



## **FACT SHEET: POLICE TRAINING AND THE DECRIMINALIZATION OF MENTAL ILLNESS**

- 1. Massachusetts has been near the last in the country in terms of spending on police training generally**
  - Even with recent increases to the Municipal Police Training Committee's budget, we are still last among comparable states
  
- 2. Massachusetts jails and prisons hold disproportionate numbers of people with mental illness**
  - 30% of those in state correctional facilities and 50% of those in county jails and houses of corrections receive services for a mental health condition
  - Results in enormous costs for the Commonwealth, both in human and economic terms
  
- 3. Police-based initiatives are successfully keeping people with behavioral health conditions out of the criminal justice system**
  - Avoiding arrest in the first place is the primary way to lower the jail and prison population
  - Quality mental health training for police officers prepares them to recognize mental health symptoms, de-escalate situations, and refer people to appropriate services
  
- 4. Only about 15% of all police departments Massachusetts have access to the resources and training necessary to respond effectively to mental health calls**
  - Incorporating funding for jail diversion into the Sen. Timilty Senate Budget Amendment will create the sustainable, statewide strategy that Massachusetts urgently needs

*“Jail diversion is not a luxury for police departments. It’s a necessity.”*  
— Lieutenant Detective Patrick Glynn, Quincy Police Department