**Example process for constructing comparison group for LEAD evaluation from**

**Duke LEAD Evaluation Project**

* + **How will we find people that are eligible for the comparison group?**

The comparison group members will be chosen from the “LEAD eligible drug arrest sheet” that was created by the Crime Analysts in the program, Crystal, for the purposes of the evaluation. The people on this sheet were charged with LEAD eligible drug charges since the start of the LEAD program but either (1) were not referred to LEAD or (2) were referred but did not accept LEAD. We will only include people with “charge sequence” number 1 because we can be certain they received no other charge at the time of the incident that would make them ineligible for LEAD. We will select people from the sheet according to their charge and demographic information (more information on that below), and then the Crime Analyst will check the criminal history of these people to determine if the person is LEAD eligible based on the eligibility requirements of the program. If they are, they are also eligible to be in the comparison group. Some of the people on the “LEAD eligible drug arrest sheet” could be people in the LEAD program (the Crime Analyst will need to check) and these people will also be ineligible for the comparison group.

* + **How will we select who we want to be in the comparison group?**

We will select people for the comparison group based on their demographic group and charge. Demographic groups will be constructed by grouping anyone with the same sex, race and 5-year age interval into one group (e.g., white women in the 21-25 age group). We will first determine how many people were in the LEAD group, who were referred prior to 2020, fit in each respective demographic group, and then choose the same number from each demographic group for the comparison group. We will provide the Crime Analyst with multiple options for each demographic group so that if a potential comparison group member is not eligible for LEAD they can be skipped and the Crime Analyst will have other matched individuals to choose from. We will prioritize selecting people with drug schedule 1,2,3, and 4 charges and then people with paraphernalia charges, given those being the most common drug charges that are diverted when someone is referred to LEAD. We will exclude people with possession of marijuana charges because it is not clear based on this charge alone if the person uses any other substances that would make them LEAD eligible. Since all paraphernalia charges are lumped into one charge, the Crime Analysts will assess if any of the drug paraphernalia charges that we choose are exclusively related to marijuana paraphernalia, and if they are, that person/charge will not be eligible for the comparison group. We will also exclude people who have charges from 2020 because we want to have at least one year of observation pre- and post-index arrest for the comparison group members. Subsequently, in comparison v. LEAD analyses, we will only include LEAD participants referred to the program prior to 2020 so we can have at least one year of observation pre- and post-LEAD referral for people in the treatment group as well.

* **What data will we have for the people in the comparison group?**

We will receive charge and incarceration data but no other administrative data (i.e. MCO data or incident reports). We also have their race, sex, and year of birth, as well as, the time and location of their interaction with police that led to them receiving the LEAD eligible drug charge. The anchor date (or “index date”) will be the date that the person was charged with the LEAD eligible drug charge and the observation period will be from 12-months before the date of the charge until 12/31/2020. We will receive the data in the same format (Criminal Justice Data Entry Form) as the LEAD treatment group CJ data.

* + **How many people will be in the comparison group?**

The number of people in the comparison group will be the same number of people that we defined as LEAD participants that were referred prior to 2020. We defined the “LEAD” group as (1) anyone who completed an intake assessment and (2) anyone who did not complete an intake assessment but had low, medium, or high engagement with the LEAD staff as determined by the LEAD staff using the Engagement Questionnaire.