

**North Texas Regional Veterans Court
Veterans Treatment Court (VTC)**

Project Narrative

Geographic Service Area (s):

Region 8 – North Texas

Fannin

Hunt

Grayson

Collin

Kaufman

Rockwall

Cooke

Beneficiaries:

Who will the organization provide direct services to under the proposed project?

Veterans

If Veterans are selected above, provide a definition for veterans that will be eligible to receive services.

The program accepts active duty, current National Guard and Reserve members, and those discharged as honorable, general under honorable conditions, and other than honorable conditions, as well as bad conduct on a case-by-case basis. The court team members through a review of criminal and military records determine eligibility for program participation.

Choose the discharge status (es) (Character of Service) that the organization will serve under the proposed project.

Honorable

General Under Honorable Conditions

Other Than Honorable Conditions

Bad Conduct

Describe any other restrictions on eligibility, if applicable (example: income level, disabilities, or referral from VA or other such organization).

Project beneficiaries will be Veterans Court candidates and participants whose criminal case(s) have been filed in Collin, Fannin, Grayson, Kaufman, Rockwall, Cooke, or Hunt counties. To participate in the program, veterans cannot be charged with crimes outlined in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedures 42.12 (3) (g). Veterans should have a mental health diagnosis such as (but not limited to) anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), or substance abuse/addiction, determined by assessment to be caused or exacerbated by their military service, which directly correlates to the criminal offense. Prior to a veteran being accepted into the program, court team members review VA records for existing diagnoses. If no diagnosis for issues like those listed above exist, the program requests a licensed professional evaluate the veteran.

Enter the number of unduplicated Veterans, Dependents, and Surviving Spouses to be served by the Proposed Project.

Number of Veterans	100
Number of Dependents	0
Number of Surviving Spouses	0
Total Number of Clients to be Served	100
Number of Home Modifications to be Completed	0

Performance Reporting:

What type(s) of data collection tools will your organization use to document Beneficiaries receiving services (required performance measure) and any additional performance measures noted in Beneficiaries, as well as measure goals and outcomes?

The Program Coordinator maintains program status (approval/denial, phase progression, voluntary or unsuccessfully discharged from program, commencement date, re-arrests, etc.), historical military information, attendance records, and monthly progress self-reports in electronic format. Excel spreadsheets are maintained for each applicant in each county detailing program entry date, current phase, monitoring devices (if any), as well as information pertaining to their individual program experiences. Analysis yields program statistics including number of veterans assessed and served, as well as program completion and recidivism. Treatment records and progress is maintained by the Clinical Director in encrypted electronic format. Services utilizing grant funds are maintained in a spreadsheet by the Program Coordinator, detailing the types and frequency of services provided. Analysis provides funds expended and remaining, cost per participant, and utilization percentage among budgeted line items.

How will your organization consolidate the collected data to ensure that beneficiaries that are reported to the FVA are unduplicated?

The Program Coordinator is the primary point of contact for all invoices / requests for payment and documents each service provided to each beneficiary in an Excel spreadsheet, which corresponds to TVC quarterly reporting periods, in the month the service was received. Upon receipt of service, the name of the beneficiary is placed inside a designated “Quarterly Recipient” section, which is divided into four quarters. The four quarterly recipient sections are coded to highlight the names of duplicated entries, which allows the Program Coordinator to track when each participant began receiving services and ensures beneficiaries are not duplicated when submitting required quarterly reports.

Project Eligibility:

The forms listed below are the only forms acceptable by TVC to determine Veteran, Dependent, and Surviving Spouse eligibility. Select the forms the organization will use to verify eligibility for each beneficiary that will be served under the proposed project.

- DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty
- NGB-22, National Guard Report of Separation and Record of Service
- NA Form 13038, Certification of Military Service
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) official letter or disability letter with character of service listed
- E-Benefits summary letter with character of service listed
- Honorable discharge certificate
- Uniform Services Identification Card
- State of Texas Issued Driver License with Veteran designation

Describe how the eligibility verification documents will be retained and maintained (example: in locked filing cabinet or electronically on your organization's server).

Note: Retention period must meet minimum requirements as defined in 2 CFR 200.333 of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

Documents will be maintained in digital (secure organization server) and/or hardcopy within a locked container in a limited or exclusion area or be under the physical control of an authorized individual and per UGMS and OMB guidelines for state and local governments. Program participant documentation is retained per Collin County's retention policy unless an Order of Expunction is signed which requires the destruction of most documentation within 10 days of Judge Roach signing the Order. Grant records will be maintained for a minimum of three years from the date of the final grant report.

Need Identified:

What is the community need(s) or existing service gap(s) that the Proposed Project will address?

More than 20 million men and women living in the US have served in the US military. Many of these veterans were deployed to engage in combat operations, spending long periods being hyper-vigilant in high stress situations. Combat zone duty can result in injuries both to the body and psyche including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injuries (TBI), orthopedic injury and/or amputations, which are all conditions that can derail emotional control and lead to interpersonal conflicts and/or other erratic behaviors resulting in job loss, divorce, and strained relationships. Unfortunately, decades of research has shown that veterans can have a difficult time of readjusting to civilian life and have been shown to have higher than normal prevalence of mental health and substance abuse issues, which frequently result in illegal, violent, and/or risky behaviors resulting in increased contact with the criminal justice system and incarceration.

How were community need(s) or gap(s) in service identified? Describe the methods used to identify the need in the service area.

According to the US Census Bureau 2018 Quick Facts, nearly 67,000 veterans reside in the five counties that make up the North Texas Regional Veterans Court. In Collin County, the number of veterans has decreased 6% since 2010; however, the number of veterans jailed has increased by 385% over the same time period. In FY 2010, 90 unduplicated veterans were detained in the Collin County jail; in FY 2018, there were 437. On average, 24% of veterans are detained multiple times during the year. Data is expected to be similar from other counties participating in the North Texas Regional Veterans Court based on anecdotal evidence.

The program originally served 8 veterans in Collin County in 2014, which was doubled to 15 in 2015. The benefits of program expansion were initially recognized by the Veterans Service Officer through networking avenues. Many of the smaller counties in North Texas are unable to support a veteran's treatment court program, leaving the justice-involved veterans in those counties without the support and treatment needed to recover. Understanding that a regional court would be able to reach more veterans by having smaller counties coordinate with larger counties to maximize resources in North Texas, Judge Roach offered to create and preside over a regional program. During the FY19-20 grant term, 112 veterans were served across 5 counties; the program will keep the number of veterans to be served at 100 now serving 7 counties.

How does the Proposed Project address the identified need(s) or gap(s) in the service area?

The North Texas Regional Veterans Court taps into the unique aspects of military and veteran culture and uses it to the benefit of the veteran. Through the program, former military personnel participate with their fellow veterans, re-instilling a sense of camaraderie that they felt while in the military and providing them with the treatment and tools for coping with their underlying problems. Similar to other treatment courts, the North Texas Regional Veterans Court

utilizes a judicially-supervised, multi-agency team-based approach to serve veterans struggling with addiction, mental illness, and other underlying risk factors that contributed to their crime(s). The voluntary program requires participants to undergo intensive treatment and counseling, submit to frequent supervision and random alcohol and/or drug testing, make frequent appearances in court, and to be closely monitored for program compliance. Promotion of sobriety, recovery, and stability through individualized substance abuse and mental health treatment and counseling, coupled with connections for housing, medical, vocational, and other support issues, diverts military offenders away from the traditional criminal justice system and attempts to reduce recidivism through provision of services while holding offenders accountable for their actions and addressing the underlying issues related to their criminal behavior.

How is the Proposed Project unique from other similar services that may be available in the proposed service area? Be specific with details about what sets your Proposed Project apart.

The North Texas Regional Veterans Court, judicially supervised by the 296th District Court, was the first regional veteran’s treatment court in Texas and is the only veteran’s treatment court in these seven counties. The purpose of the program is to provide veterans with individualized rehabilitative alternatives that successfully lead to community reintegration and criminal case resolution. While there are other drug / treatment courts in the counties, there are not any that specifically target veterans and their specialized needs. The Veterans Court team is composed of persons who can coordinate veteran-specific treatment and benefits and whom, as mostly veterans themselves, are better equipped to mentor justice-involved veterans. The regional program is able to reach justice-involved veterans who otherwise, based on county lines, would not receive the support and treatment needed for recovery and restoration to their pre-military lives.

Goals and Outcomes

Title	Sub Title	Question	Target Outcomes
Veterans Treatment Court	Project Specific Performance	How many clients will participate in the VTC program?	100
Veterans Treatment Court	Project Specific Goals	How many clients completed the program?	27

Goal Tracking

Describe how the organization will determine if the anticipated outcomes above are met.

Successful completion of the program will be determined by maintaining and analyzing the number of participants who complete the program against the number who begin the program. Additionally, the Program Coordinator will provide client satisfaction surveys before each client’s completion of court, and will search county arrest / jailing records for new offenses, the Clinical Director will assess treatment appropriateness 60-90 days after beginning services, and, when appropriate, Case Managers will conduct a personal follow up with program graduates post-completion through our Aftercare program to determine program effectiveness and whether the veteran has reoffended. Post-program data will also be collected by the Mentor Coordinator through direct contact with program graduates, whose goal is to maintain contact for at least three years post-program completion. Communication with the participants during the program will give data to support improvement in health and independence, as well as employment status; data will be compiled into a spreadsheet and maintained for reporting purposes. All data will be maintained by Veterans Court staff.

Project Principal Participants

List the principal participants in the organization as defined in the **RFA. Principal Participants must include** Project Coordinator, Financial Coordinator, Executive Director and any other key stakeholders in the organization totaling 5. Indicate which principal(s), if any, are Veterans. Résumés are to be included for each Principal Participant and should describe applicable experience by position. These résumés are to be attached in the main application.

Title	Name of Principal Participant	Veteran (Y/N)	Years in position	Roles, Responsibilities, and Qualifications
Collin County Auditor	Linda Riggs	N	3	Mrs. Riggs ensures that all federal, state, local, and funding agency fiscal policies are followed and maintains all grant financial documentation.
Collin County Judge	Chris Hill	N	3	Mr. Hill serves as the executive officer and signing authority for Collin County.
Judge, 296 th District Court	John Roach, Jr	Y	15	Judge Roach leads the interdisciplinary program team, presides over the court proceedings, interacts directly and develops a rapport with participants, administers graduated sanctions and rewards to increase each veteran's accountability and enhance the likelihood of recovery.
North Texas Veterans Court Program Coordinator	Brennan Jones	Y	5	Ms. Jones coordinates all administrative activities across all five counties. She is the liaison between the County teams and the Judge. She is responsible for paying invoices, maintaining participant information, and sets the Court schedule. She is also responsible for intake and interview of each interested or referred veteran and works with the veteran to determine program eligibility. She consults with state and national stakeholders wanting to create their own Veterans Court or Regional Veterans Courts.

Partnerships

List agencies and/or organizations that the organization partners with to assist in serving Beneficiaries as part of the Proposed Project. (Maximum number of partnerships = 10)

Name of Partner Organization	Address	Telephone	Website
US Department of Veterans Affairs – Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center	1201 E. 9 th Street Bonham, TX 75418	(903) 583-6226	VA.gov
US Department of Veterans Affairs – Dallas VA Medical Center	4500 S. Lancaster Road Dallas, TX 75216	(214) 857-2252	VA.gov
US Department of Veterans Affairs – Plano Comm. Based Outpatient Clinic	3804 W. 15 th Street Plano, TX 75075	(972) 801-4200	VA.gov
Dallas Vet Center	8610 Greenville Suite 125 Dallas, TX 75243	(214) 361-5896	VetCenter.va.gov
Green Path Financial Wellness	1575 Heritage Drive McKinney, TX 75069	(469) 215-5880	GreenPath.com/greenpath-financial-wellness
Jake E's Riding Round Up	10626 FM 429 Kaufman, TX 75142	(972) 962-2828	jakeesrr.org
Military Veteran Peer Network	1380 River Bend Drive Dallas, TX 75247	(214) 743-1200	Milvetpeer.net
Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Metrocare	16160 Midway Road Suite 218 Addison, TX 75001	(469) 680-3500	CohenVeteransNetwork.org
Texas Department of Public Safety	4600 State Highway	(972) 394-4530	www.dps.texas.gov

	121 Carrollton, TX 75010		
Texas Legal Services Center	2101 S. IH 35 Frontage Austin, TX 78741	(512) 637-5419	www.tlsc.org/veterans

Sustainability after the Grant

If the organization is awarded an FVA grant, would the Proposed Project continue after the grant period ends if the organization does not receive additional FVA funding?

Yes No

If yes, describe how the Proposed Project will continue. Include what other funding will be available to the organization and what other organizations will be collaborating or working to carry on the work of the Proposed Project after the grant period ends. (Maximum allowable characters = 1500)

FVA funding allows veterans to obtain services, such as evaluation, counseling/treatment, drug/alcohol abstinence monitoring, and emergency living assistance and support, which may otherwise be unable to be funded by the veteran preventing some from participating in the program. Without FVA funding, emergency support and needed treatments outside of the VA system will be limited. Additionally, FVA funding allows NTRVC capacity to be maintained through the provision of program administration positions. Without grant funding, the positions will likely be terminated or Collin County may consider adding the position(s) to the county budget. Termination of the positions will result in a reduced number of participants the program can assist. While loss of FVA funding will greatly impact the program, the North Texas Regional Veterans Court will continue to operate through participant fees, and retained fees collected in accordance with Chapter 102.0178, Code of Criminal Procedure, for offenses found in Chapter 49, Penal Code (DWI) and Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code (controlled substances), albeit in a much more limited capacity. The program will also continue to coordinate with existing partners.

If your organization has received FVA funding in the past for the Proposed Project, describe why you are applying for a grant again. (Maximum allowable characters = 1500)

The North Texas Regional Veterans Court currently covers five counties in North Texas, and will likely soon add an additional two. Five of the seven counties have populations under 135,000 persons and do not have the resources to provide services for veterans in the program. Additionally, the program has continued to expand its capacity each year, and therefore needs FVA funds to assist the number of veterans entering the program.