
The Mental Health Resource Handbook
for Human Service Personnel
Serving the Local Correctional Population

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PREFACE

The Mental Health Resource Handbook was written to assist mental health professionals who provide services to persons with mental illness detained in local jails and police lockups. It was prepared as a training and reference resource to facilitate implementation of the [New York State Local Forensic Suicide Prevention Crisis Service Model](#). In order for the model to realize its full potential, police, correction and mental health personnel must work together to identify and provide appropriate services to persons with acute and persistent mental health problems who become incarcerated. Mental health employees must nevertheless realize that the task of rendering care to persons in custody invariably poses a number of challenges that are not typically encountered in other situations. Even skilled clinicians can become frustrated if they do not understand how the criminal justice system operates and the role that mental health professionals are expected to play in it.

The goals of this handbook are: (1) to provide mental health staff with a better understanding of the criminal justice process; (2) to suggest ways in which practitioners can establish good working relationships with personnel at the jails and lockups that they serve; and (3) to describe the New York State laws which have the greatest impact on the delivery of mental health services to forensic patients.

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