

# Ohio's Stepping Up Initiative



## **The Hon. Evelyn Lundberg Stratton**

Ret. Ohio Supreme Court Justice  
Project Director, Ohio's Stepping Up Initiative  
Of Counsel, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease

# Ohio's Stepping Up Initiative

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

1. Understand what Stepping Up is and how it can help reverse the cycle of those with mental illness being in the de facto hospital of a jail or prison.
2. Learn about tools and resources available through Stepping Up and its partners.
3. Learn what role you can play in reversing that cycle.

# THE MISSION

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Help criminal offenders with mental illnesses get connected to clinical treatment and other services so they can get well, make positive life changes, and stay out of jail.

*“The increased involvement of people with mental illness and/ or substance use disorders in the criminal justice system is a serious problem. By connecting individuals with clinical treatment and pre-release care coordination services, they are more likely to get well and make positive life changes.”*

– Lori Criss, Director

Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

# BY THE NUMBERS

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2M

Number of people with serious mental illnesses admitted to U.S. jails each year.

~3/4

Incarcerated adults with serious mental illnesses have co-occurring substance use disorders, resulting in jails having become de facto inpatient psychiatric facilities across the nation.

30%

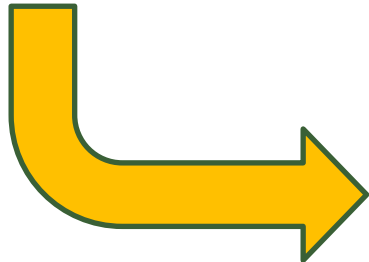
Ohio incarcerated population that have been diagnosed with some form of mental illnesses.

# THE OHIO PROJECT

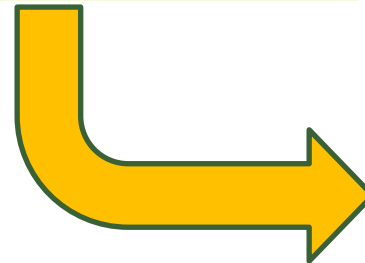
## CAUSE & EFFECT

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Closure of state-run institutions for those with severe mental illnesses.



Discharged into the community, patients put a strain on the already underfunded and ill-equipped community services.



In Ohio, and across the nation, jails have become a revolving door for people with mental illnesses.

# THE OHIO PROJECT

## REDUCING JAIL INCARCERATION

Stepping Up is a national effort to break the cycle of jail being the de facto mental health hospital.

**Goal:** Affect positive change through strong community and statewide partnerships, so that people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders get connected with the help they need.

# OHIO QUICK FACTS

**30%** of Ohio's inmates have mental illnesses

**78** county jails (all of them) serve, in some capacity, as inpatient psych facilities

**\$41.7+ MILLION** spent on mental health care and medications for Ohio's inmates with mental illness

# NATIONAL NUMBERS

**2**  
MILLION

people with serious mental illnesses are admitted to jails each year

**75%**

have co-occurring substance use disorders

**2X-3X**

more taxpayer money is spent on incarcerated adults with mental illnesses who require intervention



# THE OHIO PROJECT

## Reform Is Coming

**Validated screening and assessment tools.**

**Diversion programs instead of jail time for those with mental illnesses charged with low-level crimes.**

**Embedded mental health professionals to help ensure that people with mental illnesses are connected to community-based services.**

**Specialized courts that meet the unique needs of defendants with mental illnesses.**

**Training and response programs to improve law enforcement's response to the needs of people with mental illnesses**

**Technical assistance and resources for housing needs.**

**988 and crisis continuum responses from mobile response teams to full crisis center.**

# 5 WAYS

## OHIO CAN HELP COUNTIES 'STEP UP'

### 1) Join the growing list of supporters.

Become a Stepping Up Ohio registered county by passing a resolution in support of the initiative.

[www.stepuptogether.org/take-action](http://www.stepuptogether.org/take-action)

### 2) Access the Stepping Up Toolkit.

Once you've become a supporter, you'll get a link to the toolkit. Follow the link for planning guides, webinars, educational handouts, publications, and more.

### 3) Request a visit from the Stepping Up Ohio team.

Our team will meet with you in person or virtually, bringing resources, policies, and best practices to share. We'll help you set and prioritize your next steps.

Contact: [kathleen@mightycrow.com](mailto:kathleen@mightycrow.com)

### 4) Get access to resources to help with your county plan.

As a Stepping Up Ohio participant, you get access to a variety of technical resources, such as learning opportunities, peer exchanges, and a newsletter containing important grant and training information and conferences of interest.

### 5) Map your county's resources and needs.

# ATTORNEY GENERAL'S TASK FORCE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND MENTAL ILLNESS

- In 2011, the Ohio Attorney General formed this task force to help stop the cycle and increase access to treatment.
- Originally led by co-chairs:
  - Then Attorney General, Mike DeWine
  - Ohio Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.)
- Now led by co-chairs:
  - Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost
  - Ohio Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.)

## **Mission**

Reduce the number of persons with mental illness trapped in the criminal justice system.

# ATTORNEY GENERAL'S TASK FORCE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND MENTAL ILLNESS

- Aging
- Best Practices & Mental Health Training for Jails
- Competency Restoration & Probate Court Issues
- Diversion & Re-Entry
- Education & Stigma
- Housing
- Juvenile Justice
- Law Enforcement
- Policy & Legislative
- Probation & Community Supervision
- Psychiatry & Treatment
- Research & Best Practices
- Resources & Care Connections
- Specialized Dockets
- Veterans Courts & Military Affairs

# STOP THE CYCLE

## Join the Task Force

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