



Pennsylvania  
Commission on Crime  
and Delinquency

## PA Criminal Justice Advisory Board Conference 2025

# Expanding the S.C.O.P.E. of Law Enforcement-Community Partnerships

Corporal Todd Kessler, Bucks County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Salvatore Lamantia, Bucks County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Justin Sturkey, Bucks County Sheriff's Office

Dr. Christi M. Smith, Senior Research Fellow, Criminal Justice and Civil Liberties, R Street  
Institute

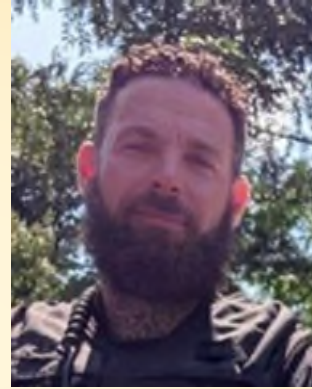
# Roll Call



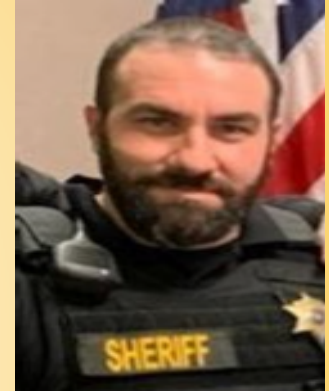
~ 20+ year academic and former probation and parole officer  
~ 3+ year public policy



- 13 years with the Sheriff's Office
- Crisis Intervention Officer
- Crisis/Hostage Negotiator



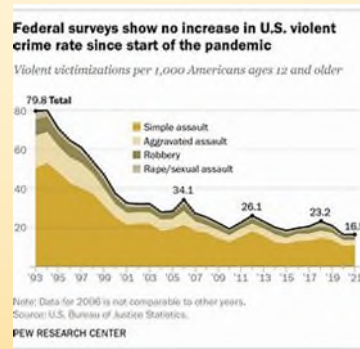
- 18 years LE experience (15 with BCSO)
- Crisis Intervention Officer
- Crisis/Hostage Negotiator



- 13 years LE experience (11 with BCSO)
- Crisis Intervention Officer
- Crisis/Hostage Negotiator

# When Arrest Isn't Best: Creating A Culture of Police-Led, Pre-Arrest Diversion

- Pandemic pressure to reduce jail populations
- Did not result in an increase in crime
- Alternatives are more effective and cost efficient
- Saves precious fiscal and human capacity resources for high priority issues



# Context and Composition of Jail Populations



# Evidence-Based Alternatives

## Police-led deflection:

- Empowers police officers to use their discretion to refer individuals to the appropriate rehabilitative and social service systems instead of arrest
- Is a less expensive, more effective intervention for nonviolent people whose alleged law violations stem primarily from social-service issues
- Supported by IACP and are used in approx. 850 sites across the U.S.
- Departments can choose a model or create their own



# Deflection and Diversion Initiatives

## Deflection/Diversion initiatives:

- ❑ Hold individuals accountable
- ❑ Prioritizing treatment and rehabilitation over conviction and incarceration
- ❑ Reduce the collateral consequences of a conviction one would otherwise experience (charges w/drawn/dismissed)
- ❑ Benefit the individual
- ❑ Saves the criminal justice system money
- ❑ Enhances public safety
  - program participants have a lower rate of re-offending than their counterparts with traditional case processing
  - prioritizes police resources for more serious and violent crime

# General Types of Deflection or Diversion

- Pre-police-encounter, community-based, civilian-initiated diversion
- Pre-arrest or police-led deflection
- Pre-charge or prosecutor-led diversion
- Pre-trial or judge-led diversion
- Alternatives to incarceration

Legal System  
Involvement



Rehabilitation and Social  
Reintegration

# Common Examples

- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)
- Police Assisted Addiction Recovery Initiative (PAARI)
- Stop, Triage, Educate, Engage, Rehabilitate (STEER)
- Citation in Lieu of Arrest
- Drug Overdose Response Teams





# S.C.O.P.E.

## Sheriff's Community Outreach and Public Engagement

### What we do:

#### Mental Health Support

- Crisis Intervention and Mental Health First Aid Certified
- Respond to Mental Health Calls
- Conduct Home Visits and Follow-ups
- Transport Individuals to Treatment Facilities

#### Community Engagement

- Build Trust and Faith in Law Enforcement through Community Programs
- Youth Mentorship Program (In-School & Out-of-School)
- Assist Homeless Individuals with Court Cases, Treatment, Housing, etc.
- Police Athletic League

#### Peer Support Services

- Provide Peer Support for Deputies and Staff
- Veterans Response Team Participation
- Certified in Critical Incident Stress Management
- Certified Peer Support Specialist

