

DWI/Drug Courts

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History

- Drug Courts were established by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 signed into law on November 18, 1988 by President Ronald Reagan.

Source: Whitehouse.gov/ONDCP

- 1989- First Drug Court: Miami – Dade County, Florida.

- 1993- First Drug Court in Texas: Jefferson County

Source: “Overview of Drug Courts in Texas”, CJPC- January 2002, A. Martinez, M. Eisenberg 11

- By June 30, 2012, there were 2,734 Drug Court programs operating in every U.S. state and territory.

Structure

- Voluntary Entry
- Guiding principles are known as the “Ten Key Components”
- Non-Adversarial, Collaborative Oversight includes the Judge, Supervision Officer, District Attorney, Defense Attorney, Counselors and Law Enforcement Officer
- Treatment required of all participants

Phases to Graduation

- Phase One: 90 days- Report weekly to Court
- Phase Two: 90 days- Report every two weeks to Court
- Phase Three: 180 days- Report monthly to Court
- Graduation allowed only after all criteria met.

Incentives & Sanctions

- A progressive sanctions model is used for non-compliance which may include verbal reprimands, community service hours, increased monitoring and/or treatment, house arrest, jail time, up to termination from the program.
- Incentives may be awarded for compliance that may include individual recognition by the Judge, relief from certain requirements or restrictions, promotion to next phase, up to early graduation.

Research

- The effectiveness of adult Drug Courts is not a matter of conjecture. It is the product of more than two decades of exhaustive scientific research.
- More research has been published on the effects of adult Drug Courts than virtually all other criminal justice programs combined.

Recidivism

- Nationwide, 75% of Drug Court graduates remain arrest-free at least two years after leaving the program.
- Studies examining long term outcomes have found reductions in crime last at least 3 years and can endure for over 14 years.
- The most rigorous and conservative scientific “meta-analyses” have all concluded that Drug Courts significantly reduce crime as much as 45% more than other sentencing options.

Recidivism

- “Even those who enter drug courts but do not complete their programs appear to have lower recidivism rates. In the state of Texas, for example, where approximately 100 drug courts are operating, the re-arrest rate for those who begin but do not complete the drug court program is 40.5 percent, as compared to the 58.5 percent rate in the Texas control group.”

Source- 2010 RightOnCrime.com: A project of the Texas Public Policy Foundation

Cost Effectiveness

- Average of \$2.21 in direct benefits for every \$1 invested.
- When more serious offenders were targeted, the return increased to \$3.36 for every dollar invested.
- Savings to the Criminal Justice system stemming from reduced re-arrests, law enforcement contacts, court hearings and use of jail or prison beds.

Cost Effectiveness

- When including more distal cost off-sets, such as savings from reduced foster care placements and healthcare service utilization, studies report economic benefits ranging from approximately \$2 to \$27 for every dollar invested.
- The result has been net economic benefits to local communities ranging from approximately \$3,000 to \$13,000 per Drug Court participant.

Goals

- Protect the community with improved public safety
- Foster participant sobriety through treatment
- Save taxpayer dollars by reducing recidivism

The scientific evidence is overwhelming that Drug Courts reduce crime, reduce substance abuse, improve family relationships and increase earning potential. In the process, they return net dollar savings back to their communities that are, at least, two to three times the initial investments.

Sources

- Except where noted, the preceding information was sourced from the NADCP* including the paper “Research Update on Adult Drug Courts” by Douglas B. Marlowe, J.D., Ph.D.’ Chief of Science, Law & Policy December 2010

*National Association of Drug Court Professionals