

Questions & Answers

What Are Drug Courts?

Drug courts are designed to address the substance abuse problems that drive people to commit crimes by treating the disease of addiction in an attempt to curb criminal behavior. Drug court programs focus on rehabilitating nonviolent drug offenders.

A highly specialized team approach allows drug courts to operate within the existing court structure. They are unique in the criminal justice environment because they build a close relationship between criminal justice and drug treatment professionals. Within a cooperative courtroom atmosphere, the judge heads a team of court staff, attorneys, probation officers, substance abuse evaluators, and treatment counselors all working in concert to support and monitor a participant's recovery.

Intensive supervision, frequent drug testing and court appearances are elements of the rigorous drug court program. Participants are often required to participate in General Education Development (GED) classes and/or keep a job.

Drug courts offer a powerful incentive for participants to change their behavior. If they don't stay clean, they go to jail.