

## **Charlottesville Albemarle Adult Drug Treatment Court**

The Drug Treatment Court is an alternative to incarceration available to non-violent, substance dependent felony offenders in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. The program provides intensive supervision and outpatient substance abuse treatment along with intensive judicial oversight to produce outcomes of reduced recidivism and reduced substance use among program participants and graduates. Drug Treatment Court is a voluntary program. Offenders must agree to participate.

### **Eligibility Screening**

- Primary screening to include criminal background check is completed by the Commonwealth's Attorney.
- The offender signs a voluntary agreement to participate in the evaluation.
- A screening for eligibility is completed by the Drug Court Coordinator, and an evaluation for Substance Use Disorders and other mental health issues is completed by Region Ten.
- If the offender is on bond, drug and alcohol tests are conducted at least twice weekly during the evaluation period. In addition, the offender is recognized to attend the Drug Court Docket each week until the evaluation is complete.
- If found eligible, and the Commonwealth's Attorney agrees, the offender may enter the program at the next scheduled Drug Court Docket. These are held every Thursday at 8:30 am in Charlottesville Circuit Court.
- If found ineligible, or the offender chooses to withdraw his or her application for Drug Court, the case proceeds with normal case processing.

### **Program Entry**

- The offender enters into a plea agreement with the Commonwealth which requires a guilty plea.
- The offender is promised a specific beneficial outcome at sentencing, ranging from suspended sentences to dismissal, if he or she successfully completes the Drug Court program.
- The offender is also advised that if he or she is unsuccessful in the program or chooses to withdraw, the case will go directly to sentencing on the original charges.

### **Participation**

- The program lasts a minimum of 12 months and is made up of four phases which participants move through based on their accomplishments, including length of sober time. The intensity of supervision is slowly reduced as participants reach the later phases of the program.
- Participants in Drug Court receive substance abuse treatment at Region Ten, intensive case management by a Drug Court Case Manager, frequent random drug and alcohol testing, and intensive judicial monitoring by the Drug Court Judge.
- The program utilizes a system of incentives and sanctions to motivate positive behavior change among participants. Incentives include but are not limited to recognition from the Judge, applause, certificates of achievement, and small tokens such as sobriety coins or gift cards. Sanctions include but are not limited to community service, written assignments, or jail time.

### **Completion**

- Once the participant has completed all four phases of the program, he or she graduates. Graduation ceremonies are held on the last Thursday of the month at 8:15 am in the Charlottesville Circuit Court.
- After graduating Drug Court, participants receive final sentencing per the plea agreement entered upon entry into the program.

### **Data**

- Data from October, 2015 shows a recidivism rate of 18.2% for graduates at a minimum of one year and a maximum of two years after graduation.
- The National Center for State Courts found a 71% recidivism rate among similarly situated non-drug court participants in their 2012 Impact Study of Virginia's Drug Courts.