

Ramsey County Mental Health Court Referral Process

❖ WHAT IS THE RCMHC?

- The Ramsey County Mental Health Court (RCMHC) is a voluntary, pre-adjudication and post-sentence program. The RCMHC became operational in May 2005 and was created when it became increasingly clear that persons with mental illness and co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders were in need of more specialized and individualized treatment. By partnering with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the RCMHC team includes community human services case managers who can link participants to available community mental and chemical health services. RCMHC provides people whose criminal acts are driven by mental illness an opportunity to go into court-supervised treatment rather than the traditional court route. For more information, go to: [MN 2nd District Mental Health Program](#).

❖ QUESTIONS RE: ELIGIBILITY AND REFERRAL PROCESS?

- Contact Brandi Stavlo, RCMHC Program Coordinator with defendant's name and case file number(s). Telephone (651) 266-9256 or email brandi.stavlo@courts.state.mn.us.

❖ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- To be eligible for RCMHC, an individual must not have a current charge or prior conviction that appears on the disqualifier list (See website for details). **If an individual has current charges or prior convictions for a starred offense, a qualification determination will be made on a case by case basis.**
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❖ REFERRAL SOURCE/ INITIAL SCREEN

- Referrals to RCMHC come from multiple sources (*i.e.*, Project Remand Pre-Trial Agency, Public Defenders, Prosecutors, Judges, Court Hearings, Community Mental Health Providers, Family, Self-Referrals, etc.).
 - Most referrals are initially screened by the Project Remand, who makes a determination of court referrals based on 1.) Brief Mental Health Screen and CAGE, 2.) Psychotropic Medications; 3.) Providers; 4.) Behavior; and 5.) Interest.
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❖ THE FOLLOWING REFERRAL PROCEDURE IS UTILIZED IN RCMHC:

STEP 1: CONTACT PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

- Contact the RCMHC Program Coordinator with defendant's name and case file number(s).
 - ✓ **Brandi Stavlo, RCMHC Program Coordinator:**
Telephone: (651) 266-9256
Fax: (651) 767-8940
Email: brandi.stavlo@courts.state.mn.us
- The Program Coordinator will alert the RCMHC Team to the referral with an email reminder that the following needs to be completed/sent out to the RCMHC team before the first court hearing, if the information has not already been provided:
 - ✓ **Prosecutor** needs to approve the referral and distribute police reports and legal offers.
 - ✓ **Project Remand** needs to distribute bail evaluation, criminal history, and other collateral information.

STEP 2: APPROVAL:

- The St. Paul City Attorney's Office or Ramsey County Attorney's Office must agree to the RCMHC referral. Please contact the RCMHC liaisons with questions regarding eligibility:
 - ✓ Andrea Miller, Assistant City Attorney: (651) 266-8740;
Andrea.Miller@ci.stpaul.mn.us
 - ✓ Karen Kugler, Assistant County Attorney: (651) 266-3110;
Karen.Kugler@co.ramsey.mn.us

STEP 3: COURT HEARINGS ARE SCHEDULED:

- If not already scheduled, the defendant must be scheduled for both a RCMHC court hearing date **and** his/her next scheduled criminal court date.

STEP 4: RCMHC HEARING:

- At the RCMHC court hearing date, the defendant will observe the court proceeding. If the defendant wants to continue the RCMHC referral process after observing court, he/she will be required to on the record:
 - ✓ Mental Health Intake Assessment: Schedule a mental health intake assessment with the RCMHC mental health case manager to determine appropriateness for the program. The mental health case manager will have defendant sign releases of information and gather collateral information on mental and chemical health diagnoses; mental health providers; and treatment.
 - ✓ Conditionally Released: If not already conditionally released, the defendant must be conditionally released to Project Remand for purposes of RCMHC referral
 - ✓ Acceptance/Denial: Come back to RCMHC for acceptance or denial into the program

STEP 5: DISTRIBUTE LEGAL OFFERS:

- All legal offers in RCMHC come from the prosecutor. In all cases, two legal offers (RCMHC offer and Traditional Track offer) will be made and distributed by the prosecutor to the defense attorney, RCMHC Program Coordinator and RCMHC Case Manager **within a week** of the first appearance in RCMHC.

STEP 6: DEFENSE ATTORNEY ROLE:

- The assigned public defender or private defense attorney will be available to answer any legal questions the defendant may have regarding the offers given by the prosecutor.
- A representative from the Public Defender's office or private defense attorney will be available for the plea and sentencing hearing.
- Once the defendant has been accepted into RCMHC, the RCMHC pro-bono defense attorneys will file a certificate of representation. If not accepted to the RCMHC, the defendant will proceed to his/her next criminal hearing with his/her assigned defense attorney.