



PSA Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia

Promoting pretrial justice and enhancing community safety

SUPERIOR COURT DRUG INTERVENTION PROGRAM | DRUG COURT

Providing quality treatment and effective supervision for 25 years

ABOUT DRUG COURT

The Superior Court Drug Intervention Program, better known as Drug Court, is a collaboration among the DC Superior Court, United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia (USAO), Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia (OAG), Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS) and PSA. Through Drug Court, the judiciary, prosecutor, defense attorney and PSA work together to help defendants achieve sobriety and become law-abiding citizens.



PSA's Drug Court team uses innovative case management, referrals to appropriate treatment and recovery-focused incentives and sanctions to support the rehabilitative process.

During the program, participants have immediate access to substance use disorder treatment and receive specialized care, including gender-specific groups and individual and group therapy for trauma-impacted individuals.

Successful completion of the program results in:

- Dismissal of misdemeanor cases; or
- Favorable sentencing or reduction of felony charges.

Drug Court is available to defendants with cases pending in DC Superior Court only.

ELIGIBILITY

Most defendants charged with misdemeanors and many charged with non-violent felonies are eligible for the Drug Court.

The following exclusion criteria generally apply, unless an exception is made by the USAO or OAG. To participate, a defendant must:

- Not be charged with a violent misdemeanor or violent felony (simple assault may be allowed upon prosecutor's review);
- Have no more than one additional pending, non-violent criminal case;
- Have no prior convictions for a violent or weapons offense for which the defendant served a sentence or is/was on probation, parole or supervised released within the last 10 years;
- Not be charged with or have a pending charge involving a victim;
- Have no prior convictions for a victim-involved crime for which the defendant served a sentence or is/was on probation, parole or supervised released within the last 10 years.

For amended sentencing agreements (reduction of felony charges to misdemeanors), a defendant must:

- Have no prior violent convictions in any court;
- Have no more than two misdemeanor convictions within the past 10 years;
- Have no prior misdemeanor convictions for possession with intent to distribute (PWID) or distribution of marijuana;
- Not have a current charge that is PCP-related; and
- Have no other pending felony cases and no more than one misdemeanor case.

Other criteria may apply, please contact Drug Court for details.

PLACEMENT STEPS

To be placed into Drug Court, each defendant must be:

- Screened by PSA for eligibility;
- Assessed and determined to need intensive outpatient or residential treatment;
- Certified to Drug Court from another criminal calendar; and
- Approved by the USAO or OAG for misdemeanor diversion and felony amended sentencing agreements and for cases that do not meet eligibility criteria.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Drug Court has four phases, each of which is designed to last six weeks.

Phases I and II consist of 36 group sessions per phase. Participants attend two groups per day, three times per week. Most Phase I groups are held in the morning. Phase II groups are typically held in the afternoon. Evening groups are available for participants who are employed or enrolled in school.

Phase III consists of 24 group sessions. Participants attend two groups per day, twice per week. Phase III groups are typically held in the afternoon, but evening groups are available for participants who are employed or enrolled in school.

Phase IV consists of 18 group sessions. Participants attend three group sessions per week, two of which are conducted by PSA and one of which is a community-based self-help group.

Program success is marked by completion of required group sessions and a minimum of 12 consecutive weeks of negative drug tests. Compliance with program requirements is marked by positive incentives, ranging from verbal praise to transit benefits. Failure to attend counseling sessions or complete assignments results in appropriate sanctions, ranging from judicial admonishment to jail-based rehabilitation.

Progression to each phase is marked at a monthly progression ceremony. Completion of the program is recognized during a monthly graduation ceremony.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call 202-220-5505 or email contact@psa.gov