



**ONE VOICE**

Advocating for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

**Please Support PCB CCJP 09-01**

**Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment  
and Crime Reduction Act  
by the Civil and Criminal Justice Policy Council**

This bill proposes creation of 3 pilot projects to develop safe, effective treatment options for individuals with mental illness who are re-entering the community from prisons and state treatment facilities or to help prevent them from inappropriately entering the justice system — offering much needed alternatives to costly, deep-end care in state hospitals. Services will be based on current research and best practices and will be tailored to individual needs. The bill does not require any new revenue to implement this initiative.

The legislation will build upon existing strategies proven effective in Florida and around the country, including Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement officers, mobile mental health crisis teams, pre-trial and post-arrest diversion services, intensive case management, and centralized mental health screening and assessment facilities. These types of programs increase access to services when and where they are needed, while also promoting public safety. Where implemented, these strategies have demonstrated success in:

- Reducing re-arrest rates by as much as 50% or more.
- Enhancing public safety and reducing injuries to law enforcement officers.
- Providing effective treatment and rehabilitation services at a lower cost than in state treatment facilities.
- Linking former inmates to the treatment and support services needed to ensure their successful re-entry to the community and to help reduce recidivism.
- Decreasing demand for costly services in jails, prisons, forensic facilities, emergency rooms, and other crisis settings.

By using new strategies to enhance access to federal benefits such as Social Security and Medicaid, this proposal will offset treatment costs currently funded exclusively by state general revenue dollars. In addition, incentives will be created to prevent individuals from inappropriately entering the justice system and to control the cost of treatment services. Proposed changes to the Medicaid state plan will create a comprehensive continuum of specialized home and community-based services targeting the specific needs of individuals involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the justice system.

A statewide leadership group formed within the existing Florida Mental Health and Substance Abuse Corporation Policy Council will provide oversight of the pilot programs. Performance standards and accountability measures will verify that providers and communities are qualified to provide services for the target population.

*Criminal Justice, Behavioral Healthcare and Consumer Advocate leaders  
Sharing ONE VOICE to improve mental health and substance abuse services*

175 Marlin Drive • Merritt Island, FL 32952 • 321- 453-8825  
[www.flpic.org](http://www.flpic.org)