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City of Austin Public Safety Commission  
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# What

The mission of the Austin Travis County Sobriety Center is to enhance public health and public safety by providing an alternative to the emergency room and jail for publicly intoxicated individuals to sober up and, where appropriate, provide a safe environment to initiate recovery.

# Public Intoxication: **It's a crime!**

- When a person is in a public place while **intoxicated to the degree that the person may endanger the person or another** they can be arrested by law enforcement and taken to jail.
- Punishment:
  - Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500
  - Class B (repeat offenders) punishable by up to 180 days in jail or a fine of up to \$2000.
- Normally people do not go to jail for Class C misdemeanors, but in the case of public intoxication there has been no other alternative in Austin, Travis County.

# History

Commission formed - 2014

Local Government Corporation (LGC) formed/  
Board appointed in November 2016

5 City of Austin Appointees

5 Travis County Appointees

1 At large appointee

Interim Executive Director – appointed Feb 2017

Permanent Executive Director – Jan 1 2018 (est.)

# Why: Effects of Public Intoxication

Reduced Productivity

Diminished community health and safety

Significant cost to taxpayers

# Let's look at the numbers

In 2016, Travis County booked 2,669 persons for public intoxication

Cost of booking - \$152 each incident

Cost of taking officers off the street to line up for booking

# Who gets arrested now?

## Bookings for Public Intoxication

|                              | <b>FY14</b>  | <b>FY15</b>  | <b>FY16</b>  | <b>FY17 YTD*</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Public Intoxication Bookings | <b>3,364</b> | <b>3,023</b> | <b>2,669</b> | <b>2,200</b>     |
| <i>Misdemeanor B</i>         | 178          | 156          | 92           | 95               |
| <i>Misdemeanor C</i>         | 3,186        | 2,867        | 2,577        | 2,105            |

## Bookings by Gender

|                              | <b>FY14</b>  | <b>FY15</b>  | <b>FY16</b>  | <b>FY17 YTD*</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Public Intoxication Bookings | <b>3,364</b> | <b>3,023</b> | <b>2,669</b> | <b>2,200</b>     |
| <i>Misdemeanor B</i>         | <b>178</b>   | <b>156</b>   | <b>92</b>    | <b>95</b>        |
| <i>Female</i>                | 32           | 12           | 10           | 1                |
| <i>Male</i>                  | 146          | 144          | 82           | 94               |
| <i>Misdemeanor C</i>         | <b>3,186</b> | <b>2,867</b> | <b>2,577</b> | <b>2,105</b>     |
| <i>Female</i>                | 547          | 494          | 481          | 387              |
| <i>Male</i>                  | 2,639        | 2,373        | 2,096        | 1,718            |

# What happens after arrest?

- Wait in patrol car for up to an hour until there is room in the sally port for the officer to park(while you feel sick, need to pee)
- Booked in – fingerprints, mugshot
- Evaluated by jail staff to make sure you don't need medical care.
- Change in to jail clothes (no bra or undies)
- Make your phone call
- Wait for magistration
- Get a court date in the future
- Get out and hope your phone still has juice.
- Most people will be there 8 to 12 hours

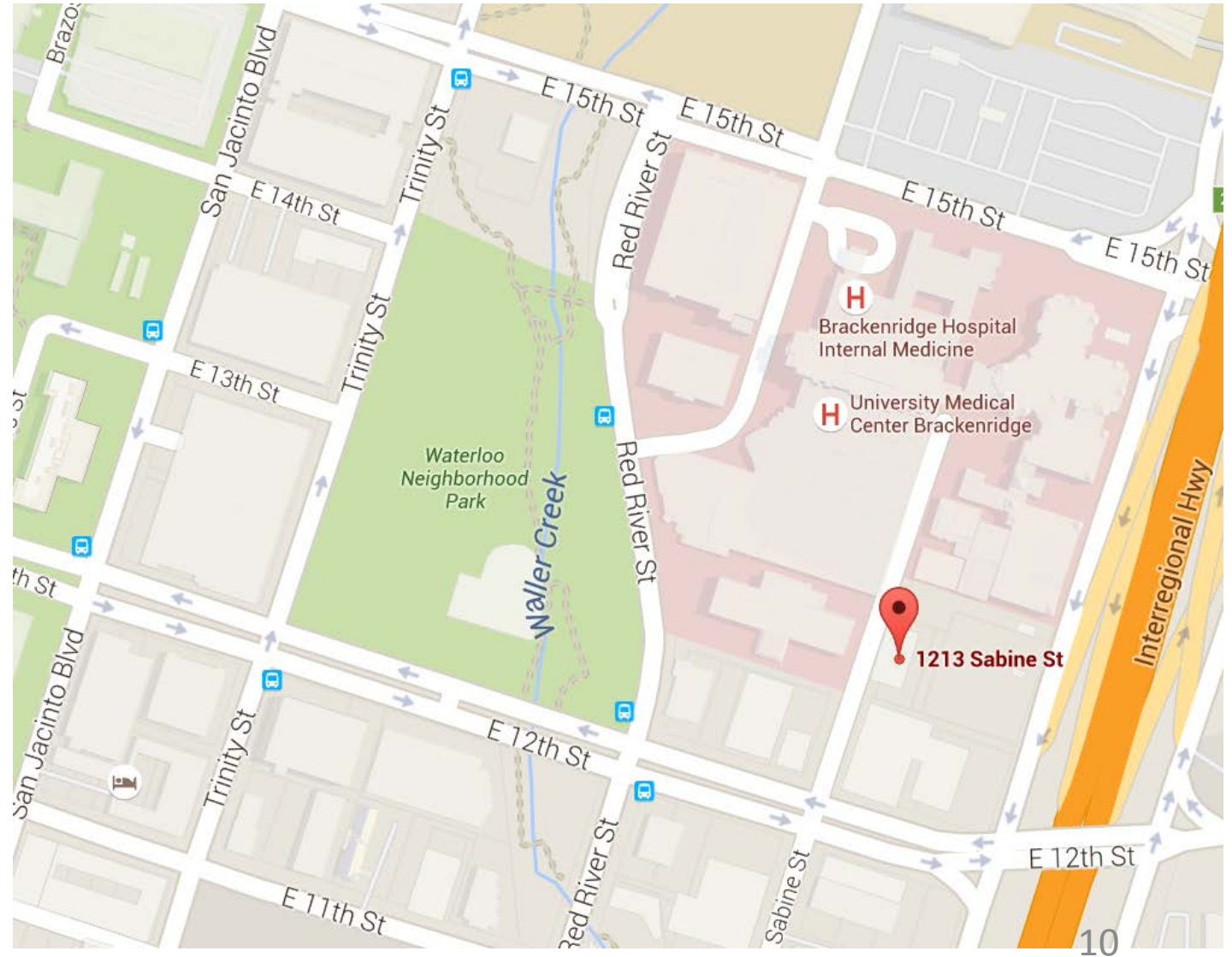


# What happens at Sobering Center

- Get seen immediately (Officers leave in 10 minutes)
- Get vital signs and BAC tested
- Go to the sobering room and get bed and a locker
- Take a shower if you like
- Get something to drink to hydrate
- Lay down and sleep it off
- Talk to a peer support specialist for interview
- Make a phone call to get your buddy to pick you up
- Most people will be there 4-6 hours max

# Where

1213 Sabine St.  
Current site of the  
Travis County Medical  
Examiner's Office  
building



# Budget

## Travis County

Providing license to use building

Making necessary renovations

In-kind donation

## City of Austin

Funding operations and maintenance

FY18 budget - \$1,133,000

# Operations

Scheduled opening – Summer 2018

Open 24/7

Voluntary admission and release

41 beds

Men – 31

Women – 8

Private – 2

Shower and Laundry facilities available

# Who

Following Houston Recovery model

Anticipate 75% one time users; 25% chronic alcohol abusers

Only accept folks delivered by Law Enforcement or EMS

# Staffing

Paramedics

Recovery Support Specialists

Peer Recovery Support Specialists

Psych Techs

Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHP)

# Services

Safe Sobering

Medical Treatment

Referrals to Treatment

Peer Recovery

Security

# Safe Sobering

Typical stay to last from 4 to 8 hours

Bed assigned

Observed for Safety and comfort

Liquids for hydration. No food



# Medical Treatment

Medical screenings at check-in and check-out

To ensure safety and appropriateness for Center

Trained personnel

# Referrals to Treatment

Center is **not** a licensed treatment provider

Will refer clients to treatment alternatives in the community

Encourage continued sobriety

# Peer Recovery

Trained peer recovery specialists

Brief interventions

Motivational interviewing

Referral to community resources

# Security

Off-duty law enforcement officers

Intervene with unruly or violent individuals

Ensure safety of clients and staff

Questions?

Thank you!