

Achieve Deflection's Potential

SHIELD-Enhanced Deflection & Technical Assistance

TASC's Center for Health and Justice & SHIELD Training Initiative



Deflection initiatives are data-driven, evidence-based strategies that have been demonstrated to improve public safety and health outcomes. As deflection becomes more widespread, law enforcement buy-in is key to its success. TASC's Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) and the SHIELD Training Initiative have partnered to bring you joint training—**SHIELD-enhanced deflection**—and technical assistance to increase officer buy-in and improve program implementation to best achieve deflection's full potential.

SHIELD-enhanced deflection provides officers with the skills and knowledge needed to have a lasting impact. It also builds an understanding of deflection's value and how it benefits officers, people who use drugs, and the community. Combined with this understanding, SHIELD and CHJ provide support with deflection design, implementation support, and cross-system technical assistance.

Together, CHJ and SHIELD bring over four decades of experience working in and with law enforcement and first responders. Our work spans frontline personnel to executive leadership. We focus on principles that keep officers safe, increase community trust, reduce crime, promote healthy communities, and save lives.

WHAT WE DO

Our approach is customized for each community. We consider your unique strengths, challenges, and capacity. SHIELD-enhanced deflection blends training and technical assistance to create sustainable and impactful deflection initiatives.

WHAT IS DEFLECTION?

Deflection is an early, “upstream” approach to addressing substance use issues before a crisis—such as an overdose, arrest, or mental health episode—occurs. Sometimes called pre-arrest diversion, deflection offers a framework for collaboration between community partners including public safety (e.g., law enforcement, first responders) and public health (e.g., treatment, recovery support).

By combining traditional and innovative strategies, deflection gives law enforcement a new “tool in their toolbox” for developing pathways to supportive services for people who use drugs.

CHJ and SHIELD partner to help communities build, strengthen, and sustain initiatives that address substance use and mental health needs—while advancing public safety, reducing crime, preventing overdose, and looking out for the wellbeing of our First Responders.

WHO WE ARE

TASC's Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) offers practical expertise at the intersection of public safety and public health, across all justice intercepts. With a focus on solutions that reduce crime, drug use, and overdose, while improving access to care and recovery, CHJ supports first responders—including law enforcement, fire, and EMS—and their community partners in developing and strengthening initiatives that help individuals at risk of arrest due to drug use, overdose, or co-occurring mental health conditions. Through training to build competency, action planning to develop practical and scalable deflection initiatives, and guiding the implementation of these initiatives, CHJ supports communities in answering “Deflect to What?” CHJ’s successes span 49 states, two U.S. territories, and numerous countries across the globe.

The SHIELD Training Initiative equips police officers and other first responders to respond more safely, effectively, and confidently during the overdose crisis. The SHIELD Training addresses growing demands placed on frontline personnel at a time of heightened risks and limited resources. The curriculum is evidence-based in both content and teaching strategies. SHIELD also takes the crucial next step of providing actionable practices such as task shifting to community-based specialists. This approach reduces burdens on officers while aligning with effective public health responses to substance use. SHIELD is practice-driven and solutions-focused, filling major training gaps and providing officers with the tools they need to be safer, healthier, and more effective in responding to the overdose crisis.

Contact us to explore how deflection and SHIELD training go together to help your community and keep your officers safe.

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SHIELD: Sunyou Kang, Director of Operations, info@shieldtraining.org

SELECTED RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Farina, G., Charlier, J., & Fiori, H. (2025). Preventing Substance Use-Related Crime through Deflection. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Human Rights and Science*, 7 (2-8). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15222574>

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Labriola, M. M., Peterson, S., Taylor, J., Sobol, D., Reichert, J., Ross, J., Charlier, J., & Juarez, S. (2023). A multi-site evaluation of law enforcement deflection in the United States (NCJ 309961). Office of Justice Programs. <https://www.ojp.gov/library/publications/multi-site-evaluation-law-enforcement-deflection-united-states-0>

Marotta, P.L., del Pozo, B., et al. (2023). Unlocking deflection: The role of supervisor support in police officer willingness to refer people who inject drugs to harm reduction services. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 121, 104188. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395923002359>

Siddiqui, S.T., La Manna, A., Connors, E. et al. (2024). An evaluation of first responders' intention to refer to post-overdose services following SHIELD training. *Harm Reduction Journal* 21, 39. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-024-00957-4>

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SHIELD Training Initiative

Protecting Those Who Serve