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Summaries for the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015

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Library of Congress Summary

The summary below was written by the Congressional Research Service, which is a nonpartisan division of the Library of Congress.

4/16/2015--Introduced.

Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015

This bill amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize the Attorney General to make grants to an eligible entity for sequential intercept mapping and implementation for:

mental health and criminal justice stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the flow of individuals with mental illnesses through the criminal justice system, and identify opportunities for improved responses, including emergency and crisis services, specialized police-based responses, and community and post-prison supervision; and hiring and training personnel, identifying target populations, and providing services to reduce recidivism.

The Attorney General is authorized to award grants for:

veterans treatment court programs involving collaboration among criminal justice, veterans, and mental health and substance abuse agencies; peer to peer services or programs for qualified veterans; practices that identify and provide treatment, rehabilitation, legal, and transitional services to such veterans who have been incarcerated;

and training programs to teach criminal justice, law enforcement, corrections, mental health, and substance abuse personnel how to identify and respond to incidents involving such veterans.

The Attorney General is authorized to award grants to enhance correctional facility capabilities to:

identify and screen for mentally ill inmates; assess and provide the clinical, medical, and social needs of inmates and appropriate treatment and services that address mental health and substance abuse needs; and develop and implement post-release transition plans.

Adult and juvenile criminal/mental health collaboration program grants may be used to establish multidisciplinary teams that coordinate and implement community-based crisis responses and long-term plans for frequent users of crisis services.

Collaboration grant accountability requirements are established.

The Attorney General is authorized to make grants for programs that teach law enforcement personnel how to identify and respond to incidents involving persons with mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.

The Attorney General is directed to provide direction for programs that offer specialized training to federal first responders and tactical units in order to identify and respond to incidents involving individuals who have a mental illness.

The definition of "preliminarily qualified offender" is revised for purposes of collaboration program grants to:

include, in the case of a veterans treatment court program, an adult or juvenile accused of an offense who has been diagnosed with, or manifests signs of, mental illness or a substance abuse disorder; remove a requirement that the person be accused of a nonviolent offense; require a person to be unanimously approved for participation; and disqualify a person who has been charged with or convicted of a sex offense or murder or assault with intent to murder.

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