



Minnesota Judicial Branch Policy

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Treatment Courts¹

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Treatment courts are an effective approach supporting individuals in the judicial system who are alcohol or other drug addicted and/or suffering from mental health issues. Treatment courts use evidence-based practices and qualified and trained staff to tailor appropriate services for participants². Stakeholders from inside and outside the justice system collaborate to (i) improve public safety and participant outcomes; (ii) improve inter-agency communication; (iii) encourage greater trust between residents and government; and (iv) foster new responses to encourage behavior modification through treatment and court responses.

Treatment courts (i) promote participant compliance through monitoring and responding with incentives for productive behaviors and imposition of timely consequences for non-compliance; (ii) require that service providers deliver quality services; and (iii) ensure accountability to the larger community by tracking and publicizing the courts' performance.

As an evidence-based practice, it is the policy of the Minnesota Judicial Branch to collaborate with justice partners in the endeavor to provide equal access statewide to treatment courts for the residents of Minnesota. Implementation and operation of treatment courts will be governed by statewide standards. Expansion of existing treatment courts and implementation of new treatment courts shall be approved by the Judicial Council.

II. IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY

¹ As used in this policy, the term “treatment court” is defined to include courts that utilize evidence-based practices and that are treatment-focused such as DWI, adult drug, mental health, hybrid, juvenile, family dependency and veterans treatment courts.

² As used in this policy, the term “participants” includes defendants in adult courts, respondents in juvenile and CHIPS courts and who have been ordered to complete the treatment court program.

Implementation of this policy shall be the responsibility of the State Court Administrator and the Chief Judges of the Judicial Districts.

III. EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

The State Court Administrator shall develop procedures for evaluating operational treatment courts and report to the Judicial Council at least once per biennium.

Each Judicial District shall complete and submit by August 1st an annual treatment court plan using a statewide template provided by State Court Administration indicating the status of existing treatment courts and any plans for new development. The annual treatment court plan will be submitted to the State Court Administrator to assist in biennial budget forecasting and other resource planning.