



Experience From the Field: Strategic Planning and Evidence-Based Practices in Travis County, Texas

**Presentation to Kansas Community Corrections
10-22-08**

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- **Why Evidence-Based Practices in Travis County?**
- **Overview of Travis Community Impact Supervision Model (TCIS)**
- **What Have We Done and Where Are We Going?**
- **Lessons Learned**
- **What Have We Gained?**

Why Evidence-Based Practices in Travis County?



Challenges Facing Probation in Texas



Growing county population

Jail and prison overcrowding

Stiffer competition for resources to pay for incarceration at state and local level



Demand for probation systems to become more effective in reducing recidivism and divert offenders from prison while protecting public safety



Shift in philosophy from solely monitoring compliance with conditions to actively working with probationers to reduce recidivism for the long term

Some Texas Statistics



- **State Prison Beds: If no change in policy – 168,166 by 2012, with shortfall of 17,332 beds**
- **2nd highest incarceration rate in nation w/ 206% increase in incarceration since 1980**
- **Probation population is 400,000+**
- **Probation Revocation Represent 1/3 of Prison Admissions with about 1/2 of those for technical violations**
- **The technical violations in FY06 (12,440) will cost the state about \$757M in incarceration costs**
- **Counties that received new funding to reduce caseloads and to provide treatment to offenders last biennium (2006-07) showed 1,155 fewer revocations in FY2006 and about \$67M in cost avoidance**
- **Texas Legislature significantly invested in probation for treatment alternatives to incarceration.**

Texas Legislature Three Recommendations



- **Reduce caseload size**
- **Provide more treatment options**
- **Develop progressive sanctions to address technical violations**

The 80th Texas Legislature greatly expanded choices available to judges, prosecutors, and community supervision officers as alternatives to incarceration:

	Provided thru	
	CSCDs	TDCJ
• 1,500 new Substance Abuse Felony Punishment treatment beds (\$63.1 million increase)		✓
• 1,400 new Intermediate Sanction Facility (ISF) beds (\$28.8 million increase; shared with Parole)		✓
• 800 new Community Corrections Facility (CCF) beds (\$32.3 million increase)	✓	
• \$10 million increase for Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment	✓	
• \$10 million increase for Mental Health treatment through the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments		✓

Developments in the Field

Evidence Based Practices (EBP) model as a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of probation.



EBP: Similar to evidence-based medicine. The goal is to improve the CJ system by implementing programs and policies that produce results, in this case a reduction in recidivism.



Sound Organizational Practices

Effective Programs

Collaboration

Data Driven Policies

How can a locality implement EBP in a systematic and cohesive way that maintains fidelity to the model?



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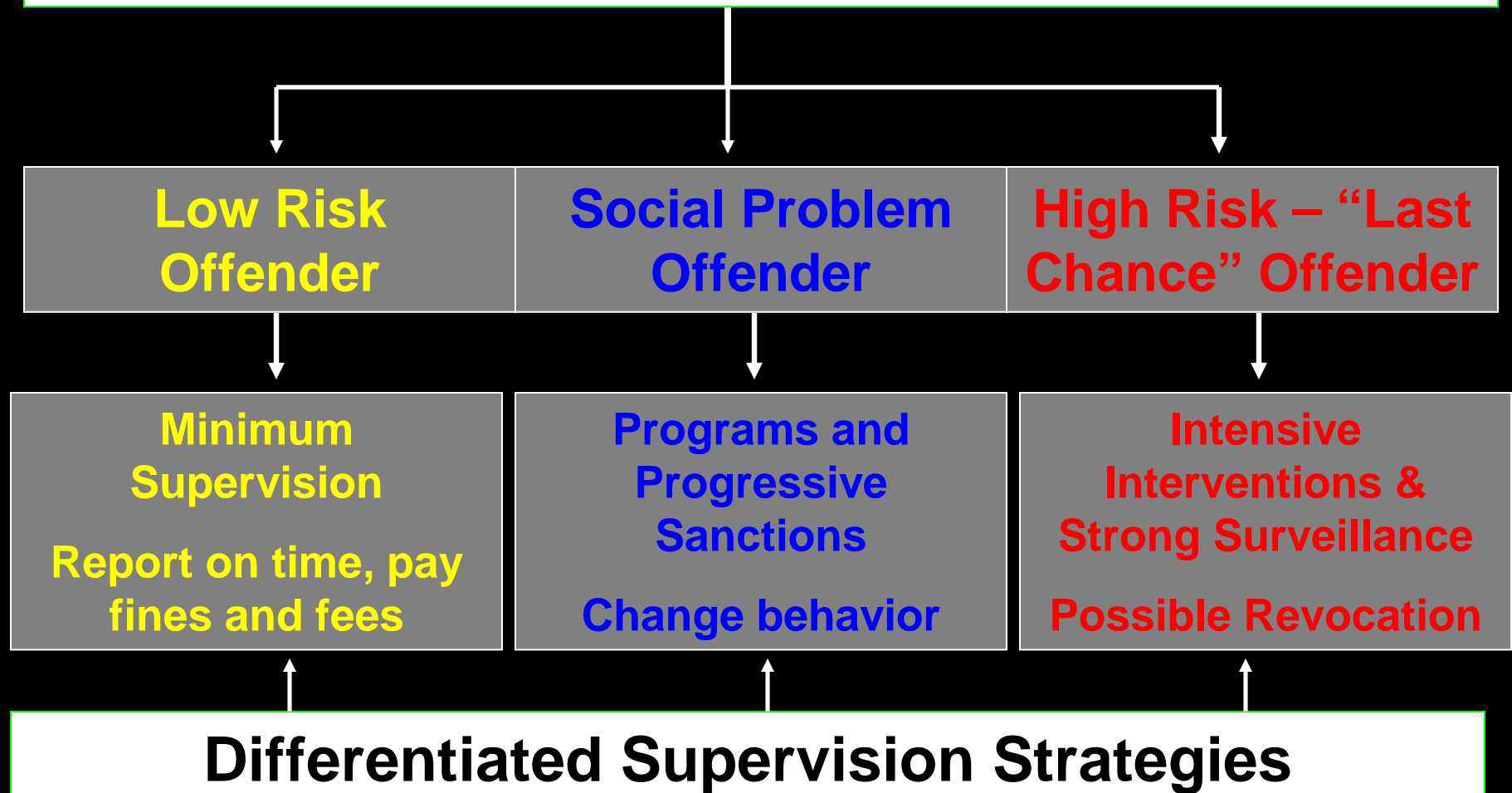
Travis is Fifth Largest Probation Department in Texas

Ten Largest CSCDs August 2006 Direct Offender Populations-Source TDCJ-CJAD

CSCD	Felons	% of Statewide Felons Total	Misd	% of Statewide Misd Total	Total	% of Statewide Total
Harris	20,361	12.7%	10,326	9.7%	30,687	11.5%
Dallas	17,951	11.2%	10,870	10.2%	28,821	10.8%
Bexar	10,589	6.6%	8,807	8.2%	19,396	7.3%
Tarrant	9,099	5.7%	5,381	5.0%	14,480	5.4%
Travis	6,099	3.8%	6,085	5.7%	12,184	4.6%
Hidalgo	6,447	4.0%	3,956	3.7%	10,403	3.9%
El Paso	5,496	3.4%	3,242	3.0%	8,738	3.3%
Collin	2,311	1.4%	2,877	2.7%	5,188	1.9%
Cameron	3,404	2.1%	1,755	1.6%	5,159	1.9%
Denton	1,819	1.1%	3,210	3.0%	5,029	1.9%
Top 10 Texas	83,576 159,771	52.3%	56,509 106,761	52.9%	140,085 266,532	52.6%

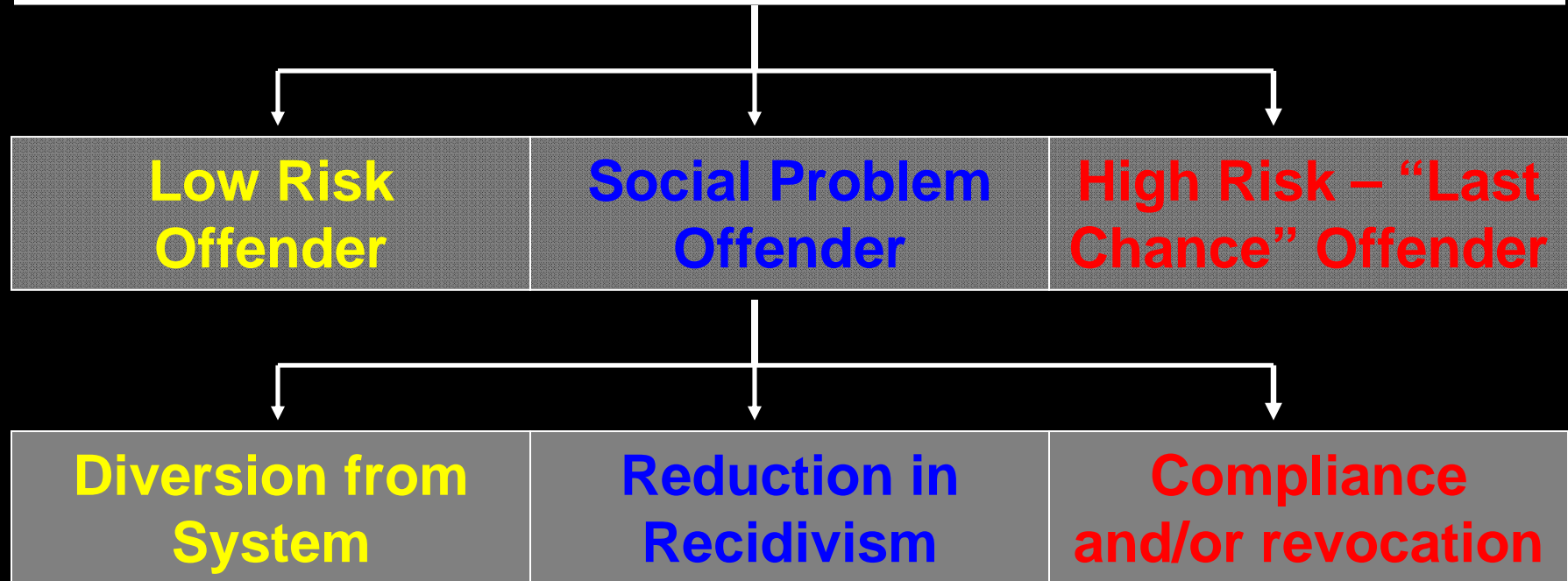
TCIS Model in a Nutshell

Effective Assessments to Classify Population



Supervision and Programs That Are Consistent With EBP Principles

Stronger and More Effective Response to Moderate and High Risk Offenders



Relationship to Conditions of Probation and Supervision Strategies

- Lowest reporting requirements
- Possibility of certain offenders reporting only to the Supplemental Reporting System
- No need for intensive discretionary programs
- Application of low to moderate responses to administrative violations using violation grid
- Incentives for early discharge

- Increased reporting requirements
- Mix supplemental reporting with visits to PO/home visits as needed
- Need for discretionary programs, mainly drug treatment, anger management, cognitive programs
- Application of more restrictive responses to administrative violations
- Incentives to move to "Yellow" level

- Highest reporting requirements of all supervision levels
- Field visits by probation officer
- Use of surveillance-type programs and cognitive interventions for all but most extreme
- Most restrictive and swift responses to administrative violations of all supervision levels
- Incentive to move to "Blue" level but cannot move to "Yellow" level

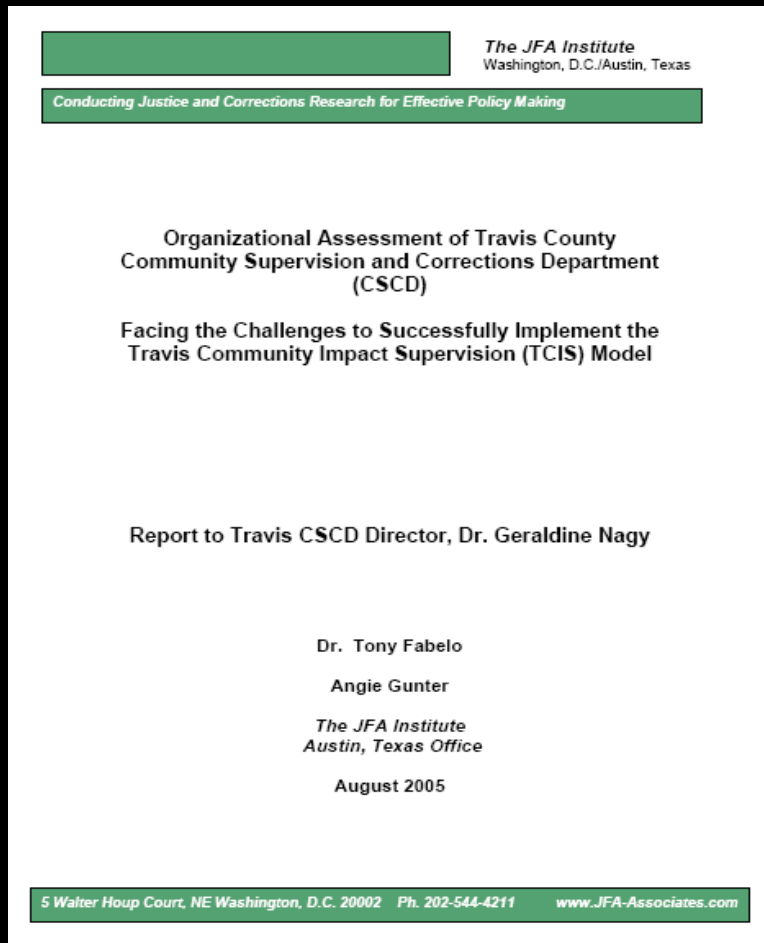


- Why Evidence-Based Practices in Travis County?
- Overview of Travis Community Impact Supervision Model (TCIS)
- **What Have We Done and Where Are We Going?**
 - ✦ **Defining the Current Reality**
 - ✦ **Strategic Planning and Staff Development**
 - ✦ **Assessment as the Foundation**
- Lessons Learned
- What Have We Gained?

Our First Step Was Defining “Current Reality”

**Organizational assessment of
department to determine its
strengths and weaknesses along
evidence-based practices**

Department Assessment Promising for EBP



Travis department has qualified personnel, strong processes, supportive judiciary and active Community Justice Council to provide foundation for EBP

Department needs to improve assessment and field supervision strategies, program monitoring, and training, and needs to bring balance to a culture in which process is main focus

Travis Community Impact Supervision Model (TCIS)

Strategic Planning

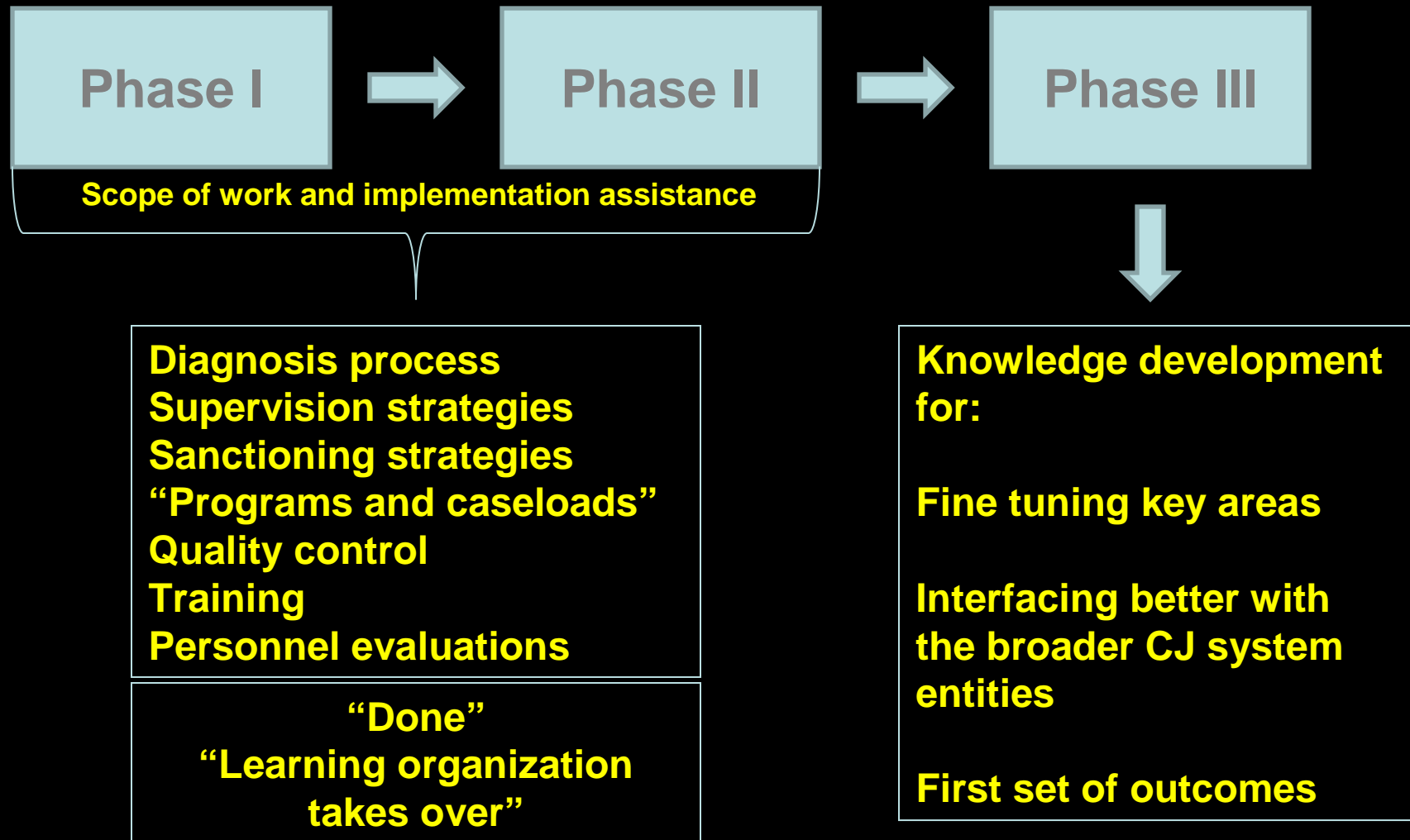
■ Core Planning Group

- Vertical and horizontal slice of organization
- Focus groups/training to establish vision, define purpose, and establish expectations
- 2-Day Strategic Planning Session
 - Established goals
 - Defined committees
 - Set time-lines and work plans

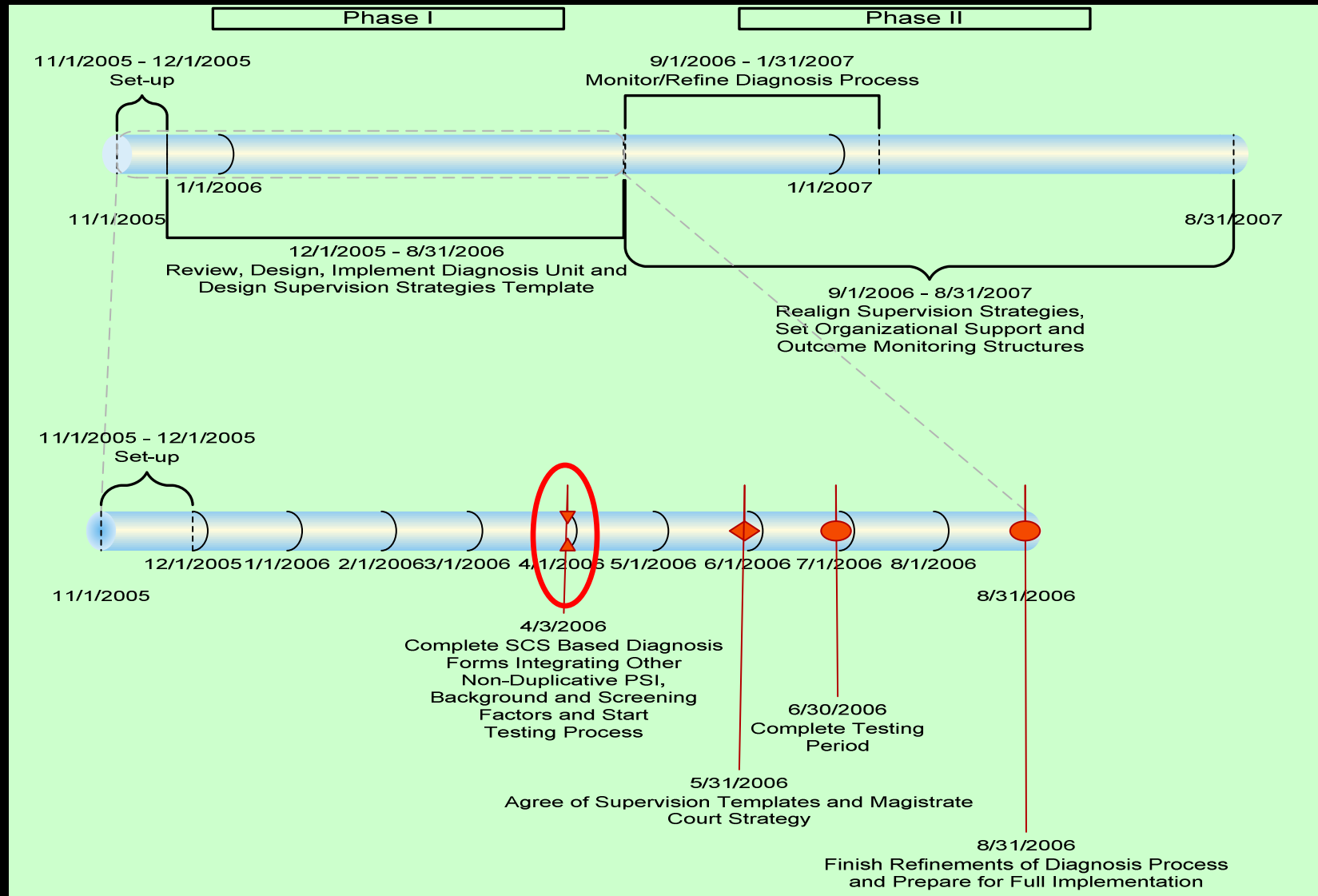
■ External Stakeholders

- TDCJ-CJAD
- Judicial/DA/Defense briefings and focus groups
- Conference

TCIS Phases



Project Timeline for Phase I & II



TCIS Phase I and II Goals & Committees – Policy and Strategies

Diagnosis Committee

- ✓ Design New Diagnosis Process
- ✓ Streamline & Design New Forms
- ✓ Design and Test New Report
- ✓ Validate Assessments
- ✓ Review Process to Assure Validity

Supervision Committee

- ✓ Low and High Risk Caseloads
- ✓ Re-design Supervision Process
- ✓ Design Templates
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Program Quality/Referrals

Sanctions Committee

- ✓ Review and Redesign of Absconder Policies
- ✓ Refine Progressive Sanctions Model to be Assessment Driven
- ✓ Tracking for Fidelity

TCIS Phase I and II Goals & Committees – Internal Organization

Staff Development Committee

- ✓ Review Training Competencies and Gaps
- ✓ Re-align Training with Goals of TCIS
- ✓ Conduct Training Related to TCIS (Motivational Interviewing; Supervision Methods; Progressive Sanctions)

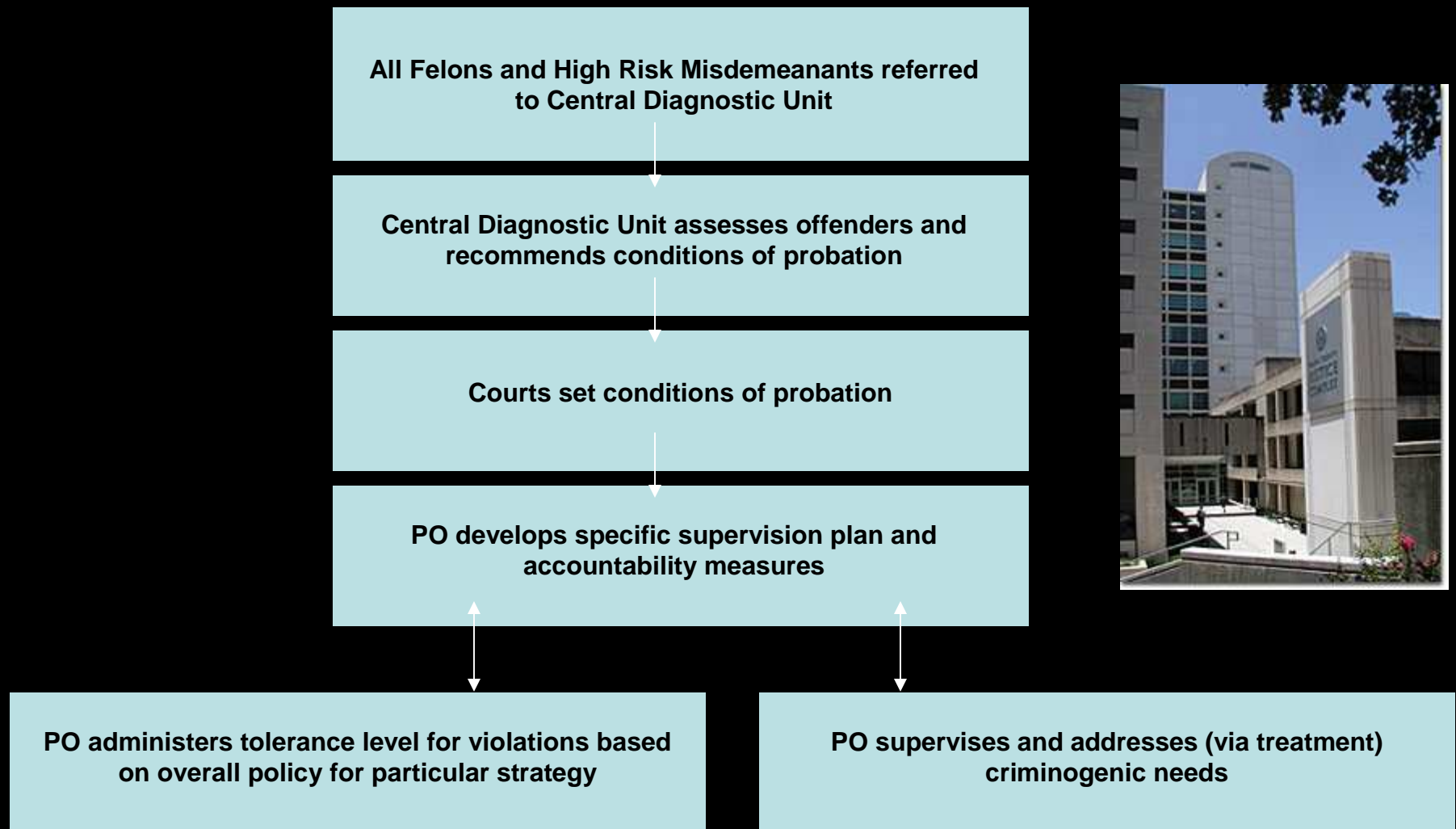
Quality Control Committee

- ✓ Review Present Reports
- ✓ Develop Streamlined “Maintenance Reports”
- ✓ Develop Report to Track Outcomes
- ✓ Develop Methods to Measure Officer Effectiveness

Personnel Evaluation Committee

- ✓ Review Present Personnel Evaluations Forms and Policies
- ✓ Review Evaluations in Other Locales
- ✓ Develop Personnel Evaluations for All Positions Consistent with TCIS

Diagnosis As Foundation of Supervision and Sanctions



TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
MILLER, M.
9-08

TRAVIS COUNTY ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT
P. O. Box 2245, Austin, Texas 78768 (512) 854-4600
DIAGNOSTIC REPORT-PSI

NAME (Last)	(First)	(Middle)	(Maiden)	COURT DATE
Miller	Melanie	R		09/06/07
Aka: Mary Miller		TRN	CAUSE NO.	
		TRS		
SSN	APD	FBI NO.	SID NO.	DL NO.
MAILING ADDRESS		PHYSICAL ADDRESS		CITIZENSHIP
		Same		United States
PHONE NUMBER		OTHER NUMBER		ALIEN NO.
512-		512-		None
PLACE OF BIRTH	DOB	AGE	SEX	RACE
Texas	09/19/1960	46	Female	Caucasian
MARITAL STATUS		DEPENDENTS		EDUCATION
Single		1		10th grade
MONTHLY INCOME		MONTHLY EXPENSES		
\$817.00		\$714.00		
OFFENSE				OFFENSE TYPE
FORGERY				State Jail Felony
PENALTY RANGE				OFFENSE DATE
180 days - 2 years confinement, 2-5 years supervision, Fine up to \$10,000.				12/xx/06
CO-DEFENDANT				DATE OF ARREST
None				12/xx/06
PLEA		CUSTODIAL STATUS		DATE OF PLEA
Has Not Pled		Personal Bond		N/A
DETAINERS/ CHARGES PENDING				
None				
PROSECUTOR		DEFENSE ATTORNEY		RESTITUTION
				None
SENTENCING JUDGE		COURT		
		xxth District Court		
PROBATION OFFICER		PROBATION MANAGER		
DIAGNOSTIC UNIT		DIAGNOSTIC UNIT		

TRAVIS COUNTY

PSI Report

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
MILLER, M.
9-08

PRESENT OFFENSE NARRATIVE:

On December xx, 2006, at approximately 2:15 pm, Austin Police Department (APD) Officer K. and Officer P. responded to a report of a forgery passing at ABC Cash Express located at 517 A Ave. Upon arrival they met with Mary Smith who stated that a female, identified as Melanie Miller, the defendant, was attempting to cash a fake 7-11 check worth \$2962.30. Mary called the Bank of America to confirm if the check was real. Bank of America told her that the account number on the check did not exist. Mary advised the defendant, who also presented a letter trying to prove that the check was good.

Mary added that the paper used for the check was regular paper, not paper that is consistent in the preparation of checks. She continued to state that the business has cashed valid 7-11 checks in the past and the check number was too small.

When Mary told the defendant and her cousin, identified as Esther Jones, that she was calling the police, the defendant and Jones got scared and left the scene. The defendant (and Jones) returned to the scene and explained to Officer K. and Officer P. how she got the check. The defendant stated that she enrolled herself in a Yahoo post for a Christmas job or to receive financial assistance for Christmas. She stated that she got paid in many ways, including gift cards and this check with number 0009999337. The defendant said that the check was delivered from Canada. The letter that came with the check was from Alliance Processing Center. It was an Award Notification Letter telling the defendant that she had won \$50,000 and that they were mailing her an assistance check of \$2962.30 to help her pay for tax and administrative expenses involved with her winnings. The defendant was upset and stated that she did not know that the check was not real.

The defendant stated that she did not know who sent her the check, and did not have an explanation for why the check was stated to be from Dallas, TX, but mailed from Canada. It should be noted that the phone number on the check returns to Ontario, Canada, not Texas.

SUMMARY OF CRIMINAL HISTORY: (PRIOR RECORD)

DATE	ARRESTING AGENCY	OFFENSE	DISPOSITION
06/00/80	PD, Austin, Texas	Credit Card Abuse	12/00/80, Three years probation
03/00/80 (Offense date)	SO, Travis County, Texas	Theft by Check	07/00/82, 20 days Travis County Jail
02/00/86 (Offense date)	PD, Austin, Texas	Burglary of Habitation	07/00/86, 10 years Shock Probation; 04/00/88, Revoked, 90 days Travis County Jail
10/00/87	PD, Austin, Texas	Theft	02/00/88, 60 days Travis County Jail

TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
MILLER, M.
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11/00/87	PD, Austin, Texas	Theft	02/00/88, 60 day Travis County Jail
08/00/87 (Offense date)	PD, Austin, Texas	Forgery by Possession with Intent to Pass	01/00/88, Eight years TDCJ
11/00/94 (Offense date)	Park Police, Austin, Texas	Theft of Property	11/00/95, Four days Travis County Jail
01/00/95	PD, San Marcos, Texas	Criminal Mischief	03/00/95, Fined

Sources available to this department indicate that the defendant has been convicted of three prior felony offenses and served two prior terms of probation for Credit Card Abuse and Burglary of Habitation. There was no record found for the Credit Card Abuse probation. The Burglary of Habitation probation term was revoked on 04/00/88 due to committing the subsequent offense of Forgery by Possession with Intent to Pass on 08/00/87 and failure to report as directed.

PENDING CASES: None.

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT:

Victim: None
Loss: None

SUMMARY EVALUATION SOCIAL INDICATORS:

Based on the SCS protocol, the following shaded areas in the Potential Concern and Salient Problem categories indicate criminogenic risk factors placing this individual at greater risk of recidivating.

Domains	Not An Issue (NI)	Potential Concern (PC)	Salient Problem (SP)
Criminal Thinking/ Orientation	<i>First time offender. Pro-social</i>	<i>Negative environmental influences, peers etc. Escalating Criminal History</i>	<i>Lengthy criminal history. Entrenched criminal value system. ●Lived off prostitution. ●Nine prior offenses of theft, forgery, or burglary. ●One prior felony term of probation revoked. ●History of homelessness and unstable periods.</i>
Peer Relations	<i>Generally positive and associations with non-offenders</i>	<i>Occasional association with other offenders</i>	<i>Gang member or associates with other offenders/drug dealers. Easily influenced ●Offenses were generally committed with accomplices.</i>

Domains

Not an Issue

Potential Concern

Salient Problem

TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

Domains

Not an Issue

Potential Concern

Salient Problem

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
MILLER, M.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pimps or people around her made her commit the offenses she has in her prior history. •Now isolates herself because she admits she is easily influenced by people. •Thinks she is really weak and does whatever anyone tells her to do.
Assaultive Behavior	No evidence of emotional instability or assaultive behavior	Single prior episode of assaultive behavior	Current or multiple episodes of assaultive behavior
Alcohol Use	None or Social.	Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning	Frequent abuse, serious disruption
Drug Use	No Current Use	Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning	Frequent abuse, serious disruption
Sexual Behavior	No evidence of inappropriate sexual behavior	Current or past statutory offense • History of Prostitution	Current and/or multiple incidents, which have occurred in the last 5 years
Vocational/ Employment –Work Skills	Full-time employment and/or student/homemaker	Sporadic full and/or part-time employment history, including brief periods of unemployment	No employment record, unskilled, unmotivated, or involved in illegal activity •Unemployed 50% of the time or more. •Disabled for four years. •History of unskilled labor. •Longest job reported was five to six months long and she quit because she was pregnant with her son.
Family/ Marital Relations	Stable/ Supportive/ Effective Controls. No Abuse	Some Disorganization and Stress/ Marginal Controls. Prior Abuse.	Major Disorganization or Stress/Ineffective Controls. Current Abuse. •In CPS custody since the age of eight. •Mother was physically abusive. •Recently found out her father is her mother's biological brother and that he raped her mother when she was 12 or 13 years of age. •Reports being molested while in foster homes. •Ran away from foster home at the age 16 and ended up on

TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

Domains

Not an Issue

Potential Concern

Salient Problem

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
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			<p>the streets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was forced to prostitute herself since the age 16. • Had several children and all but one have been placed under adoption. • Only son is 17 years of age now. • Married once in the 80's but marriage was annulled one week later.
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Additional problem areas that may interfere with the individual's adjustment and/or compliance with probation.

Medical Health	<i>Sound physical health</i>	<i>Handicap or illness that interferes with social functioning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffers from asthma and should be taking albuterol but has run out. • Recently suffered head trauma because a tree fell into her window and on her and was prescribed depakote for the pain. 	<i>Serious or chronic illness</i>
Residential	<i>Self-Sufficient, Stable environment</i>	<i>Short-term periods of residential instability</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lived at current address for three years. • Lives with 17 year old son. • Has been stable for the past eleven years. • Was at Salvation Army homeless shelter with son eight years ago. • Grew up in 24 different foster homes until the age of 16 when she ran away and ended up on the streets. 	<i>Chronic residence problems with frequent address changes homelessness, or shelter care</i>

TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

Domains

Not an Issue

Potential Concern

Salient Problem

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Education	<i>Satisfactory – No Significant Learning Disabilities or Special Education, HS or GED and higher achieved education</i>	<i>Functioning below expected grade level or Learning Disability/Special Education. No GED or High School Diploma</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dropped out school during the tenth grade. •Received remedial education and had trouble learning. •Believes foster parents did not care about her education. •Obtained her GED in 1993 while on parole. •Does not remember how many times she was suspended from high school or why she was suspended. 	<i>Below grade 9 and/or functionally illiterate</i>
Financial Management	<i>Current income exceeds expenses. Living within means</i>	<i>Questionable expenses, instable income</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Receives Social Security disability, food stamps, and TANIF for 17 year old son. •Offense committed for monetary gain. •Has \$103 left over after all expenses are paid. 	<i>Excessive debt, expenses exceed income. Inability to meet basic living needs</i>
Mental Health Status	<i>No Mental Health problems and/or diagnosis.</i>	<i>Mental Health problems that have been or are now being treated</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Has active MHMR diagnosis since December 2005. •Currently receives services from the MHMR/ANEW program. •Currently on several psychotropic medications, that despite taking them, the defendant still has symptoms present. •Receives pension for psychiatric disability. 	<i>Significant Mental Health instability</i>

TRAVIS COUNTY PSI Report

EXAMPLE: ES/HIGH RISK
MILLER, M.
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CLASSIFICATION AND SUPERVISION GROUP:

	SCS Score				
	SIS	SIT	ES	CC	LS
Initial Risk					
Low					
Medium					
High			XXX		

This person is High Risk of recidivating and falls into the Environmental Structuring (ES) strategy group.

Characteristics: These offenders make choices due to their inability to solve problems correctly and their naiveté and social gullibility. ES offenders tend to have below average mental capacity. They are often impulsive, because they are less capable of weighing the consequences of their behavior for either themselves or others. They have a low ability to perceive the motives and concerns of others and are easily led by more sophisticated individuals. Even though malice is rare in their motivation, offenders can become involved in assaultive offenses due to a lack of insight.

Supervision Strategy: Will require intensive supervision and referrals to enhance skill levels as well as improve interactions with others. Will also require collateral contacts with family members.

URINE SPECIMEN RESULTS:

Results from the urine specimen collected on 08/21/07; Tested Negative for THC, Cocaine, PCP, Amphetamines, Opiates Status: Negative; Assessment.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE EVALUATION RESULTS:

Based on Lack of current indicators, Travis County Adult Probation is recommending No need for treatment.

CONDITIONS OF PROBATION:

If placed under the supervision of the Travis County Adult Probation Department the following conditions would be appropriate:

Treatment Conditions

- Assign to Mental Health Specialized Caseload and participate in MHMR/ANew for an assessment of services.
- Take Medicine as Prescribed.
- Do not participate in any clinical studies.

"Off Grid" Conditions (Conditions that apply because of the special nature of the offense):

What Else Has Specifically Changed?

■ **Past 3 years**

- **Training: Foundations; Skills Based – Motivational Interviewing; Coaching; Leadership at the Mid-level**
- **Reform of Supervision Processes to Focus on Compliance AND Criminogenic Needs**
- **Implementation of Progressive Sanctions**
- **Data Analysis and Standardized Reports to Guide Decision Making and Assure Fidelity;**
- **Performance Evaluation Consistent w/ EBP**

■ **Now**

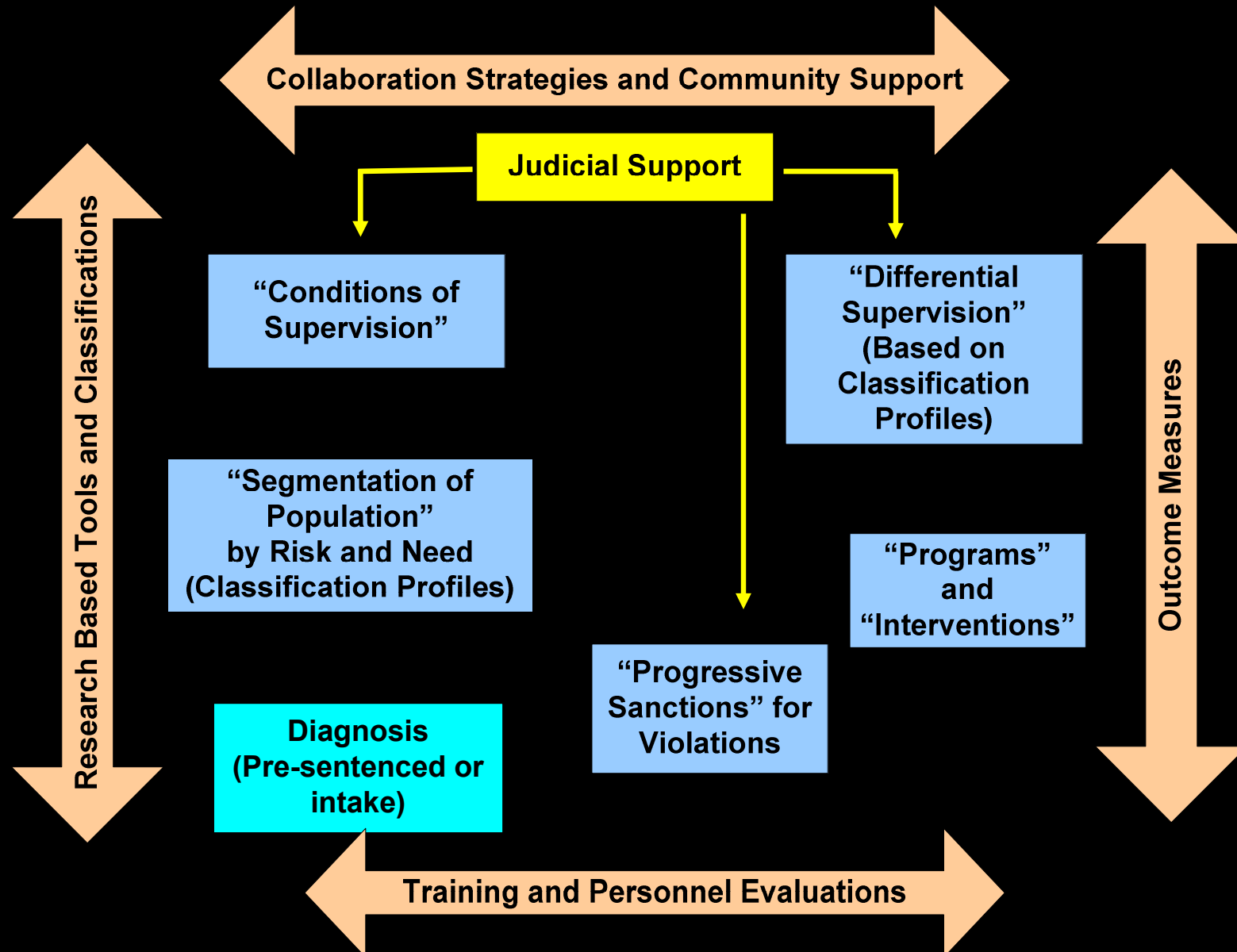
- **Testing of fidelity**
- **Caseload realignment**
- **Refinement of supervision processes**
- **Evaluation of internal & external programs**
- **Design & implementation of new programs**
- **Training/coaching/mentoring for officers on new skill development**

The KEY to EBP is implementation – easy to talk about; not so easy to accomplish on a broad scale.



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EBP Requires Organization Wide Reform



Organizational Culture Change is Key

- **Organizational Assessment**
- **Clear Vision**
- **Building Infrastructure:**
 - Research
 - Data
 - Build knowledge base
 - Internal trainings
 - Focus groups
 - Conference
 - Realignment of organization across functional areas
 - Realignment of resources
- **External Experts**
- **Involvement and high standards of performance for staff**
- **Clear and thoughtful plan**
- **Long-term, methodical commitment to changing how we do business**
- **Evaluation: Are we accomplishing what we want to accomplish?**

Communication is a Key Challenge

- **Organization-wide communication & transparent discussion of issues**
- **Training to establish goals and a common vocabulary**
- **Address “trust” and other organizational culture issues directly**
 - **Monthly leadership forum**
- **Mentoring of leadership to support transition to new communication model**
- **Communication with external stakeholders**

Collaboration is Necessary for Success

- **More than meeting together - mutual commitment that eliminates silos and results in viable solutions for all**
- **Who Do We Collaborate With?**
 - Judges, District Attorney Staff, County Attorney Staff, Defense Attorneys
 - Law Enforcement (Sheriff & City PD)
 - County Agencies, Budget Office, Commissioners
 - Service Providers
 - Community Leaders/Advocacy Groups/Consumer Groups
 - State Agencies/Legislative Groups
- **Communication Structure**
 - Committees, Diverse Workgroups/Task Forces
 - Community Justice Council
 - Travis County Initiatives/Committees

Leadership and long-term commitment is the foundation of collaboration. You need key decision makers to stay with the process.

Major Leadership Challenges

AKA

What Not To Do

- **See EBP as a Simple or Narrow Goal**
 - Must continually focus on organization-wide communication & transparent discussion of issues
 - Must mentor leadership and mid-level managers to transition to a new communication model
 - Must support staff through the tension of change
 - Must manage the pace of change
- **Fail to Plan for Unexpected Obstacles and Challenges**
 - Budget Issues
 - Caseloads
 - Judicial Discretion
- **Go It Alone**
 - Involvement is critical
 - Staff get it done
 - Sustained communication w/ stakeholders during & after implementation is necessary
- **Stop at implementation.**



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Big Picture Felony Risk Assessment/Revocation FY07

Minimum

2.5%

Medium

15.9%

Maximum

81.5%

Second Year Comparison

TCIS Phase One
Fiscal Year 2006

TCIS Phase Two
Fiscal Year 2007

Percent Change

Total Revs

1,157

1,037

-10.4%

A Healthier Organization

- **We have accomplished a transformation that changed and strengthened the internal processes and culture of the organization to promote evidence-based practices.**
- **Staff have a clear and realistic vision of our future.**
- **Staff have been trained in EBP and participated in intensive planning and implementation process.**
- **Quality control measures have been strengthened: research, evaluation, outcome measurement.**
- **We define ourselves as a Learning Organization.**

10 Incubator & Final 2-Year Report

www.co.travis.tx.us/AdultProbation

