

# San Francisco LEAD

## Research Considerations



# Goals from the Grant

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- Reduce the recidivism rate for low-level drug and alcohol offenders in San Francisco's Tenderloin and Mission districts.
- Strengthen collaboration across city departments and with community-based organizations to better meet the needs of individuals with a history of substance abuse and low-level drug offenses by diverting them from the criminal justice system and into harm reduction based social services.
- Improve LEAD participants' health and housing status.

# Unique Context of San Francisco

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- Commitment to Treatment
- Diversions Programs (Post-booking)
  - Neighborhood Courts, First Offender Prostitution Program, Community Justice Center, Pre-Trial Diversion, Collaborative Courts, and Intensive Supervision Court
- Co-Occurring Charges

# Research Design: Proposed by State Evaluators (CSU-LB)

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## Traditional Experimental Model

- Officer/Deputy determines -- at the time of initial contact -- whether an individual meets the LEAD eligibility criteria
- Officer/Deputy enters demographic data into app
- App randomly assigns individual into treatment or control group
  - If assigned control group Officer/Deputy completes LEAD coversheet and conducts business as usual
  - If assigned treatment group Officer/Deputy completes LEAD coversheet and offers LEAD as alternative to business as usual

# Experimental Research Concerns

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The Operations Working Group expressed concern about using a traditional experimental design.

- Buy-in from Law Enforcement
- Community Trust
- Participation Level



# Research Design: Revised with Input from Operations Workgroup

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The Operations Working Group met with the State evaluators to share their concerns and discuss possible options. Together they came up with the following proposed research design for review by the Policy Committee.



# Research Design: Revised Proposal for Policy Committee Review and Approval

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## Rigorous Quasi-Experimental Model

- Officer/Deputy determines -- at the time of initial contact -- whether an individual meets the LEAD eligibility criteria
- Predetermined number of individuals are referred to LEAD each month
- Remaining individuals are placed in Standby Group
- Officer/Deputy completes coversheet for all individuals
- From Standby Group – propensity score matching used to develop Comparison Group
- Individuals stay in Comparison Group for 6 months
- After leaving Standby or Comparison Groups individuals may participate if they have another LEAD legible offense

# Proposed Research Design

