COURTS CAN ADOPT THE FOLLOWING KEY PRINCIPLES TO ADVANCE EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT

1. No court should prohibit participation in medication-based treatment or require participants to refrain from using medication as a term or condition of successful completion of a drug court program.

2. Courts can play a central role in reducing barriers to treatment, particularly in rural areas, by providing affirmative access and linkage to medications for opioid use disorder.

3. Courts can promote expanded access to diversion programs, including for people convicted or accused of a felony.

4. Approaches must be solution-focused, evidence-based and trauma informed.

5. A central body in each state should certify treatment courts using evidence-based standards.

6. Treatment courts are one tool in a holistic system of diversion and deflection; treatment for substance use disorder should be provided outside of the criminal justice system entirely wherever possible.

FIGURE 1: Treatment Courts Distance to M-OUD Providers (km)

FIGURE 2: Number of M-OUD Providers by County

MEDICATION SAVES MONEY AND LIVES: An analysis of crime costs in California estimated that treating criminal justice-involved persons with methadone or buprenorphine, as opposed to detoxification alone, saved nearly $18,000 per person over six months.