

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
ATI OFFICE



Alternatives to Incarceration

"Care First, Jails Last"

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION OFFICE


Judge Songhai Armstead (Ret.) | Executive Director

Alternative Crisis Response (ACR): NASEM Suicide Prevention Webinar Briefing

May 12, 2022



Agenda

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- **Timeline / Background**
 - **LA County ACR Vision**
 - **Key Projects**
 - **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**
 - **Social Media Key Takeaways**
 - **Closeout**

Timeline / Background

Timeline

- **June 2020:** [Alternative Crisis Response \(ACR\)](#) initiative created by Board of Supervisors as partnership between DMH and CEO-ATI
- **October 2020:** Federal bill establishes 988 as national number for behavioral health crisis calls, to go live in July 2022
- **May 2021:** Ballmer Group awards funding to RI International for consulting engagement with LA County on ACR
- **November 2021:** RI International provides preliminary recommendations for LA County ACR, now incorporated in ACR Strategic Project Portfolio
- **July 2022:** 988 officially launches nationwide, and LA County is targeting several ACR expansion efforts by this date

Tagline

“Someone to call, someone to respond, and somewhere to go. For anyone, anywhere in LA County, and at any time they are experiencing a crisis.”

RI’s Engagement

- Currently finalizing report and recommendations for LA County’s crisis system design and implementation plans



Vision for LA County

988 as the preferred, no-wrong-door place to access crisis care countywide

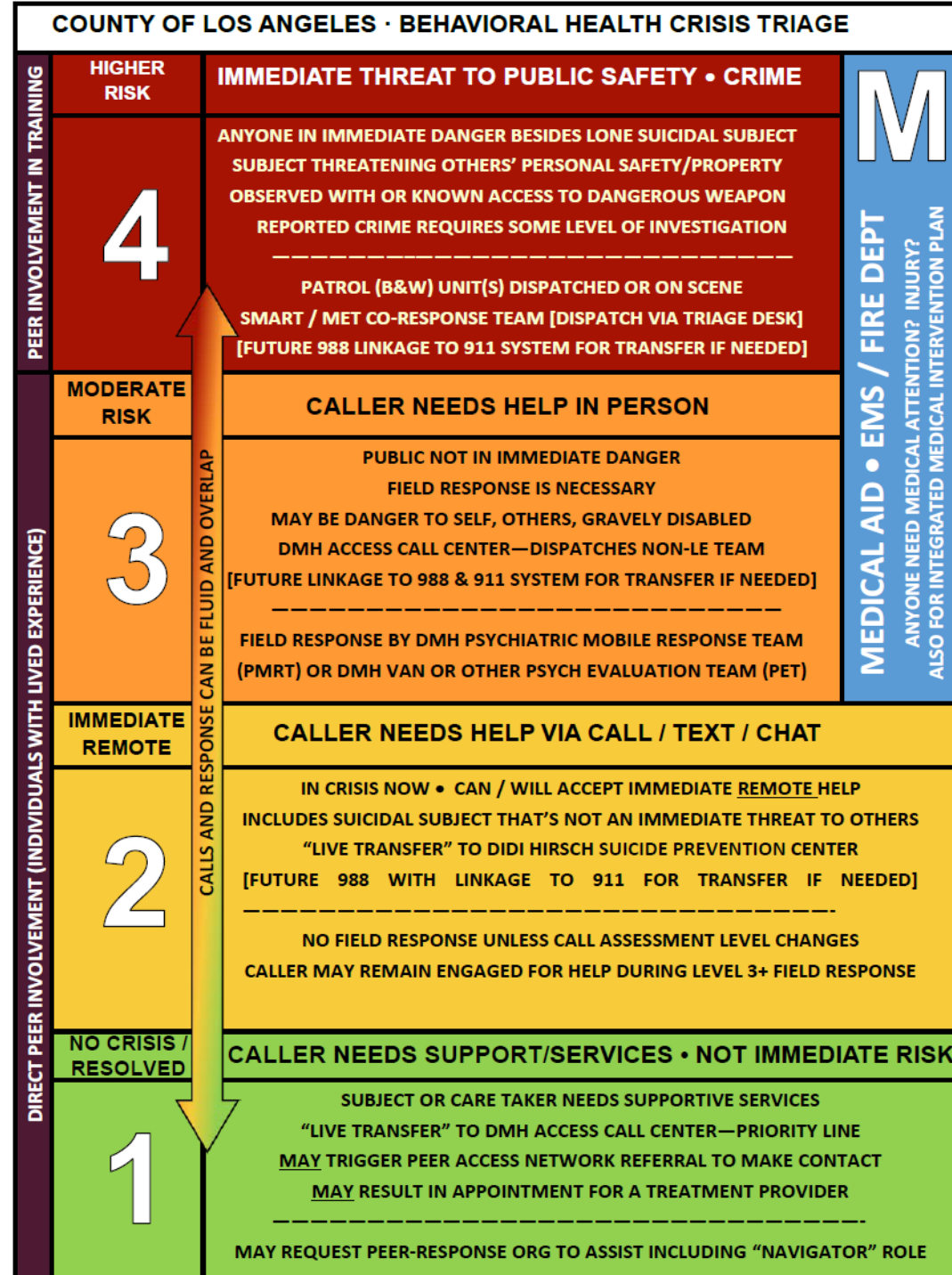
- Divert as many 9-1-1 crisis calls to 988 as possible

>87% of crisis calls to 988 are resolved there, with no need for further crisis services

- For individuals needing more crisis care, 988 dispatches mobile crisis teams, and can coordinate placements in crisis beds

9-1-1, law enforcement, and EMS are only engaged when there is a public safety threat or medical emergency

- Otherwise, crisis calls are triaged through 988 and civilian services by default



Vision for LA County

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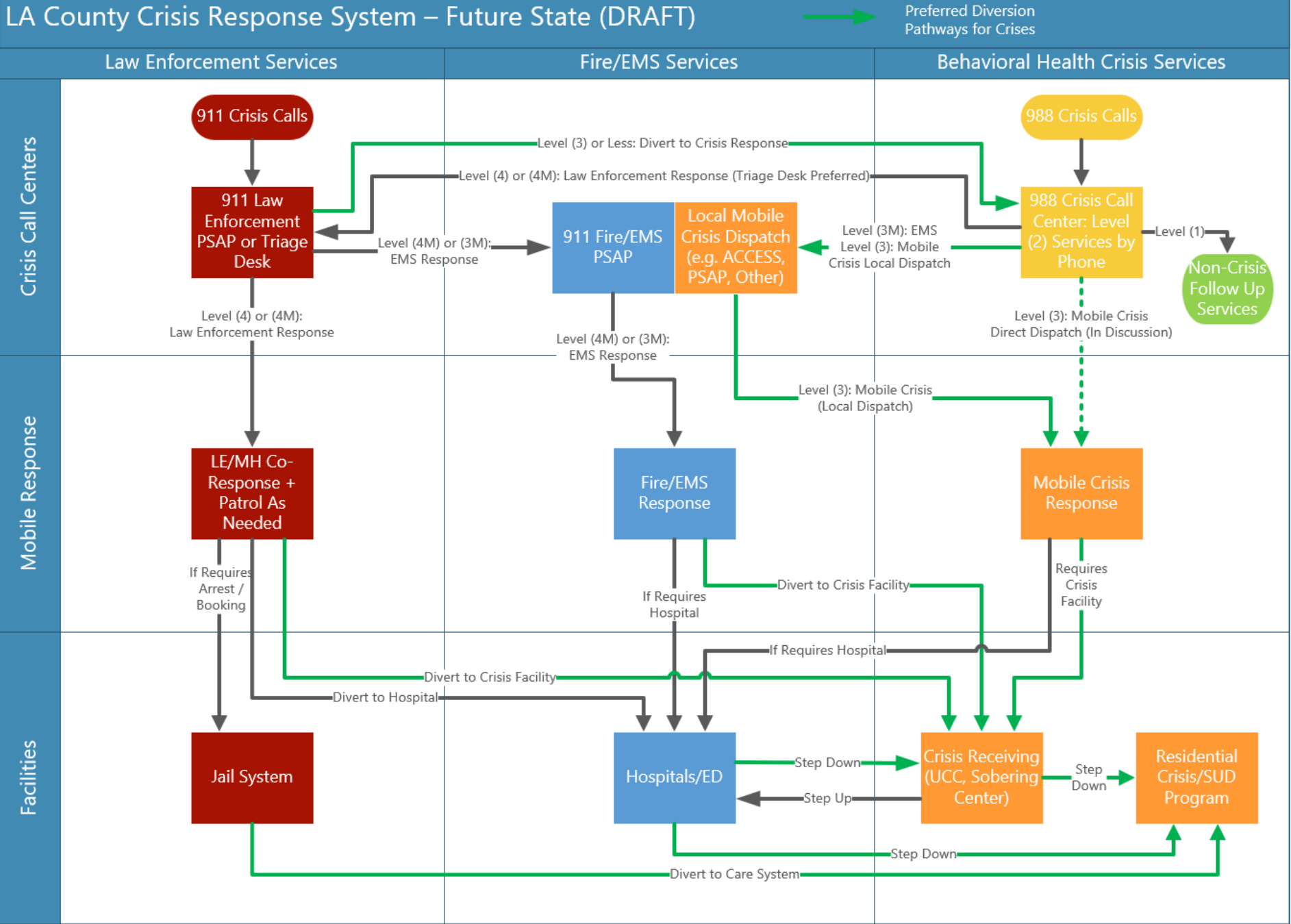
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Key Projects

Projects in progress to expand capacity and improve the coordination of ACR services in LA County

Strategies	Projects/Actions
<div>1</div> <div>Expansion: Increasing the capacity of LA County’s crisis services in anticipation of increased demand for crisis care after the official July 16, 2022 launch of 988, and also to improve response times and real-time client access to needed crisis care</div>	<div><div>• 988 Call Center and Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOT) Solicitations: DMH recently released solicitations to procure and support enhanced LAC 988 call center services + contracted mobile crisis response teams.</div><div>• Hiring Peers for the Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams (PMRT) Program: DMH is currently hiring 16 peers (Community Health Workers) plus 2 peer supervisors for the PMRT program.</div></div>
<div>2</div> <div>Coordination: Improving the connections between parts of LA County’s crisis system to provide better no-wrong-door access to crisis care, reduce law enforcement response unless necessary, and ensure no one falls through the cracks</div>	<div><div>• 9-1-1 Diversion: LA County’s 988 call center will lead efforts countywide to divert behavioral health crisis calls from 9-1-1 to 988 and connected crisis services.</div><div>• Metro and City Partnerships: Partnering with Metro and cities to develop dedicated ACR services in their areas, still linked to 988.</div></div>
<div>3</div> <div>Infrastructure: Ensuring funding and technology to provide needed support of crisis services, and that we’re developing the workforce of the future to deliver them</div>	<div><div>• Dispatching: Developing a countywide dispatching technology platform for use by 988 and all mobile crisis teams.</div><div>• ACR Training Academy: Designing an academy to provide professional training for the ACR workforce across the board.</div></div>

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Measuring for success to ensure quality and equity in LA County's crisis system

Measure	Applicable Programs	Target
Volume of calls and services	All	Steady growth
% of crises stabilized without escalation to a higher level of care	All	988 call center: >87% Mobile crisis: >70% Crisis receiving facility: >70%
Volume of 9-1-1 calls diverted	988 crisis call center	>1.5% of total call volume
Average response time	Mobile crisis response teams	<1 hour overall, and <30 mins for law enforcement requests
Engagement with outpatient care and social support services post-crisis	All	>85%, and within 7 days for clients seen at a crisis receiving facility
Client satisfaction with services	All	>85% satisfied or extremely satisfied

- All of the above disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender identity, age, and geography to ensure LA County's crisis care network is providing equitable access to high-quality services

Social Media Key Takeaways

How social media can help (or hurt) efforts to divert crises from law enforcement response

- There is evidence that upwards of 19% of 9-1-1 calls could be served by civilian response instead of law enforcement or EMS ([Vera Institute of Justice, April 2022](#)).
- Crisis hotlines (like 988) typically resolve 80% or more of calls without a need for in-person response at all. When in-person response is required, sometimes law enforcement or EMS is needed, but most of the time civilian teams can handle the response ([NASMHPD, August 2020](#)).
- 988 crisis hotlines are trained to de-escalate and will engage 9-1-1 only when there is a clear public safety threat or medical emergency. Social media algorithms ought to link to 988 during a suspected crisis first, and link to 9-1-1 only as a last resort if 988 cannot be reached.
- Looking for “trigger words” has serious limits and potential biases. They may help in indicating a need to link to 988, but ultimately a human being trained in culturally competent triage and de-escalation needs to intervene as soon as possible.
- Is having social media reach out to 988 comparable to when a friend, family member, or other collateral reaches out on someone’s behalf? Are there analogous best practices and effective techniques for doing so? This is likely an area which would benefit from further research.

Thank you!