



DHS News

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Five questions with Brandi Harrison

Brandi is project manager, forensic services on the Office of Analytics, Technology and Planning's (ATP) Planning and Innovation Team. She can be reached at brandi.harrison@alleghenycounty.us.

1. What was your path to Allegheny County/DHS?

I began in this role at DHS in July of 2018. My experience prior to that includes work in program management, evaluation, and planning, community social work, and behavioral and physical health. I am a graduate of Carlow University (MS professional leadership, non-profit management) and Bethany College (BSW).

2. Tell us a bit about the work you do.

My work is primarily focused on projects that impact individuals in our county who have justice involvement, including managing grant-funded projects that support Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and family support services for individuals in the jail, and coordinating cross-system collaboration on complex cases to divert from or reduce the length of incarceration. I also work with program offices, providers, and external partners to identify and implement strategies to improve access to and quality of services for individuals with justice involvement.

3. How does your work help to support DHS's mission and goals?

My work supports the mission and goals of DHS by facilitating coordination of care and access to quality services to meet the needs of individuals with justice involvement. Additionally, it supports DHS's work on Allegheny County's Safety and Justice Challenge initiative to reduce the jail population and address racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.

4. What most excites you about your work?

I think any time we can act on an opportunity to improve access and/or the quality of services for those who need it most at the systems level, that is very exciting. I also love that I am always learning new things and hearing diverse perspectives in this role. I truly appreciate being part of a team that is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families through innovation and collaboration.

5. What is the most important thing DHS staff should know about your role?

Cross-system collaboration is really important when supporting individuals who have justice involvement. If a staff person needs to connect with someone in the courts or jail to collaborate on case planning and is unsure who to contact, I can help them initiate that contact.