



# MEMORANDUM

Date: July 9, 2026

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lesher *Jan*  
County Administrator

Re: **Detainee and Crisis Systems Updates on the Community Reentry Study and a Review of Community Overdose Deaths for Jail-Involved**

In April of last year I provided the Pima County Board of Supervisors (BOS) [the final evaluation of the Inmate Navigation, Enrollment, Stabilization and Treatment \(INVEST\) program](#). The INVEST program was designed and implemented through grant funds in 2019 and demonstrated several successes in engaging participants and positive outcomes for justice involved individuals.

The program continues to demonstrate success in assisting individuals in the Pima County Adult Detention Complex (PCADC) who exhibit co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions and are at a moderate to maximum criminogenic risk by engaging participants in several programs such as the forensic peer support and intensive case management within the jail, participation in Freedom Management curriculum, enhanced discharge and reentry coordination, demonstrating notable impacts such as, but not limited to, a reduction in recidivism (31%), improved participant outcomes in areas such as housing stability, employment, and enhanced participation in post-release services.

Attached is a memorandum from Director Perrera on the Community Reentry Study – a subsequent randomized control trial, building on the INVEST findings, to further evaluate the effectiveness of the INVEST program after the initial grant phase beginning in 2021. The evaluation enumerates the INVEST and jail-based enhanced release programming and the connection between the improvement of linkages to care, and its subsequent impact on reduced recidivism, and successful engagement in treatment and services in the community. The success of INVEST and positive evaluative findings from Community Reentry Study subsequently led to the department receipt of a \$2.6 million dollar grant to expand the INVEST program and enhance jail-based release planning.

The memo attached herein details the findings from the Community Reentry Study, specifically that participants working within the INVEST program and with jail-release planners had a substantially low 30-day recidivism rate (3% and 4%, respectively), which is a notable achievement noting the complex nature (co-occurring mental health and substance use, high criminogenic risk) of participants. Similarly, the department has engaged Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) treatment provided in the jail, improved coordination with judicial partners, and improved continuity of treatment immediately post-release to ensure continuation of care in the community and reduce the risk of post-release adverse outcomes.

*Jan*  
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The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

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The work demonstrated in this report aligns directly with both One Pima and the Prosperity Initiative and demonstrates the complex and cross-sector partnership and capacity building throughout the community to ensure successful jail release and reentry for our community.

JKL/anc

Attachment

- c. Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator  
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator  
Chad Kasmar, Deputy County Administrator  
Paula Perrera, Director, Pima County Detainee and Crisis Systems  
Jenifer Darland, Director, Pima County Office of Housing Opportunities, and Homeless Solutions  
Sarah Davis, Senior Advisor, Pima County Administrator's Office

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: July 8, 2026

To: Jan Leshner  
County Administrator

From: Paula Perrera *PSP*  
Director

**Re: DACS updates on the Community Reentry Study and a Review of Community Overdose Deaths for Jail-Involved**

### **Background**

The Community Reentry Study (CRS) is a randomized control trial that was developed by Detainee and Crisis Systems (DACs) to evaluate the effectiveness of the INVEST program beginning in 2021. The results of that evaluation showed that people who worked with INVEST had a significant reduction in jail rebooking, spent fewer days in jail, increased their ability to utilize resources/build supportive relationships, and experienced reduced levels of stress.

These positive findings led to expansion of the CRS in early 2024 when the Arizona Attorney General awarded DACs with a \$2.6M grant to expand INVEST and jail-based release planning. The evaluation findings of this expansion demonstrated that those working with INVEST and jail-based release planners have significantly lower recidivism than those who do not. DACs has aligned both programs with the goals of One Pima and the Prosperity Initiative.

DACS has also been asked by the Pima County Health Department to assist in drafting a community overdose mitigation plan. Multiple studies of community opioid overdose deaths link involvement with the justice system to increased risk of opioid overdose in the community after release from custody. Numbers vary widely with upwards of 80% of community opioid overdoses having justice involvement during their lifetime and 40% having a jail or prison stay within the last year prior to their overdose death. Where there is some agreement is that the highest risk appears to be the first 2 weeks post release from custody. One study of North Carolina opioid overdose deaths showed a 40 times higher risk in the first 2 weeks post release. What is not clearly known is whether this data holds true for Pima County opioid overdose deaths. Dr. Alvarez, the DACs Medical Director, conducted a review of community overdose deaths where there was some jail involvement; those findings are also discussed in this memo.

### **Community Reentry Study Update**

INVEST and jail-based release planning interventions are designed to improve linkages to care and reduce recidivism, goals they are meeting. The recidivism findings of the latest [CRS report](#) showed that those working with INVEST have a 3% 30-day recidivism rate, while those working with the jail-based release planners have between a 2-4% 30-day recidivism rate. This is in comparison to a 27% 30-day recidivism rate baseline that was reported on in the 2025 Annual Report for the Pima County Transition Center.

Jan Leshar, County Administrator

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The table in Figure 1 provides a high-level comparison of the various CRS groups but it is worth providing a description of each group and which intervention they received.

Green Group – High Risk Group (most have a mental health condition, and a substance use condition, and moderate-maximum criminogenic risk). Receive jail-based release planning.

Purple Group – High Risk Group (most have a mental health condition, and a substance use condition, and moderate-maximum criminogenic risk). Receive INVEST services.

Orange Group – Lower Risk Group. Receive jail-based release planning.

**Figure 1**

	Green Group % (n)	Purple Group % (n)	Orange Group % (n)
Age (Average)	36.9	36.6	35.6
Gender			
Male	64% (65)	63% (78)	73% (157)
Female	36% (36)	37% (45)	27% (57)
Relationship Status - Has Spouse or Partner	27% (27)	34% (40)	37% (79)
Parent Status - Has Children	67% (68)	65% (78)	70% (149)
Has Health Insurance	86% (87)	87% (105)	76% (163)
Has High School Diploma/GED or Less	66% (66)	66% (80)	76% (162)
Has Learning Challenges	73% (74)	76% (92)	57% (122)
Have Been Employed	99% (99)	97% (117)	95% (203)
Had MH Provider at Enrollment	36% (36)	40% (48)	34% (50)
Has MH Condition(s)	95% (96)	97% (115)	40% (84)
Has Housing Identified Upon Release	54% (54)	48% (58)	65% (138)
Substance Use (Top 3)			
Methamphetamines	81% (81)	73% (87)	67% (140)
Opioids	77% (77)	73% (87)	57% (119)
THC	39% (39)	39% (46)	51% (107)
Days in Jail (Average)	99.0	97.4	85.9
Number of Charges (Average)	4.7	4.9	4.4
30-Day Recidivism - subsequent re-booking within 30 days post initial release	4% (4)	3% (3)	2% (4)

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The complex nature of each group makes the recidivism outcomes even more impressive. There was a total of 436 CRS participants between 7/1/24-4/30/26 with the goal of enrolling 800 participants into the CRS by December 31, 2027. These 436 participants had a total of 2,002 combined criminal charges with many charges relating to failing to comply with judicial orders. One of the more daunting realizations was the number of children impacted, these participants averaged 2.8 children each, with a range of one to 12 children. Achieving better jail-based reentry outcomes has the potential of impacting far more than the individual receiving the direct benefit. The latest CRS report demonstrates how both INVEST and jail-based release planning align with strategic county priorities including One Pima and the Prosperity Initiative.

**Review of Community Overdose Deaths for Jail-Involved**

**Methodology:**

Logs of all overdose deaths reported to the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office occurring in calendar year 2025 and through May 14, 2026, were sorted to remove other counties served by the Pima County Medical Examiner to focus only on Pima County overdoses. The lists were further narrowed to deaths showing any opioid involvement (fentanyl, heroin, etc.) while also including mixed drug overdoses that reported at least one opioid. This resulted in 265 individuals with suspected opioid overdose deaths in Pima County in calendar year 2025. For 2026 through May 14<sup>th</sup>, this resulted in 96 individuals.

The TechCare electronic health record used by the Pima County Adult Detention Center (PCADC) since July 2021 was then searched for all patients on both lists for 2025 and 2026 to identify those who had been in custody previously. A thorough chart review was completed on each chart to document the last booking and release date for that individual and to review patient substance use history and acceptance of treatment.

**Results:**

Calendar Year 2025

1. 265 Pima County overdose deaths with opioid involvement
  - a. 113 (43%) in custody at some point over the last 5 years (since TechCare)
  - b. 61 (23%) in custody within the last year prior to date of overdose death
    - i. 48 of the 61 either didn't report opioids, refused opioid substance use disorder treatment, were in custody less than 24 hours (not on treatment yet), or were direct transfers to another location and not released to the community.
  - c. 10 (3.8%) were in custody within 2 weeks of date of death
    - i. 7 of the 10 either didn't report opioids, refused opioid substance use disorder treatment, were in custody less than 24 hours (not on treatment yet), or were direct transfers to another location and not released to the community on their own.

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Calendar Year 2026 (through May 14th)

1. 96 Pima County overdose deaths with opioid involvement
  - a. 37 (39%) in custody at some point over the last 5 years (Since TechCare)
  - b. 18 (19%) in custody within the last year prior to date of overdose death
    - i. 14 of the 18 either didn't report opioids, refused opioid substance use disorder treatment, were in custody less than 24 hours (not on treatment yet), or were direct transfers to another location and not released to the community.
  - c. 4 (4.1%) were in custody within 2 weeks of date of death
    - i. 3 of the 4 either didn't report opioids, refused opioid substance use disorder treatment, were in custody less than 24 hours (not on treatment yet), or were direct transfers to another location and not released to the community on their own.

**Discussion:**

For Pima County it appears that 40% of individuals with opioid overdose related deaths have been in custody at the PCADC at some point in their lives, 20% in custody within the last year prior to their overdose, and 4% in custody within 2 weeks of their death. This finding is consistent for both 2025 and 2026 (through May 14, 2026).

Upon reviewing the patient records further, the large majority (75-80%) of those in custody the year before their death show a jail stay of less than 24 hours; a lack of reporting substance use; no desire to start treatment; or were transferred directly to inpatient/residential status or another correctional facility. This holds true for those in custody less than 2 weeks prior to their death as well.

It would appear from these numbers that the PCADC Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) program has helped to lessen the burden of Pima County community opioid-related overdose deaths for justice involved individuals when compared to other communities showing higher percentages.

**Recommendations:**

1. Continue to support the PCADC MAT program
  - a. MAT Provider and MAT LPN staffing positions have been added for FY27
2. Focus more release planning resources directly on this population
  - a. Current DACS vacant position has been moved to release planning for FY27
3. Improve coordination with probation, the court, and public defenders on releasing this population directly to supervise residential treatment whenever possible
4. Continue to reoffer treatment to those who initially decline treatment while in custody
5. Identify barriers to continuation of care in the community
6. Encourage community partners to expand immediate treatment access for patients releasing from the PCADC
7. Explore transportation directly to a community MAT provider upon release for those not qualified for residential treatment.
8. Continue to support DACS programs that align with One Pima and the Prosperity Initiative
  - a. INVEST and jail-based release planning