested in this application, the County will lean on its Mental Health Collaborative (DCMHC), a partnership of over 50 organizational members who have been working together on strategic projects along the mental and behavioral health continuum of care for eleven years. The County's general fund pays for three staff to coordinate the activities of the DCMHC. These staff lead and co-lead work including the operations of the County's Co-Responder Program (the Community Response Teams - CRT), the enhanced care coordination program The Care Compact (TCC), and collaborations in veteran's mental health, crisis services, suicide prevention, high acuity youth and family care coordination, community education and training, and collaborations with other specialty programming.

In April 2024 DCMHC convened a working group to improve the civil certification process and develop an enhanced civil mental health certification pilot. The agencies supporting this project are: AllHealth Network, CRT, Highlands Behavioral Health, Centennial Peaks, Bridges of Colorado, Castle Rock Police Department, Parker Police Department, Lone Tree Police Department, Douglas County Sheriff's Office & Detentions, Douglas County, Developmental Pathways, 23rd Judicial District (Probation, Pre-Trial, District Attorney, Public Defenders), Colorado Access, Signal Behavioral Health Network, National Alliance on Mental Illness Arapahoe/Douglas Counties (NAMI ADCO), Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Office of Civil and Forensic Mental Health, Colorado State Court Administrator's Office, and the Colorado Judicial Branch Problem Solving Courts.

Project Steps:

Step 1: Plan and design. Convene the full stakeholder group above for a workgroup orientation and kick off (April 2024). Share the "why" of this work, and why each partner is needed; speed networking; share process map progress; establish goals, objectives and activities associated with improving the certification process; identify chair and co-chair; set meeting cadence; prep for court design work. This group will create and execute all standard operating procedures, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and evaluation plan. Individuals with lived experience will be included in pilot design.

Step 2: Enter contract amendment negotiations with Sky Ride, a Secure Behavioral Health Transportation provider. Sky Ride is a Region 12 Opioid Abatement Council vendor for transportation. Pilot stakeholders have identified transportation as a barrier. Adding transportation for pilot clients to the existing Sky Ride contract will help alleviate issues with attending scheduled appearances.

Step 3: Launch pilot. Collect data on key success indicators defined during Step 1. This step includes incentive purchases and program evaluation.

Step 4: Secure evidence-based training for pilot stakeholders. "LEAP (Listen-Empathize-Agree-Partner) is a set of evidence-based practices that create therapeutic alliances and trusting relationships with people suffering from severe mental illness. Designed to build and strengthen mutual respect, it helps people who are non-adherent, or partially adherent, to become more cooperative and engaged in treatment and services,

including medication, psychotherapy, psychosocial programs, club houses, peer-support, and supervised housing.

Agency responsibility for the project overall and steps:

The Douglas County Mental Health Division (Douglas County Department of Human Services) will be point for this project, including financial administrator support.

Evaluate progress throughout the grant period:

The staff supporting this grant have extensive experience managing contracts and grants. Expectations and timelines will be set up-front and monitored throughout the grant term. Staff, and the pilot stakeholder group will meet frequently to discuss progress and make necessary changes. Working group leads will represent systems impacted by this work, for example, community-based mental health and the judicial system. Their leadership and regular contact with the stakeholder network will ensure any changes and the impact they may have on this work are accounted for proactively.

Reduce reliance on federal JAG funds:

The budget assumes one-time funding. Due to the complex nature of developing and implementing this pilot, the County and its partners would greatly benefit from subject matter expertise (training) and operational enhancements. This type of support is temporary. There are general funded County staff dedicated to driving this work, and many committed stakeholder agencies ready and willing to collaborate. The goal is for the 23rd Judicial District to adopt this program after the pilot.

▼ - Project Evaluation

Describe the evaluation plan for measures and outcomes. In this section include at minimum, information about the following:

1. Based on the stated outcomes, what data will you collect in order to measure your success meeting those outcomes?
2. Describe your plan for collecting data on each specified outcome and managing the data once collected.
3. How will you analyze the collected data and use the data to change/improve your program?
4. How will you confirm whether your project was successful in making progress toward achieving your goal?
5. What is your approach to obtaining consent from participants and maintaining confidentiality (if client- or community-based outcomes)?

Project Evaluation:

The County will contract with a vendor to provide third party program evaluation.

▼ Budget and Budget Narrative

PERSONNEL

SUPPLIES & OPERATING

Item Name	Amount to be Charged to the Grant	Budget Narrative
Incentives	\$5,000.00	A. Client incentives for treatment plan progress 1. Up to \$5,000 total throughout the grant term for client incentives as they

		attend staffings, treatment appointments and make progress on their treatment plan and other goals.
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TRAVEL

EQUIPMENT

CONSULTANTS / CONTRACTS

Application must contain a detailed budget and budget narrative for anything listed under Consultants / Contracts. List each consultant, contractor, or type of service with the proposed fee (by eight-hour day or hourly rate). If the applicant agency is contracting with an outside agency to conduct the day-to-day operations of the project, the total cost should be in Consultant/Professional Services.

Rates (honoraria are not an allowable expense) for individual professional services must be based on an hourly rate (including preparation and travel time), and must have explicit, **separate** prior approval from DCJ. Rates for individual consultants cannot exceed \$650 per day or \$81.25 per hour. Justification is required to establish a "usual" or "going rate" for similar services. Some consultants provide services at a flat rate rather than an hourly rate. If that is the case, identify the service to be provided, including all covered expenses such as travel, and the rate for each "unit" of service. One example is polygraph exams that cost the same no matter where the polygrapher must travel to perform the exam. There are other federal regulations that pertain to some professional services/consultant rates. Contact DCJ if you have questions.

Professional services should be procured competitively. **Sole source contracts must be justified** and must have specific prior written approval from DCJ before execution of any contract, separate from approval to fund the project. **Sole source contracts of \$250,000 or over require federal pre-approval.** Refer to the Administrative Guide for Federal Justice Grant Programs or contact DCJ for additional guidance. Consultants must be able to sign the Certification of Debarment, OJP Form 406 1/1 (see section J of the Certified Assurances for details).

Budget Narrative and Justification: Explain why proposed consultant services cannot or should not be provided by project staff. Explain how the hourly rate or flat rate was determined. For each consulting organization added, indicate the number of people to be assigned to the project, number of hours per person per day to be spent on the project, and a breakdown of the contract price by major cost item (i.e., supplies, rent, equipment, travel, contracted services).

Click on the plus button to add a line item.

Name	Rate	Amount	Budget Narrative
Transportation		\$15,000.00	A. Transportation 1. Contract with licensed Secure Behavioral Health Transportation provider to get clients to and from staffings, appointments, etc.
Training		\$23,000.00	A. LEAP Institute LEAP Training (3 virtual sessions at \$6,000 each = \$18,000; 1 Applying LEAP to Challenging Cases & Common Scenarios course = \$5,000). 1. Evidence-based communication skills LEAP training for care team and pilot professional stakeholders.
Evaluation		\$18,250.00	A. Professional, Third-Party Pilot Evaluation 1. Contract with a qualified vendor for third-party pilot evaluation to demonstrate the impact of enhanced civil certification management on emergency, judicial and behavioral health systems, as well as individual quality of life outcomes.

INDIRECT COSTS

OVERALL BUDGET SUMMARY

After entering budget items, click 'Save' to view updated totals in the table above.

Overall Budget Summary

	Funding Request
Personnel	
Supplies and Operating	\$5,000.00
Travel	
Equipment	
Consultants / Contracts	\$56,250.00
Indirect Costs	
Totals	\$61,250.00

PROGRAM INCOME

Will this project earn Program Income? No

▼ Additional Financial Questions

Budget Questions

Answer these questions to ensure there is **NO** supplanting of other funds and that the project **IS** sustainable.

Have local funds been appropriated or allocated for any of the requested budget items?

No

If you didn't have federal funds available to conduct this project, would you still conduct it with other funds anyway?

Douglas County Mental Health Division staff has lead community partners in the research and development of a pilot. The stakeholder group intends to implement an enhanced civil mental health certification management pilot, with the goal of moving to a specialty court docket long term, and intends to participate in the development of a competency diversion docket as well. We plan to move forward and support this project with County staff time and in-kind time from community partners with or without funding. However, funding would provide infrastructure to implement a strong demonstration project that we believe could be a model for the state.

What would happen to this project in the event federal funding isn't available?

We plan to move forward and support this project with staff time and in-kind time from community partners with or without funding. The Douglas County Mental Health Collaborative and its steering committee has already

organized a stakeholder group of 22 partnering agencies and 50+ interested stakeholders. This project has broad support, including buy-in from the 23rd Judicial District Chief Judge, his court administrator, and the Judge presiding over specialty courts in the 23rd Judicial District.

Please click Save and Close, then click "Submit to DCJ."

Report & Payment Summary

Report Type	Due Date	ID #	Amount	Status
JAG Narrative	1/15/2025	649		Draft
Financial Report	1/15/2025	653		Draft
Payment Request (Form 3)	1/15/2025	657		Approved
JAG Narrative	4/15/2025	650		Draft
Financial Report	4/15/2025	654		Draft
Payment Request (Form 3)	4/15/2025	658		Draft
JAG Narrative	7/15/2025	651		Draft
Financial Report	7/15/2025	655		Draft
Payment Request (Form 3)	7/15/2025	659		Draft
JAG Narrative	10/15/2025	652		Draft
Financial Report	10/15/2025	656		Draft
Payment Request (Form 3)	10/15/2025	660		Draft

System Generated Emails

SYSTEM GENERATED EMAILS

JAG - Revision Instructions

Sent to "Laura Ciancone" <lciancone@douglas.co.us>,"Abby Fithian" <afithian@douglas.co.us>,"Michele Lovejoy" <michele.lovejoy@state.co.us>,"Deanna Stewart" <deanna.stewart@state.co.us> at 2:25 PM on October 6, 2025