

# Commitment to Change and Inside Out Travis County, FY12-14

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## Executive Summary

An important component of evidence-based re-entry programs is ensuring that interventions address specific risk-needs factors. In evidence-based practice, individuals who are at the higher level of risk for reoffending receive more intensive intervention targeted toward the factors that place them at risk for criminal conduct. For this reason, individuals at the Travis County State Jail who are identified as both being more likely to re-offend and as having a substance use problem that has contributed to criminal conduct are offered participation in two complementary programs, Inside Out Travis County (IOTC) and Commitment to Change (CTC).

The programs are administered by Travis County Justice Planning (Justice Planning). IOTC is a voluntary re-entry program that focuses on providing services to jailed inmates during their transition from the Travis County State Jail to the community once they have been released. The program targets men who are at high- or moderate-risk to re-offend. Services provided include therapeutic support and education; intensive case management; and re-entry planning and support. CTC is a substance use rehabilitation program operated by Travis County in a dedicated housing unit at the Travis County State Jail. The program targets men who have a history of substance use and are seeking to change their behavior using a cognitive behavioral curriculum. Services provided include daily cognitive behavioral education, as well as individual and group therapy and case management.

IOTC was begun in response to an identified need within CTC for increased support during the re-entry period. With the establishment of IOTC, individuals at moderate to high risk for re-offense had access to intensive aftercare services that were previously unavailable to those exiting state jail, who are rarely on any type of community supervision after release. This report evaluates the intersection of the IOTC and CTC programs and compares their activity and outcomes with that of clients receiving only IOTC services and only CTC services.

Between FY12-FY14, 73 inmates participating in IOTC and CTC simultaneously were released from Travis County State Jail. Additionally, 409 inmates participated in IOTC without participating in CTC, and there were 126 CTC clients who have never participated in IOTC.

This evaluation found that clients receiving both services completed CTC classes at a higher rate than those who did not take part in IOTC (72% compared to 53%). After release, clients receiving both services also completed aftercare at a higher rate (43% compared to 16%). Looking at IOTC participation, clients shared between the two programs completed IOTC services at a higher rate than those receiving only IOTC services (32% compared to 13%).

## Key Finding and Recommendation

- Clients who participated in both CTC and IOTC completed services at a higher rate than clients who only participated in one service. Clients who participated in both services recidivated at a lower rate than clients who only participated in IOTC.
  - **Recommendation 1:** Consolidate efforts, staff, and resources by implementing a tiered approach to serving Travis County residents at the Travis County State Jail. Provide substance abuse intervention, one-on-one counseling, and re-entry planning to all participants while offering anger management, workforce development, and other related programming targeted to individuals based on need. Consider renaming the consolidated programs to reflect a more unified approach.

## Introduction

Every year, the Travis County State Jail releases approximately 700 state jail inmates to Travis County. Research has shown that being on parole supervision after release from incarceration inhibits substance use<sup>1</sup>, but more than 99% of state jail inmates released from the Travis County State Jail are discharged to the community with no supervision.<sup>2</sup> About one-third of those being released from Travis County State Jail served time for drug possession, which is also the most frequent offense type reported among individuals released from that facility. Individuals returning home often face challenges with finding employment, securing housing, and managing chronic health conditions (including mental health and substance use). Without a formal source of supervision or support, many of the highest risk individuals struggle to re-integrate and ultimately recidivate.

## Overview

Commitment to Change (CTC) and Inside Out Travis County (IOTC) are two programs operated by Travis County at the Travis County State Jail that work to help clients make positive changes in their lives and avoid future involvement in crime. CTC targets individuals with a history of substance use, and IOTC targets individuals who are at high risk to re-offend. When IOTC was added to the programming at the state jail, staff expected overlap between the clients served by CTC and IOTC. IOTC was seen as a way to provide additional aftercare support to CTC clients who struggled with reintegration.

This report examines the activity and outcomes for clients participating in both CTC and IOTC and released from state jail between FY12 and FY14, the period extending from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2014. The report also compares the CTC-IOTC shared clients both to clients who received only CTC services and those who received only IOTC services.<sup>3</sup> Because CTC and IOTC target different populations that have different needs and potentially different levels of risk for recidivism, recidivism rates in this context may not indicate whether one program is performing better than another.

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<sup>1</sup> La Vigne et al. 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics on people released from state jail were calculated on data provided by TDCJ on Travis County State Jail releases to Travis County, State Fiscal Year 2005-2013.

<sup>3</sup> A more detailed analysis of the services provided by IOTC and CTC can be found in separate evaluation reports.

## History of the Community Justice Center

Before describing IOTC and CTC, it is important to describe an initiative by the state that sought to make it easier for individuals charged with felonies to be accountable for their crime, yet to also be able to return to their community afterwards to live productive lives.

The Texas Legislature created a fourth degree felony, also referred to as a state jail felony, in the 73rd Legislative Session (1993) so that lower level offenders, typically convicted of small amounts of illegal drugs or property offenses, could serve shorter sentences in state prisons in their local communities. The creation of state jails was intended to allow larger urban counties to keep offenders closer to their communities for an easier transition back to society. The original state jail legislation permitted judges to sentence offenders to short periods of incarceration, up to two years, followed by longer terms of community supervision or probation, during which offenders could participate in rehabilitative programs. However, as legislation changed over the years, the original concept altered greatly from its original intent. On average, Travis County defendants serve 9 months in state jail<sup>4</sup>, and they are not on community supervision after release.

The Travis County State Jail (formerly called the Travis County Community Justice Center (CJC)) is a state-owned jail located in Travis County and designed to house approximately 1,600 state jail felons. Commissioners Court lobbied heavily to the state to have a state jail built in Travis County so that rehabilitative programs and services could be provided locally to offenders. The CJC was planned to be qualitatively different from other state prison facilities; namely, its programs were designed around the concept of “community justice.” Its location was intended to keep offenders closer to home and to keep them involved with their family and community during incarceration. In addition, the facility was designed to provide a holistic array of programs such as family therapy and several volunteer-based programs. Other services intended included case management and community resource development.

Travis County stands out in its investment of local tax dollars at a state operated prison. Since 2000, Travis County Commissioners Court has funded over four million dollars for programs targeting state jail felons. Efforts at the state jail funded by Travis County include:

- Crime Prevention Institute (1999-2010)
- Resource Fair (2000-current)
- Capital Area Training Foundation/FOCUS Program (2001-2005)
- Travis County Re-entry Success Guide (2005-current)
- Construction of Kennel to Establish Dog Training Program (2005)
- Commitment to Change (2005-current)
- Family Forward, family therapy (2005-2007)
- A New Entry, case management (2005-2007)
- Encore House, transitional housing (2005-2007)

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<sup>4</sup> The average was calculated on data provided by TDCJ on Travis County State Jail releases to Travis County, State Fiscal Year 2005-2013. Length of stay was calculated from sentence start date to release date.

- Transitional Housing (2007 – current)
- PREP (2009-current)
- Construction of Visitation Center (2009)
- Inside Out of Travis County (2011-current)

CTC was created in FY05 to add substance use rehabilitation into the array of services that aid in the re-entry and re-integration of offenders. IOTC started in FY12, with the re-allocation of funding from CTC intended to enhance the aftercare supports available to clients at high-risk of recidivating.

## Program Design

Current research in criminal justice suggests that to reduce recidivism, rehabilitative programs should include cognitive-behavioral interventions<sup>5</sup> and adhere to risk-need-responsivity principles.<sup>6</sup> CTC uses a curriculum that takes a cognitive behavioral approach to addressing participants' substance use and criminal conduct. CTC targets the criminogenic need factors substance use and antisocial beliefs and attitudes that place individuals at risk for future criminal involvement. CTC provides cognitive behavioral therapy in a dedicated housing unit at the Travis County State Jail. CTC/IOTC shared clients receive both a cognitive behavioral intervention to address substance use and intensive case management during the period immediately before and after release from state jail. When IOTC began operation, it was proposed to be a means to provide an additional aftercare support to high-risk CTC clients since previous attempts at offering aftercare had been under-utilized. In FY12, Inside Out Travis County (IOTC) began providing re-entry case management and therapy to clients beginning during incarceration and after release from state jail.

## Target Population

An important component of evidence-based re-entry programs is ensuring that interventions address specific risk-needs factors. Clients receiving both CTC and IOTC have an identified substance use need and a high- or moderate-risk to re-offend. Because both programs are based at the Travis County State Jail, all clients are men and are incarcerated for a state jail felony.

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<sup>5</sup> Lowenkamp et al. 2009; Wilson et al. 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Lowenkamp et al. , 2006a; Lowenkamp et al., 2006b.

## Budget

There is not a separate budget for the overlap between the CTC and IOTC population, but the cost of serving clients with both programs as a percentage of each program's budget is \$116,380. The shared CTC/IOTC clients represent 42% of the CTC clients and 19% of the IOTC clients. IOTC has three full time staff providing direct services, and CTC has two full time staff providing direct services. The programs share a case management coordinator. The annual cost to staff CTC is \$174,172, and the annual cost to staff IOTC is \$233,644.

## Who Was Served?

This report examines the activity of 73 clients who were jointly served by CTC and IOTC and released from state jail between FY12 and FY14.

## Demographics

Demographic data were collected on all CTC and IOTC clients. Because the programs take place at the Travis County State Jail, all clients are male. The average age of clients participating in CTC and IOTC is in the late thirties, but the age range spans from the late teens to individuals approaching retirement age. When compared to clients who only participated in CTC, the CTC/IOTC shared clients are the same age on average, but a larger percentage of the clients receiving both services were in their thirties or forties.

Table 1: Age, IOTC/CTC Shared Clients Compared to IOTC Only, FY12-14

|             | CTC Only |      | CTC/IOTC |      | IOTC Only |      |
|-------------|----------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| Average Age | 37       |      | 37       |      | 37        |      |
| Youngest    | 19       |      | 19       |      | 17        |      |
| Oldest      | 64       |      | 60       |      | 64        |      |
| 17-25       | 22       | 17%  | 15       | 8%   | 68        | 17%  |
| 26-30       | 19       | 15%  | 5        | 7%   | 74        | 18%  |
| 31-40       | 34       | 27%  | 24       | 33%  | 111       | 27%  |
| 41-50       | 36       | 29%  | 23       | 32%  | 105       | 26%  |
| 51+         | 15       | 12%  | 6        | 8%   | 51        | 12%  |
| Total       | 126      | 100% | 73       | 100% | 409       | 100% |

The CTC/IOTC shared clients had a higher percentage of clients who were Hispanic than either the CTC Only group or the IOTC only group.

Table 2: Race/Ethnicity, IOTC/CTC Shared Clients Compared to IOTC Only

|                                  | CTC Only |      | CTC/IOTC |      | IOTC Only |      |
|----------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| American Indian/Alaska Native    | 0        | 0%   | 1        | 1%   | 3         | 1%   |
| African American                 | 53       | 42%  | 23       | 32%  | 151       | 37%  |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 0        | 0%   | 0        | 0%   | 1         | 0%   |
| White                            | 46       | 37%  | 27       | 37%  | 127       | 31%  |
| Other                            | 0        | 0%   | 0        | 0%   | 2         | 0%   |
| Unknown                          | 0        | 0%   | 0        | 0%   | 23        | 6%   |
| Hispanic (of any race)           | 27       | 21%  | 22       | 30%  | 102       | 25%  |
| Total                            | 126      | 100% | 73       | 100% | 409       | 100% |

## Recidivism

Recidivism was measured by gathering arrest information based on bookings for arrests on new charges in Travis County. Two recidivism measures are presented: any arrest for a new charge and an arrest for a new charge with a severity of misdemeanor B or higher.

To follow every client in a cohort for one year following release from state jail, recidivism rates are calculated with arrest data extending one year after the period being analyzed has ended. At the time of this report one-year re-arrest data were available through FY13. If an individual had more than one arrest during the follow-up period, only the first arrest was counted.

There were 43 CTC/IOTC shared clients released from state jail between FY12 and FY13. Of those, 18 or 42% were arrested for a new offense of any severity. The recidivism rate for CTC/IOTC shared clients is about the same as that of clients who received only CTC services (42% compared to 40%). The CTC/IOTC clients had a lower recidivism rate than clients who received only IOTC services.

Table 3: Recidivism Rate (Any Arrest), IOTC/CTC Shared Clients Compared to IOTC Only

|            | CTC Only |      | CTC/IOTC |      | IOTC Only |      |
|------------|----------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| No Arrest  | 49       | 60%  | 25       | 58%  | 121       | 44%  |
| Any Arrest | 32       | 40%  | 18       | 42%  | 156       | 56%  |
| Total      | 81       | 100% | 43       | 100% | 277       | 100% |

When considering only arrests for offenses with a severity of at least Misdemeanor B, the recidivism rate for CTC/IOTC shared clients is the same as that of clients who received only CTC services (37%) and lower than that of clients receiving only IOTC services.

Table 4: Recidivism Rate (Misdemeanor B and Above), IOTC/CTC Shared Clients Compared to IOTC Only

|                                       | CTC Only |      | CTC/IOTC |      | IOTC Only |      |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| No Arrest for Misdemeanor B or Higher | 51       | 63%  | 27       | 63%  | 142       | 51%  |
| Arrest for Misdemeanor B or Higher    | 30       | 37%  | 16       | 37%  | 135       | 49%  |
| Total                                 | 81       | 100% | 43       | 100% | 277       | 100% |

## Services Provided

CTC/IOTC shared clients received services from two programs: a substance use rehabilitation program and an intensive case management/therapy program. CTC is a cognitive-behavioral course designed to address substance use and criminal conduct. Program length can be tailored to meet the needs of clients court-ordered to different lengths of time. Participants live together in a dedicated housing unit that can hold up to 24 men. They receive programming using a cognitive behavioral curriculum and work on homework between classes. After returning to the community, clients are encouraged to participate in aftercare. Court-ordered clients are required to participate in aftercare. IOTC services typically begin about ninety days prior to release. While at the state jail, clients attend one-hour group counseling sessions and individual meetings with their social worker. After returning to the community, clients continue to meet with their social worker to work on their re-entry goals and connect with community-based resources. In addition to IOTC and CTC, clients may have also attended PREP employment-readiness training and/or a State Jail Resource Fair.<sup>7</sup>

## Theory

Adding IOTC to the array of services offered at Travis County State Jail was expected to benefit the highest risk CTC clients by improving aftercare services available to them. Because clients in the IOTC program are assessed using a validated risk assessment tool that yields information on which factors place the individual at risk for future criminal involvement, it was theorized that the assessment would lead to improved case management and a greater reduction in recidivism.

The CTC program addresses substance use and criminal conduct using a cognitive behavioral therapy curriculum, *Criminal Conduct and Substance Abuse Treatment: Strategies for Self-Improvement and Change*. The curriculum addresses behavior patterns contributing to substance use; develops skills related to communication and critical thinking; and cultivates prosocial attitudes. In CTC, staff lead clients through a systematic examination of how they respond to situations and guide clients toward developing new, more appropriate behaviors.

IOTC operates from a person-centered, Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) approach. When operating from that paradigm, the social worker assesses the individual for his particular needs and level of change tolerance. Based on that, social workers utilize any number of therapeutic models: solutions-

<sup>7</sup> A full discussion of PREP and the State Jail Resource Fair can be found in the IOTC evaluation.

focused, relational, cognitive behavioral, Gestalt, narrative, etc. Social workers provide individual therapy during which there may be multiple theories utilized. The program uses the principle of Risk Needs Responsivity (RNR), which is that it serves those individuals who are at the higher level of risk for reoffending with services targeted toward criminogenic needs while responding to any barriers toward treatment.

## Group Sessions

Clients in both the CTC program and IOTC attended daily programming with CTC and as part of the IOTC program, attended one-hour group counseling sessions with the topics of: goal setting; relationships; self-compassion; anxiety management; prosocial networking; and motivational enhancement. The average number of groups attended is consistent across time and also between the CTC/IOTC shared clients and the clients who received only IOTC services.

Table 5: IOTC Group Sessions, CTC/IOTC Compared to IOTC Only

|                                   | CTC/IOTC |     | IOTC Only |     | Total |     |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-----|-------|-----|
| Average Number of Groups Attended | 3        |     | 3         |     | 3     |     |
| Attended Groups                   | 51       | 70% | 203       | 50% | 254   | 53% |
| Number Released                   | 73       |     | 409       |     | 482   |     |

The CTC/IOTC shared clients attended IOTC groups at a higher rate than the clients who received only IOTC services (70% compared to 50%)

## Individual Meetings and Case Management

As part of the IOTC program, clients are required to meet with their social worker weekly, with a minimum of six visits in order to be eligible for services in the community. In the final individual meetings, clients develop a 72-hour plan, which focuses on the resources a client will use to succeed in the first three days after release. Clients in both programs engaged in individual meetings at a similar rate as those who only in the IOTC program.

Table 6: Pre-Release Individual Meetings, IOTC/CTC Shared Clients Compared to IOTC Only

|                                    | CTC/IOTC |     | IOTC Only |     | Total |     |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-----|-------|-----|
| Average Number Individual Meetings | 7        |     | 6         |     | 6     |     |
| Attended Individual Meetings       | 68       | 93% | 369       | 90% | 437   | 91% |
| Number Released                    | 73       |     | 409       |     | 482   |     |

## Outcomes

Clients who participated in both CTC and IOTC showed higher rates of program completion than clients receiving either only CTC or only IOTC. Below are comparisons of the rates of program completion

between clients who received both CTC and IOTC and clients who only received one service. A more detailed analysis of the outcomes for each program can be found in their respective evaluations.

## Commitment to Change

Clients receiving both services completed CTC classes at a higher rate than those who did not take part in IOTC (72% compared to 53%). After release, clients receiving both services also completed aftercare at a higher rate (43% compared to 16%).

Figure 1: Percentage Completing CTC Classes

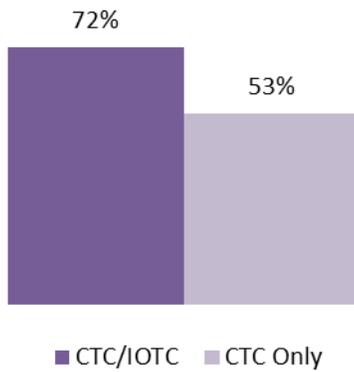
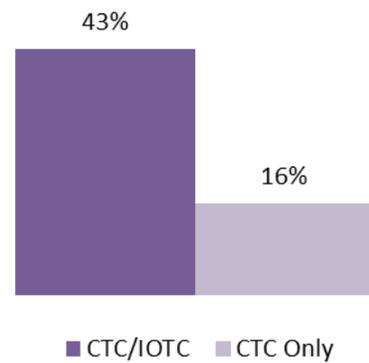


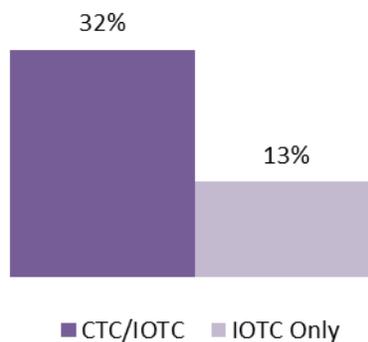
Figure 2: Percentage Completing Aftercare



## Inside Out Travis County

Looking at IOTC participation, clients shared between the two programs completed IOTC services at a higher rate than those receiving only IOTC services (32% compared to 13%).

Figure 3: Completing IOTC



## Conclusion

Since the Travis County State Jail first opened, Travis County has sought solutions for rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders serving sentences there. In keeping with the risk-needs-responsivity principle, clients who have both substance use problems and high risk to re-offend are targeted with a higher intensity of programming. Clients receiving both services complete both programs at a higher rate than clients receiving either one of the services individually. Clients receiving both services recidivated at about the same rate as clients only receiving CTC, and they recidivated at a lower rate than those receiving only IOTC.

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## **Appendix 1. Data Sources: Definitions and Explanations**

### **The Travis County Integrated Justice System (Tiburon)**

The Travis County Integrated Justice System (Tiburon) is a series of data tables and databases used by many government agencies in the county for electronically storing administrative records. These data include records of most people arrested and booked in Travis County (except expungements). This study uses these data to examine the recidivism of the CTC clients and their comparison group.

This study also used Tiburon to generate a list of program clients and capture their program activity.

### **Inside Out Travis County Program Database**

The evaluation of IOTC draws on the Inside Out Travis County (IOTC) database, which was built by Travis County Information Technology Services. The database captures information on individual clients, tracking their entry into and exit from the program, their assessments, intake information, notes on all interactions, their linkages to community resources, and other relevant data.

### **Analysis**

Each client is represented one time in this analysis. If a client has participated in the program more than once, only the activity occurring between the first intake and the first exit from the program is included in this analysis. To create a group of CTC clients for comparison, any client who had ever received IOTC was excluded from the list of CTC clients. The final evaluation data set was processed using SPSS to provide counts for specific measures.

## Appendix 2. Recidivism Analysis Methodology

### 1. Locate CTC and IOTC clients to follow

This recidivism analysis selected all records in the IOTC database that indicated the client was also a participant in CTC and who were released from state jail in FY12 and FY13 (October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2013). Clients were selected if they had an intake date, meaning they had been accepted into the program, regardless of whether they completed services.

### 2. Identify the start date for the recidivism follow-up period

This study operationalized the recidivism follow-up period as the 365 day period starting on the day a person was released from state jail. The end date of the analysis, the last day of FY13, allows at least one full year (365 days) for the recidivism follow up period.

### 3. Screen CTC and IOTC clients for recidivism

The outcome evaluation examined whether clients were arrested and booked for any new offenses for Class C Misdemeanor offenses and above. To conduct this recidivism screen, this study ran the clients against all arrest and jail bookings (Tiburon) to see if there was a match on the MNI number.

The MNI number is a person-specific code that is assigned to a person when he first enters the Travis County Criminal Justice System. The unique MNI number makes it easy to see if the person has a subsequent arrest-booking event: the researcher simply searches the MNI field for the specific MNI to isolate the individual's arrest-booking history. Specific code values identify new arrest-bookings

### 4. Specific code values used to identify new arrest-bookings

This study operationalized new arrest and jail bookings using two variables in the Tiburon data. First, the Authority Code (Auth\_Code) variable had to have at least one of three values: CCN (Community Court New Charge), CWART (taken into custody for a Class C Misdemeanor offense), or New (New Arrest). Second, the jail code (BJ\_TYP\_PRIS) for these charges had to have either CITY or CTY as a value. Finally, the booking date of the variable had to occur within 365 days of the client's release from state jail.

### 5. This recidivism analysis includes Class C Misdemeanors

In line with Justice Planning practices, re-arrests indicating "any arrest" reported include Class C misdemeanors. A second measure of recidivism "arrests for a misdemeanor B or higher" is also provided because other evaluations of state jail activity, typically report re-arrests for offenses with a severity of at least misdemeanor B. The second measure of recidivism is provided in that context.

