



NEWS *from* **Clatsop County**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clatsop County Launches New Deflection Program to Address Substance Possession

Astoria, OR – On September 1, 2024, Clatsop County implemented a new deflection program in response to Oregon's updated law criminalizing the possession of controlled substances. This program is a partnership between local law enforcement and Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare.

Under the new law, individuals found in possession of controlled substances will be offered the opportunity to participate in the deflection program rather than face immediate criminal charges.

- A deflection citation will be issued by law enforcement and the individual must contact CBH in person within 72 hours to enroll in the program.
- If available, CBH peer staff may respond right to the scene, complete the intake and schedule an assessment. CBH will notify the deflection program coordinator.
- A Law enforcement officer will hold on to the citation and over a 90-day period, if the individual engages in treatment, the charge will be dropped.
- Clatsop County residents or those homeless in our community are eligible for deflection.
- If the individual does not participate in deflection program the County will proceed with criminal charges.

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Sept 17, 2024

Page 2 of 2

"This program offers a second chance for individuals struggling with addiction, giving them the opportunity to seek help and avoid charges," Christina Schulz, Clatsop County Deflection Coordinator said.

Participants in the deflection program are not limited in the number of times they can access these services. Additionally, even if an individual is found with illegal substances while already participating in the program, they may still be allowed to continue with treatment.

"The ultimate goal of the program is to connect individuals with the resources they need to recover, rather than penalize them through the legal system," Schulz said.

The program is funded by an IMPACTS grant from the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, which has awarded Clatsop County \$453,888 to operate the deflection program through June 30, 2025.

For more information about the Clatsop County Deflection Program, please contact the [Clatsop County Deflection Program Coordinator](#) or visit ClatsopCounty.gov.

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