

Responding to Criminal Justice Reform, Mental Health & Equality Through an Innovative Re-Entry Support Team

Tiffany Leon-Synnott, JD

Level

Introductory

Room

Track

Legal, PALs

CE

CPA/BBS/CJER/MCLE

Bio

Tiffany Synnott, JD is the Deputy Director of Sacramento County's Conflict Criminal Defenders (CCD). Prior to her role at CCD, Tiffany was an attorney with the Sacramento County Public Defender's Office for 22 years. At the Sacramento County Public Defender's Office, Tiffany developed and implemented a Felony Mental Health Diversion Program, Misdemeanor Mental Health Diversion Program, Incompetent to Stand Trial Mental Health Diversion Program, Juvenile Trauma Response Court, Pretrial Support Program, a Housing Engagement Legal Program, and a Record Modification Unit. Several of the programs Tiffany developed and implemented were recognized and awarded at the state and national level. Tiffany has also testified several times before the legislature as an expert in the intersection of mental health, criminal justice, and homelessness. Since leaving the Public Defender's office, Tiffany continues to be committed to bridging gaps in our criminal justice system. In her new role at CCD, Tiffany has created a Re-Entry Support Team, Pretrial Program, Felony Mental Health Diversion Program, IST Mental Health Diversion program, Collaborative Court Program, a Pro Per Redaction Unit, and a Post Conviction Unit. The programs Tiffany has developed at CCD ensure that pro per defendants, privately retained defendants, and defendants represented by CCD all have equal access to services and programs in Sacramento County.

Narrative

An intersection between criminal justice and mental health exists. This growing intersection has led to significant criminal justice reform in legislation over the past few years. These new laws have impacted our entire criminal justice system. As programs developed in response to changes in law, a need existed to ensure that all individuals had equal access to services and support. Sacramento County Conflict Criminal Defenders responded to this need by developing an innovative program called the Re-Entry Support Team (REST). REST was created to ensure private attorneys, pro per individuals, and the Conflict Criminal Defenders had equal access to services and support. This presentation will discuss the current landscape of our criminal justice system, summarize significant California legislative changes that have impacted the intersection of criminal justice and mental health, and present data regarding a new innovative program called REST, designed to respond to criminal justice reform, mental health, and equality.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe three needs of our current criminal justice population
2. Describe two recent legislative changes in California and the impact these changes have had on the intersection of criminal justice and mental health
3. Evaluate data outcomes regarding a new innovative program called the Re-Entry Support Team (REST), designed to respond to criminal justice reform, mental health, and equality