



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County Joins National Effort to Improve Public Safety

Wake County is one of 67 city, county and state governments across the country that has committed to a federal initiative to use data to improve public safety.

[Announced by the White House today](#), the national Data-Driven Justice Initiative will help local law enforcement agencies divert low-level offenders with mental illness out of the criminal justice system and into appropriate care.

These innovative strategies, which have measurably reduced jail populations in several communities, help stabilize individuals and families, better serve communities and often save the taxpayers money in the process.

Wake County began work on its own data-driven justice initiatives last year. The White House-led effort not only affirms the value of these existing practices, but it also expands the list of resources available to the county to help tackle these challenging issues.

The Wake County Detention Center currently works with Wake County's managed care organization to examine data on the county's jail population each day to identify inmates who need treatment for mental health issues. Once identified, these individuals begin treatment while incarcerated and are connected with services to continue the regimen after release. This approach helps stabilize the inmates and better serve communities by ensuring the offenders have the resources they need to become productive residents after they are released from jail.

Wake County is also piloting a program that identifies individuals with mental illness who are better served through treatment programs than through incarceration. Under the program, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office and the individual's attorney work with Wake County's managed care organization to identify appropriate participants and create a treatment plan. The program allows the participant to meet the obligations of the criminal justice system through treatment as opposed to traditional sanctions, thus better serving the participant while saving the taxpayers money.

To learn more about the White House's Data-Driven Justice initiative, please visit [its website](#).

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