

Welcome to the LEADS Program

This handbook is intended to:

Answer questions

Address concerns

Give you information about Leading Adults to Develop Success (LEADS)

As a participant in this program, you are expected to follow the instructions given in court by the Judge and follow the Individualized Program Success Plan that you develop with your Pretrial Services officer. This handbook explains what is expected of you and what you can expect from LEADS.

Entering and successfully completing LEADS may result in important legal benefits in your case, which will be explained by your attorney. If you are successful in this program, your case can be dismissed or you could receive a reduced sentence. This program can support you in your personal and professional goals and should be considered when you decide to enter into LEADS. If you have any questions about this handbook or about LEADS, ask your Pretrial Services officer or your attorney.

What is LEADS?

LEADS is for adults ages 18 to 26 who have legal and social service needs, and are given the opportunity to participate in LEADS instead of the regular criminal court process. LEADS is an alternative court of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. Alternative courts use a different approach to resolve criminal cases by connecting participants to community services and other opportunities. The goal is to support participants so they do not commit new crimes. Your LEADS group includes the Judge, Treatment Providers, Assistant United States Attorney, Assistant Federal Public Defender, Defense Attorney, Pretrial Services Officer—and you.

What do I have to do?

The LEADS group members will work with you to create an Individualized Program Success Plan based on your individual needs and goals which may include housing, education, employment, financial benefits, mental and physical wellness, parenting and life skills support. To participate in LEADS, you must agree to follow your Individualized Program Success Plan, which is a shared commitment between you and the court. Before you sign Participant Contract, you will have an opportunity to review it with your attorney and have your questions answered.

You will appear before the LEADS Judge on a regular basis. For the first several months, you will likely come to court every week or every other week. As you start to meet your goals, court hearings will take place less often.

Be on time for your court hearing. Be courteous and respectful of all people in the courtroom. Dress appropriately (no hats, no hoods, pants up, no midriff tops, no shorts).

How long is court?

Court will vary based upon an individual Judge's schedule—however, you should anticipate that your case will be called within two hours. Please make sure that you have cleared the necessary amount of time on your schedule to accommodate your court appearances. Depending on how well you are doing with your Individualized Program Success Plan, your hearing may be called earlier or later in the calendar.

How long will I be involved in LEADS?

The length of time you participate in LEADS depends upon your criminal charges and individual progress with your Individualized Program Success Plan. Participants can expect to be in the program for at least one year and may complete the program up to two years after they start. While you are participating in

LEADS, the Judge, your Pretrial Services officer and your attorney will keep track of your participation and progress through the phases, and will work with you to determine when you are ready to graduate.

Your case will return to the regular criminal court process if you are terminated by the Court for not following your plan, or, if you voluntarily withdraw from LEADS.

How LEADS can work for me?

Services and Resources: Once accepted into LEADS, you will be linked to some or all of the following services: case management, housing, job training and placement, education, group and/or individual therapy, parenting resources, health care, and benefits. We recognize that housing is very difficult. However, your Pretrial Services officer will work with you to find shelter or a more secure environment for you.

Recognition of Progress: As you progress through your Individualized Program Success Plan and the phases, your achievements will be publicly recognized by the Judge, attorneys, and Pretrial Services officer.

Legal Benefits: If you successfully complete your Individualized Program Success Plan and graduate, you will leave the criminal justice system in a better position than the more traditional criminal court process. For example, your charges may be reduced or your charges may be dismissed. Every case is different. Your attorney will discuss the specifics of your case and explain the benefits for your case/s if you successfully complete LEADS.

Opportunity: LEADS offers you a chance to connect and receive services and support, practice and develop skills that lead to success in adulthood, and receive a better legal outcome than if you had remained in a standard criminal court proceeding.

Graduation/Sentencing: Once you are consistently engaged with your Individualized Program Success Plan, following the Judge's orders, and remaining arrest-free, you may be eligible for graduation from LEADS. There are four phases in the program. Graduation is determined by your achievements in each program phase.

Remember that there are many people who make up your LEADS case—including you. The judge, your attorneys, and your Pretrial Services officer wants you to succeed. If you take advantage of the assistance offered, you can discover many ways to make a better life for yourself.

PROGRAM PHASES

The LEADS program is a four-phased highly structured program lasting from 12-24 months. The length of time varies depending upon your progress.

Each phase includes activities and accomplishments and consists of achievements to move into the next phase. You and your attorneys, the judge, and your Pretrial Services officer, will determine your readiness for phase advancement based on your goals.

The more engaged you are with your Individualized Program Success Plan, the better your progress and outcome. It is not just about showing up. As you move from one phase to another, your family and/or other important persons in your life are invited to join you in court to celebrate your success.

PHASE ONE – Engagement and Assessment	
Objectives	Intake, assessment and orientation; meet with your Pretrial Services officer; develop your Individualized Program Success Plan; attend group and/or individual therapy sessions; meet immediate needs
Expected Length of Phase	3 months
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weekly/Biweekly court hearings ○ Create Individualized Program Success Plan goals (housing and employment for example) and begin working on them ○ Attend support groups as directed ○ Comply with the terms and conditions of pretrial release (if applicable) ○ Drug testing based on identified needs
Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No pretrial sanctions ○ Satisfactory treatment progress or completion ○ Satisfactory compliance with all program requirements ○ Agreement of your attorneys, the judge, and your Pretrial Services officer

PHASE TWO – Stability and Accountability	
Objectives	Continued Individualized Program Success Plan
Expected Length of Phase	3 months
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend required court hearings ○ Ongoing review and updating of Individualized Program Success Plan with goals accomplished (including housing, employment or educational goals) ○ Comply with the terms and conditions of pretrial release ○ Group, individual and/or family therapy, if required ○ Attendance of support groups as directed ○ Random drug testing as directed
Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No pretrial sanctions ○ Satisfactory treatment progress or completion ○ Satisfactory compliance with all program requirements Agreement of your attorneys, the judge, and your Pretrial Services officer

PHASE THREE – Wellness and Community Connection
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Objectives	Continued Individualized Program Success Plan; Wellness, pursuit of education and/or vocational goals, connect with the community at large
Expected Length of Phase	3 months
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend required court hearings ○ Ongoing review and updating of Individualized Program Success Plan with goals accomplished (including housing, employment or educational goals) ○ Stable housing arrangements ○ Begin relationships with community partners to continue after program completion ○ Comply with the terms and conditions of pretrial release ○ Group, individual and/or family therapy, if required ○ Attendance of support groups as directed ○ Random drug testing as directed
Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No pretrial sanctions ○ Satisfactory treatment progress or completion ○ Satisfactory compliance with all program requirements ○ Agreement of your attorneys, the judge, and your Pretrial Services officer

PHASE FOUR –Program Transition	
Objectives	Transition from LEADS while maintaining wellness and positive community connections
Expected Length of Phase	3 months
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend required court hearings ○ Completion of Individualized Program Success Plan with goals accomplished ○ Stable housing arrangements ○ Finalize relationships with community partners to continue after program completion ○ Maintain employment or participation in an educational/vocational program ○ Comply with the terms and conditions of pretrial release ○ Group, individual and/or family therapy, if required ○ Attendance of support groups as directed ○ Random drug testing as directed ○ Develop a Post-Graduation Life Plan
Advancement/Graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No pretrial sanctions ○ Satisfactory treatment progress or completion ○ Satisfactory compliance with all program requirements ○ Agreement of your attorneys, the judge, and your Pretrial Services officer

On your graduation day, you will be invited to share with the LEADS Judge how life has changed for you since you started the program. The Judge will present you with a certificate of completion and will recognize your accomplishments. Family and friends are invited to join you to celebrate your success.

What are the expectations of LEADS?

You must meet the following commitments to participate in LEADS.

Appear in Court as Scheduled

You must appear in front of the LEADS Judge on a regular basis. The Judge will be given progress reports about your engagement in your Individualized Program Success Plan and with Pretrial. The Judge will ask you about your progress and discuss any challenges you may be experiencing. Depending on your progress, you may have to come to court several times a month. As you make progress, you will have less frequent court appearances.

Follow your Individualized Program Success Plan

Your plan will include some of the following components:

- Case management and therapeutic services
- Group, individual and/or family therapy
- Meeting with your Pretrial Services Officer
- Meeting with a mentor
- Substance abuse counseling (as applicable)
- Housing, education, employment and parenting support

What's in Your Individualized Program Success Plan?

Pretrial Services

Your Pretrial Services Officer will connect you to services in the community to achieve your goals and will inform the Court on your progress on completing your Individualized Program Success Plan. You are expected to attend all scheduled appointments, both with your Pretrial Services Officer and with agencies that you are referred to by your Pretrial Services Officer.

Substance Abuse or Alcohol Treatment

LEADS recognizes that substance abuse often compromises the safety, wellbeing, and mental health of our participants, and we work with you to move towards abstaining from problematic drug and alcohol use.

Drug Testing

Drug testing will take place during phase one. The LEADS group members hears about all drug test results including any failure to test. The Judge may order a drug test at any time. Tampering with the drug test or refusal to be tested is considered a positive test and may result in a remand or termination from the program (if a urine test is used, this includes flushes, diluting, using someone else's urine) or other negative consequences. A positive or "dirty" test will also result in a negative response from the court.

Additional Services and Activities

Your Individualized Program Success Plan will likely include a number of activities including therapy, employment and education programs, and other services. Completing these activities is your road map to successful completion of the LEADS program. Your plan may change over time, as you complete activities and/or adjust your goals. Your Pretrial Services Officer will provide LEADS with a report about your attendance and progress, and will contact staff at various community agencies to confirm that you are attending and engaged and that the services are meeting your needs.

Rewards and Responses

There are rewards for your conduct while you are a participant in LEADS—both good and bad.

Rewards are received for doing well in LEADS and are awarded on a case by case basis, as determined by the LEADS group. "Doing well" means:

- Arriving on time for court hearings and scheduled appointments
- Following the Judge's recommendations
- Following your Individualized Program Success Plan
- Being actively engaged in court and your plan
- Practicing and developing accountable behaviors

Responses are consequences for not meeting your commitments to LEADS. Responses are intended to keep you on track, encourage you to make good choices, and help you to succeed in the program. Responses are given in order of increasing seriousness.

The following behaviors may result in the Judge or your Pretrial Services Officer ordering one or more responses.

- Missed court appearances
- Missed appointments with your Pretrial Services Officer or other service providers
- Infractions of rules of treatment including verbal threat of violence
- Other failures to follow your Individualized Program Success Plan
- Continued substance abuse
- Refusing to drug test
- Failure to follow conditions of pretrial release.
- Missed appointments with pretrial.
- Leaving your treatment program or supervised housing
- New criminal offenses

Termination from LEADS

New arrests could result in being terminated from LEADS. Other violations which may result in termination or a judicial response include: failing to meet program commitments; failing to follow instructions of the Pretrial Services Office. The LEADS Judge will make the final decisions about termination from LEADS. If you are terminated from LEADS, your case may be returned to the regular criminal court process.