



Four Ohio counties join Data-Driven Justice Initiative

Cuyahoga, Franklin, Lucas and Shelby counties are part of the more than 100 city, county and state jurisdictions to join onto the President's Data-Driven Justice (DDJ) initiative to collect, study and share data and best practices for using data to better address mental illness in jails across the nation. The initiative was launched to break the cycle of incarceration among Americans suffering with mental illness.

As part of signing onto DDJ, the jurisdictions have committed to three things:

1. Combining data across system silos to identify individuals who are at high-risk and finding ways to provide effective, community-based services to help break the cycle of incarceration.
2. Developing tools and trainings to help first responders effectively de-escalate crisis situations and safely divert people to the appropriate service providers instead of arresting them.
3. Using evidence-based, objective, risk based assessment tools in pre-trial assessments. This will allow individuals who are considered low risk defendants to be safely released from jails.

Nationwide, local governments spend more than \$20 billion yearly on jails, and 64 percent of the incarcerated suffer from mental illness. Almost 70 percent have a substance abuse disorder, and 44 percent suffer from other chronic health problems. Treatment options are very limited in most jails, and there are challenges in sharing health information about inmates among law enforcement, courts and jails. [Read more...](#)