Lessons from Research

### Warning, Citation, or Summons in Lieu of Arrest

- **Expected benefits** include **time and cost savings** for the police; the broader criminal justice system; and for the individual receiving the warning, citation, or summons.

- **Alternatives to arrest** can save time for officers. Survey data from a U.S. representative sample of 1,300 law enforcement agencies indicates that citations take 24.2 minutes to process, compared to the 85.8 minutes it takes to process an arrest. **Citation time savings = just over one hour per incident.**

### Police-led Diversion

- **Would arrest help or hurt?** Line officers have discretion over the critical decision to arrest or not. Greater contextual information about the options available can help inform this decision.

- Programs focus on the **diversion of low-level or non-violent offenders** from the criminal justice system by emphasizing **connection to treatment and services** rather than criminal prosecution.

- **Useful for:**
  - Persons affected by mental illness
  - Persons affected by substance use disorders
  - Juvenile offenders

- **34 percent** of law enforcement agencies participate in diversionary practices, and **21 percent** operate police-led diversion programs.²

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1. International Association of Chiefs of Police, *Citation in Lieu of Arrest: Examining Law Enforcement’s Use of Citation Across the United States* (April 2016).

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Key Takeaways for Police Agencies

- Diverting low-level or non-violent offenders away from the justice system and toward support and services to address behavioral and/or health needs can **prevent the individual from re-offending in the future**.

- Reducing recidivism by connecting individuals to treatment and services can **help improve both agency and officer workload efficiency**.

- **Arrest alternatives result in both cost and time savings** for the law enforcement agency, allowing officers to focus their energy on other calls for service and community-policing activities.

- **Arrest is a specific tool that should be used under specific circumstances.** Some circumstances are not appropriate for arrest alternatives and should result in arrest.

- There need to be mechanisms in place for circumstances that are **appropriate for diversion**.

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This publication is one in a series and is based on a literature review examining the factors associated with arrest and alternatives to arrest. To access the full literature review and more information and resources from the IACP/UC Center for Police Research and Policy, please visit:

- research@theIACP.org
- theIACP.org/research
- 800.THE.IACP

Funded by Arnold Ventures, the IACP/UC Center for Police Research and Policy brings together renowned scholars, current and former police executives, programmatic staff, and dedicated researchers to conduct cutting-edge research and share findings with law enforcement leaders around the world.

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