



**DOING THE  
MOST GOOD**

William Booth, *Founder*  
Shaw Clifton, *General*  
Commissioner Maxwell Feener, *Territorial Commander*  
Lieutenant Colonel Vern Jewett, *Divisional Commander*  
Majors Tom & Julie Louden, *Corps Officers*

Friday, December 03, 2010

**RE: The Salvation Army's Request for Support for the 'Triage/Low Demand Center'**

Dear Legislator:

Over the past 25 years an unfortunate and inefficient trend of turning to the criminal justice system to respond to people living in public spaces has been growing with in communities across the country. This trend includes measures that target homeless persons by making it illegal to perform life-sustaining activities in public. These measures prohibit activities such as sleeping/camping, eating, sitting, and begging in public spaces, usually including criminal penalties for violation of these laws.

The Lee County Triage/Low Demand Center is a voluntary alternative to incarceration and inappropriate emergency room utilization. It has been in operation since April 28, 2008 and targets individuals who have been detained by law enforcement for low level, no-violent offences such as trespass, open container, disturbing the peace. The Center is primarily for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis who are homeless, indigent, and/or intoxicated.

**Triage/Low Demand Center's Impact on the Criminal Justice System:**

- Reduces jail admissions 49% of the time
  - Diverted 97 charges
  - 11.2% reduction in arrests for low level offenses since opening
  - 15% of people would have been charged with more than one crime

**Triage/Low Demand Center's Impact on the Community:**

- Reduces impact of inappropriate utilization of emergency rooms
  - 9% of the time law enforcement officers would have taken the person to the hospital
- Provides access to assessment, shelter, resources and treatment for people who would have otherwise been left on the streets
  - 43% of the time law enforcement officers would have taken the person nowhere
- 75.5% successfully linked with resources aimed at effectively reintegrating the individual into the community
- 27% were placed in housing/residential treatment program

Local partners include: Lee County Board of County Commissioners, Lee Memorial Health System, Lee Mental Health, Southwest Florida Addictions Services, United Way and The Salvation Army. All of whom are asking your support to secure permanent funding through the Criminal Justice, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse Enhancement Grant.

Sincerely,

Meg M. Geltner  
General Manager  
MMG/br

*"...For service is our watchword, and there is no reward equal to that of doing the most good to the most people in the most need." -General Evangeline Booth*



**Administrative Building:**  
10291 McGregor Blvd.  
Fort Myers, FL 33919  
p: 239.278.1551

**Social Services Unit:**  
2400 Edison Ave.  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
p: 239.334.3745

**LaBelle Service Center:**  
180 N. Main St.  
LaBelle, FL 33935  
p: 863.674.1441

**South Fort Myers Store:**  
15418 S. Tamiami Tr.  
Fort Myers, FL 33908  
p: 239.267.9652

**Cape Coral Store:**  
4506 Del Prado S.  
Cape Coral, FL 33904  
p: 239.540.0265

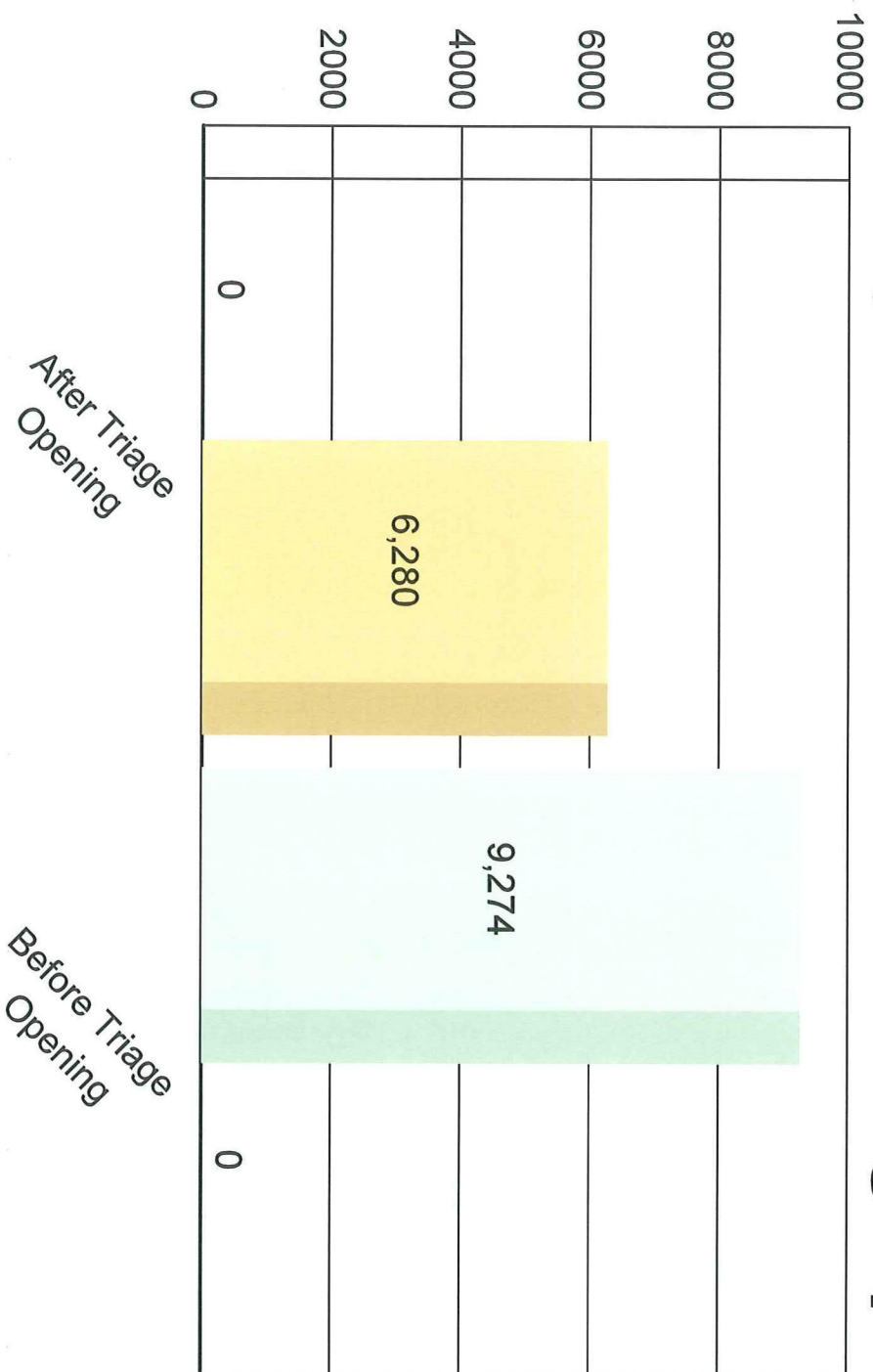
**Cost Savings:** \$189,460.32

**Jail Reduction Percentage:** 32%

Represents 1 year before and 1 year after Triage Opening  
Arrests between 4/27/2007 and 4/28/2009 Print Date: 6/3/2009

# Triage Clients with local arrest history

## Jail days served before and after Triage Opening



**Cost Savings:** \$289,063.04

**Represents 18 months before and 18 months after Triage Opening**

**Jail Reduction Percentage:** 26%

Arrests between 10/27/2006 and 10/28/2009 Print Date: 10/28/2009

# Triage Clients with local arrest history

## Jail days served before and after Triage Opening

