

Innovations in Mental Health Diversion – The C.A.R.E.S. Navigation Center

L.D. Louis, JD

Level

Intermediate

Track

Clinical/Legal

CE

CPA/BBS/BRN/CJER/MCLE

Bio

L.D. Louis, JD, graduated from Howard University in 1996 and UC Berkeley School of Law in 1999. She has been with the Alameda County District Attorney's Office for 22 years. During her tenure with the DA's office, she was assigned to the Domestic Violence Unit for 3 years. From 2009-2010 she was the co-leader of the Misdemeanor Trial Team in the Hayward Branch Office. For the last 12 years, L.D. has been assigned to the Mental Health Unit. This unit handles most involuntary civil commitments for Alameda County, including the Sexually Violent Predator cases, Mentally Disordered Offenders, Developmentally Delayed Persons, Persons Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity and Murphy Conservatorships. She also coordinated the District Attorney's Office working group on Collaborative Courts and Alternatives to Incarceration from 2017-2020. In August of 2018 L.D. was promoted to Assistant District Attorney and became head of the Mental Health Unit. In this new role, she has worked on public policy and legislative issues and has provided testimony both for the California State Legislature and a Presidential Commission on Mental Health and the Law. L.D. has instructed others extensively on criminal defendant's mental competency, including a 4-part mental health webinar series for the California District Attorneys Association. In January 2020, she planned and coordinated a 3-day statewide training on Complex Mental Health Issues and the Law. She has also trained mental health professionals and attorneys regarding legal standards pertaining to conservatorships and other forensic mental health topics. L.D. is currently a technical advisor for the California District Attorneys Association in Mental Health & the Law. She was President of the Bay Area Black Prosecutor's Association (2017-19) and has served on several boards including the Charles Houston Bar Association, the Earl Warren Inn of Court (past president) and the National Inns of Court Board. L.D. was appointed to the Alameda County Mental Health Advisory Board (MHAB) in 2017 by the Board of Supervisors, is currently Vice-Chair of the Board.

Narrative

Are the public safety professionals in your jurisdiction seeking ways to divert those diagnosed with Substance Use Disorders (SUD) and Serious Mental Illness (SMI) away from the criminal courts? This presentation is designed to educate attendees about the innovative new model being deployed by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, which disrupts the flow into

the criminal justice system of individuals diagnosed with substance use disorders and serious mental illness. The Alameda County District Attorney's Office developed the C.A.R.E.S. Navigation Center to combat this public health crisis. During this presentation, you will learn about the development, implementation and outcomes of this new effort to intervene earlier in the criminal justice process and keep those with SUD and SMI from ever entering the criminal courts. You will leave this presentation with a concrete strategy to combat this public safety challenge in your jurisdiction.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe a new model for diverting individuals diagnosed with a serious mental illness or substance use disorder away from jail and the criminal courts
2. List two outcomes of C.A.R.E.S. Navigation Center
3. Describe two lessons learned from the first year of the C.A.R.E.S. Navigation Center