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F4GI AND JUSTICELA ANNOUNCE A FREE COURT DATE NOTIFICATION TOOL

LOS ANGELES, CA, July 22, 2022 — The Fund for Guaranteed Income ([F4GI](#)), in partnership with the [JusticeLA coalition](#), announced the launch of a free court date notification tool that provides reminders to help people make it to court hearings throughout LA County.

[Courtreminders.org](#) allows anyone to sign up for free text message reminders, which are sent one week, 3 days, and 1 day before the court hearing. Users can receive notifications in English or Spanish that are automatically updated if their court date changes. As a backup and in case a phone number is lost or disconnected, users can include a phone number for a friend or chosen family member. The tool offers a FAQ to help those appearing in court understand the court process. This service does NOT communicate with LA County courts or any government entity. Your data will NOT be sold to any third party.

Not showing up for a court hearing is a crime called a Failure to Appear (FTA), which can carry steep penalties and even land someone in jail for months while they await trial. Currently, pretrial detainees account for nearly half (48%) of all people in the LA County jail system, the largest jail system in the world which leads the country in jail admissions (128,531 jail admissions in 2017 in LA, compared to 47,599 in Chicago and 58,226 in New York). Up to 80% of these arrests are for low-level crimes.

F4GI's tool builds upon models that have been proven to be effective in jurisdictions around the country. F4GI's tool aims to reduce the damage that FTAs have on the communities that already disproportionately bear the burden of incarceration, and reduce the number of people held in jail before their trial due to uncertainty around court appearances.

"Hearings are usually scheduled at 8:30AM and being even a few minutes late can result in a warrant being issued for someone's arrest. When daily traffic makes travel hard to estimate and at a time when public transit is facing a driver shortage, running late is almost unavoidable. Court dates can be rescheduled or postponed for months - and updates are sent by physical mail - so someone can have a warrant issued for their arrest without even knowing they had a court date in the first place. Courtreminders.org will help ensure that running five minutes late to court won't cost someone their livelihood," said **Nick Salazar, Chief Operating Officer at F4GI.**

"Failures to appear in court have historically resulted in millions of dollars a year spent on arresting people who are legally innocent and fed what remains to be the local largest jail system in the world. Black and Brown houseless people – and women in particular – have borne the brunt of the county's failure to provide these basic services to people who are legally innocent despite the commitments outlined in the Care First, Jails Last vision of the Alternatives to Incarceration department. This tool is a community driven solution to a long-standing problem that is reliable, effective, and long overdue." said **Mark-Anthony Clayton-Johnson, Executive Director of the Dignity and Power Now.**

[Courtreminders.org](#) advances the pathway for diverting people from jail to care, as outlined by the LA County Alternatives to Incarceration roadmap. Implementation of government funded programs in LA County such as the Hearing Reminder Service (HRS), Court Appearance Reminder (CARS), and AccessLACourt YOUR WAY (LA

Court.org) show that these tools can find a home in LA County, but demonstrates the need for F4GI's tool which was built with input from community members and advocates.

F4GI provides these reminders free of charge, and standard rates for sending and receiving text messages still apply. For more information, visit f4gi.org/courtreminders

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F4GI is a 501c3 organization focused on transforming the way services are delivered to communities.

JusticeLA is a partnership of grassroots organizations, advocates, directly impacted communities, and stakeholders to reduce the footprint of incarceration by stopping jail expansion and reclaiming, reimagining and reinvesting dollars away from incarceration and into community-based systems of care.