



LEGAL SERVICES TO END HOMELESSNESS

SOAR Justice Project

SSDI Outreach, Access, & Recovery
2018 & 2019 Summary Report

This report summarizes 2018-19 outcomes for the Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP) SSI/SSD Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Justice Project. HAP is a Philadelphia legal services non-profit organization founded in 1990 to meet the needs of homeless individuals and families in Philadelphia. SOAR is a national initiative, originally supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), to assist individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits.

Since January 2018, HAP has partnered with several Philadelphia diversion/specialty courts to provide SOAR services to criminal justice involved individuals. These courts include: Mental Health Court (offenders with severe mental illness), Project Dawn Court (women with repeat prostitution offenses), Veteran's Court (former active military charged with a non-violent misdemeanor), and Drug Treatment Court (non-violent drug or drug-related offenders).¹

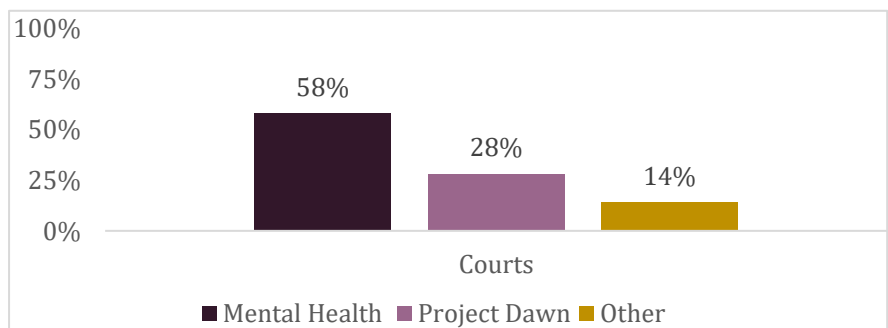
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- *Since January 2018 a total of 118 individuals were referred for HAP SOAR benefits, 61 SOAR applications were filed and 57 Favorable Outcomes were obtained (approvals and reinstatements). HAP has a 100% approval rate (no denials after filing), the highest rate for SOAR programs nationally.*
- *For individuals approved or reinstated for benefits, 58% were from Mental Health court, 28% from Project Dawn court, and 14% from other courts/sources.*
- *86% or more of individuals approved or reinstated for SOAR benefits had no criminal recidivism, that is, they had no arrests, violations of probation, or days in custody through 6- and 12-month follow-up periods.*
- *Almost two-thirds (64%) of individuals approved or reinstated for SOAR benefits are living in the community on their own, with family, or in residential services housing at the 6-month follow-up period.*

Number of Individuals Approved through SOAR

Since January 2018, a total of 118 individuals were referred for HAP SOAR benefits and 61 SOAR applications were filed. A total of **50 individuals had benefits approved and 7 individuals had their benefits reinstated, for a total of 57 Favorable Outcomes.** HAP's overall rate of approvals is **100%** and is the highest of any SOAR site nationally. For those individuals approved, there was an average of 66 days from application filing to approval of benefits.

Shown at right is the percentage of individuals approved for SSI/SSD benefits through SOAR for the Mental Health and Project Dawn courts, respectively, the two courts with the most SOAR eligible client referrals. **Of the 57 individuals approved or reinstated for benefits, 58% were from Mental Health court, 28% from Project Dawn court, and 14% from other courts/sources.**



¹ In 2019, HAP began accepting referrals from the Philadelphia Defender Association's Mental Health Special Defense Unit and PeerStar in collaboration with the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. These referrals sources are not included in this report due to their small number in the applicable reporting period.

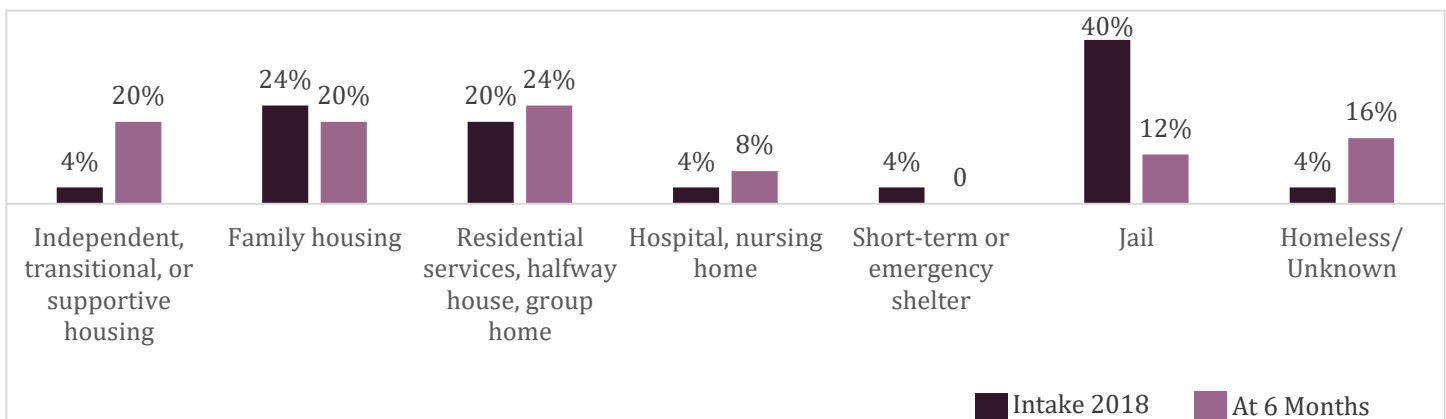
Criminal Recidivism Outcomes for Individuals Receiving HAP Services

Criminal recidivism outcomes were examined and included arrests, violations of probation, and number of days in custody at 6 and 12 months after approval of SOAR benefits. A total of **37 individuals were eligible for the 6-month follow-up analyses** (i.e., they had a benefits approval date or a reinstatement date of June 2019 or earlier) and **22 individuals were eligible for the 12-month follow-up analyses** (i.e., they had a benefits approval date or reinstatement date of December 2018 or earlier). As shown below, **there was 1 arrest and 3 violations of probation, respectively, in the first six months after approval or reinstatement of benefits and no arrests and 3 violations of probation in the second six-months after effectuation**. Combined, this represents a total of 1 arrest and 6 violations of probation through the 1-year follow-up period after approval or reinstatement of benefits. The total number of days in custody was 438 and 375 for the 0-6 month (3 individuals) and 7-12-month (3 individuals) follow-up periods, respectively, after approval or reinstatement of benefits. Finally, these outcomes involved a total of only 5 individuals (although 3 individuals spent days in custody during each 6-month period, one person did so in each period). Thus, **of the 37 individuals eligible for reporting, 32 remained free of criminal recidivism with no arrests, violations of probation, or days in custody after receipt of SOAR benefits, a rate of 86%**.

Criminal Recidivism Outcomes	0-6 Months after Effectuation (for 37 individuals)	7-12 Months after Effectuation (for 22 individuals)
Arrests	1	0
Violations of Probation	3	3
Days in Court Custody	438	375

Housing Outcomes for Individuals Receiving HAP Services

Housing outcomes were examined at 6 and 12 months after approval or reinstatement of benefits. For these analyses, once again there were 37 individuals eligible for the 6-month follow-up analyses and 22 individuals eligible for the 12-month analyses. The following housing outcomes were assessed after 6 months and 12 months after approval of benefits or their reinstatement, respectively: 1) independent, transitional, or supportive housing; 2) family housing; 3) residential services, halfway house, or group home; 4) hospital or nursing home; 5) short-term or emergency shelter; 6) jail; and 7) homeless/unknown. Due to the small sample size at 12 months, only the intake and 6-month results are shown graphically for the 25 individuals for whom housing status was known.



The figure above shows housing outcomes for individuals approved or reinstated for SOAR benefits. At intake, 40% of individuals were in jail, 20% in residential services, and 24% living with family. In contrast, after being approved for SSI/SSD through SOAR, 20% live independently in the community, 20% live with family, and 24% in residential housing services. There is a dramatic reduction in the number of individuals in jail to 12%, and the living arrangements of 16% are unknown or presumed to be homeless. Smaller percentages at either time are in the hospital or in a shelter.

Housing data through 12 months is only available for 13 individuals, and so the results should be interpreted with caution. Of this group, 3 each are living independently or with family (23% respectively), 4 are living in residential services (31%), 1 person is in jail (8%), and 2 are homeless (15%). The reasons provided for specific housing outcomes vary across individuals. **Overall, almost two-thirds (64%) of individuals approved or reinstated for SOAR benefits are living in the community on their own, with family, or in residential services housing at the 6-month follow-up period.**