

Highlights from the Otero County Community Health Assessment - 2019
Recommendations to support Community Safety and Justice

Otero County Healthcare Services Department

Full report available at: <https://www.co.tero.nm.us/374/Community-Health-Assessment>



Community Safety and Justice

- Safe communities are healthier communities; communities can prevent violence and reduce accidents and injuries through a wide range of policies and programs (e.g., policies to reduce alcohol-related harm and firearm deaths, Community Schools initiatives, and mentoring programs)
- Key stakeholders are working together to improve our community-based continuum of care to support people living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders
- Improving officer and community safety while reducing the number of people with mental illness in our jails is an ongoing and collaborative effort, as is meeting the needs of local youth with justice involvement through community-based programs, support, and supervision instead of detention

The Alamogordo CIT Team was featured in "[Crisis Intervention Team \(CIT\) Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crises](#)", the first comprehensive guide for communities starting and sustaining CIT programs. Alamogordo is featured in *Chapter 1: Case Study: Building Relationships in Alamogordo, New Mexico* on pages 21-23.



Incarceration rates in New Mexico

- New Mexico's total incarceration (jails, prisons, other detention facilities) rate of **829** people per 100,000 is higher than the national average¹
- People and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by harmful incarceration policies
- In Otero County, the jail population rate among Black residents age 15-64 is **1,080** per 100,000 population compared to **628** per 100,000 Hispanic/Latino residents and **461** per 100,000 White residents



Recommendations based on evidence, community input, and current priorities

- Support current *CIT initiatives to reduce incarceration* among people with mental illness
- Advocate for state and federal policies to *reduce mass incarceration*
- Support *local problem-solving and treatment courts*
- Support *local Community Schools efforts to improve mentoring and support services*
- Support community-based alternatives to *youth detention* through Otero County Juvenile Justice Board initiatives (e.g., Restorative Justice, school-based mentoring programs)
- Develop *sustainable plans to attract, train, and retain law enforcement, first responder, and other public safety personnel* with competitive compensation

Sources: ¹[Prison Policy Initiative, 2020](#)

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