



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Executive Department

Executive Directive 4 (2015)

ESTABLISHING THE CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND JUSTICE

During the past decade, Virginia lawmakers, the Supreme Court and Executive Branch agencies have spearheaded various efforts to identify and address the needs of persons with mental illness who become involved with the criminal justice system. While many initiatives have demonstrated some success, significant challenges remain in ensuring coordination and collaboration across the behavioral health and criminal justice systems at local, regional and state levels.

On April 8, 2014, I issued Executive Order 12, reestablishing the Task Force for Improving Mental Health Services and Crisis Response. Among the most significant recommendations from the Task Force is the need to create a center of excellence to collaboratively identify and utilize public and private resources to more effectively coordinate implementation of programs, policies and resources to address behavioral health needs within the Commonwealth, particularly for those individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

In order to achieve its goals of better coordination among behavioral health and justice agencies in the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors, the center shall pursue a collaborative, multi-systems approach in the following areas:

- Data collection and analytics
- Evidence-based programs and practices
- Education, outreach and training
- Technical assistance and resource development

Accordingly, I hereby direct the establishment of the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (Center) and direct the Secretaries of Public Safety & Homeland Security and Health & Human Resources to oversee this process. The work will be led by an Executive Leadership Council (Council) which will develop the organizational structure and an implementation plan for the Center.

The Council shall be convened by the Deputy Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security and the Deputy Secretary of Health & Human Resources.

The Council shall also include the Commissioners of the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services and the Department of Health, and the Directors of the Departments of Corrections, Criminal Justice Services, Juvenile Justice, and Medical Assistance Services.

The Council shall present me with an organization and implementation plan for the Center by July 1, 2015.



Attest:

Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor

Levar M. Stoney, Secretary of the Commonwealth