



LIVING ROOM FACTS

(May 2019)

This document is provided by CLOUT to clarify and explain recent statements and figures cited by public officials and the news media about The Living Room program.

What you may have heard...	What we want you to know...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Living Room has a “per visit cost of \$500”... (Mayor Fischer’s budget address) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centerstone’s current calculations of cost and guests served indicate that the cost per guest encounter is <u>below \$200</u> The “\$500” figure was not an accurate calculation because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it included initial one-time <u>capital costs</u> of preparing the physical space of the facility, and it did not take into account the <u>300% increase in guest check-ins</u> since the program was open fully to the public (i.e., beyond police drop-offs only) in Dec. 2018 \$200 (or less) is a <u>very minimal amount</u> of cost for assisting persons with the needs presented at The Living Room
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Living Room isn’t diverting as many people from jail as originally projected, and therefore not saving the city as much money as hoped... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Living Room has checked in 2000+ guests since July of 2018, <u>diverting 98% of those persons from any additional police, EMS, or hospital level of care</u>. Jail is not the only point of savings to the city. For 9 frequent visitors to The Living Room, they collectively experienced a total of 614 days in Louisville Metro jail for the year prior to their use of The Living Room. After using the program, 7 of them had 0 arrests, and 2 experienced 3 arrests, for a total of 79 days of detention at LMDC (1 of the 2 guests experienced 2 arrests totaling 78 of the 79 total days). Case examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The highest utilizer of The Living Room this year was referred by LMPD. He was homeless, and had been banned from other local resources. He has felony assault convictions. In 2018, prior to his use of The Living Room, he had spent a total of 295 days from 9 arrests in the Metro jail. The Living Room peers have helped him build the skills to obtain a job in order to secure housing. He continues to use The Living Room as he works towards securing a permanent place to live. He has had <u>zero arrests</u> and <u>zero days in jail</u> since using The Living Room. Another guest had <u>12 bookings</u> into LMDC over the <u>two years</u> before visiting The Living Room, an <u>average of 1.33 arrests per month</u>. He began working with the Living Room team and the Centerstone’s I-ACE program in August of 2018. Since that time, he has had <u>3 bookings</u>, an average of <u>0.33 per month</u>—a significant change in a short amount of time. He is one of the most complex cases that the specialty team of Centerstone has worked with. Each person who goes to The Living Room can be seen as a success, because they represent a <u>possible visit to jail averted</u>.

What you may have heard...	What we want you to know...
(contin.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also, some of the numbers being cited for jail diversions are based upon the <u>client self-reporting</u>, i.e., where they would have gone instead of The Living Room—few people would naturally say they would have gone to jail instead. Certain officials have asserted that The Living Room will not actually save the city money by diverting people from jail, because most of the costs of the LMDC are fixed, yet they have also criticized the program for not diverting enough people from jail. This is an <u>unfair contradiction</u>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be less expensive for the city to pay for the same individuals to be put up in a homeless shelter (e.g., Hotel Louisville) for the night... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Living Room is designed to provide <u>professional and peer-supported services</u> to persons with a <u>very complex set of needs</u>, and to set them on the road to recovery and healing, not simply provide them shelter for the night. <u>Homeless shelters are typically not equipped to provide these services</u>. Referring a person in mental health/addiction crisis to a homeless shelter would in many cases be <u>counter-productive and even potentially dangerous</u>, to the client, to others, and to the shelter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting \$1 million in the budget for additional services to homeless persons is a substitute for funding The Living Room... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although many of the mental health/addiction needs addressed by The Living Room are experienced by persons who are also homeless, <u>only about one-half of the persons coming to The Living Room are classified as “homeless.”</u> It is designed to assist <u>any of us, or our loved ones</u>, who are in crisis due to our mental illness or addiction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The latest statistics on The Living Room showing fewer clients with police contact indicate that the police are utilizing the program less. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>LMPD has stated a high degree of satisfaction with the program.</u> Also, less contact by Living Room clients with the police is a <u>good result</u>. Over time, the program will further reduce police involvement, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Living Room is a nice extra to have, if our city can afford it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many cities have determined that crisis stabilization facilities are <u>an essential part of the cities’ basic infrastructure</u>, along with jails, police, fire departments, EMS, courts, etc. Regardless of whatever savings might accrue from the program, The Living Room is simply <u>the right thing to do</u> for our community, for some of our most vulnerable citizens suffering from complex crisis needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lot of the persons visiting The Living Room are duplicated—the same person returning for more services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a <u>good thing</u>. After the initial crisis is addressed, the individuals assisted are not cured. It may take multiple visits to continue to receive ongoing support, to reinforce the need to follow-through on their appointments with other services, etc. Thus, it is in no way a set-back to return to The Living Room for additional services—it just reinforces that the program is <u>needed</u>.