



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