



# DORA PROGRAM REPORT

SOCIAL SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
STAFF: STEPHEN JARDINE

ISSUE BRIEF

## **SUMMARY**

The Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) oversees the treatment portion of the *Drug Offender Reform Act* or DORA. DORA is intended to provide selected felony offenders with drug treatment and increased community supervision in an effort to reduce the costs associated with future criminal behavior. During the 2014 General Session Legislative intent language was approved requesting a report [<http://le.utah.gov/interim/2014/pdf/00005243.pdf>] regarding the best use of current DORA funding in treating drug abusers in response to: 1) a November, 2013 multi-year study of DORA by the Utah Criminal Justice Center (UCJC) at the University of Utah that found “DORA did not have a significant impact on participants when compared to similar offenders on traditional probation and parole” and 2) DORA guidelines which state that “programs will . . . ensure DORA funding is utilized for evidence-based substance abuse treatment and supervision strategies.” The report points out a number of issues with the comparison sample group making the original study comparison less meaningful. Although the report believes the “DORA model is sound and utilizes evidence-based principles,” it also “recognizes the need to improve DORA outcomes and is in the process of executing strategies to address the original UCJC report’s recommendations for strengthening DORA implementation.” The report indicates the Utah Substance Abuse Advisory (USAAV) Council’s DORA Oversight Committee, beginning January 1, 2015, will implement the *Correctional Program Checklist* as a quality improvement initiative for \$144,000 (to be jointly funded by DSAMH, Corrections, and the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice). The report makes the following recommendations: 1) continue the current ongoing DORA funding level, 2) fund a DORA *full service model* which includes treatment and intensive supervision for community-based substance use disorder and intensive correctional supervision for felony probationers only, and 3) implement the Governor’s Healthy Utah Plan (this recommendation appears unrelated to the intent language request). The report poses one main policy question for Legislators.

## ***Question***

The main policy question posed by the report is:

### ***1. Does the Legislature want to maintain the ongoing DORA funding level of \$3,654,000 for FY 2016?***

- The report recommends current funding for DORA be maintained.