
Accountability Courts Statewide Report

Fiscal Year 2019

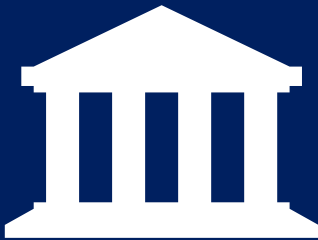


Council of Accountability Court Judges of Georgia
March 5, 2020

AT THE END OF FISCAL
YEAR 2019, THERE WERE

163 ACTIVE
ACCOUNTABILITY
COURTS:

- **53 Adult Felony Drug Courts**
4,911 Participants
- **33 Mental Health Courts**
1,407 Participants
- **23 DUI Courts**
2,094 Participants
- **18 Veterans Courts**
420 Participants
- **22 Family Treatment Courts**
697 Participants
- **14 Juvenile Courts**
242 Participants



Executive Summary

Georgia's accountability courts provide an evidence-based and cost-saving alternative to incarceration. In Fiscal Year 2019 (FY 2019), participants in Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) programs engaged in individualized treatment plans that demonstrably impacted participants' lives¹.

In FY 2019, accountability court programs added and retained more participants than in any previous year. Frequent drug testing helped participants maintain sobriety. Though new participants frequently failed drug tests, they became more likely to pass drug tests as they advanced through program phases. Nearly half of all accountability court participants were unemployed when they entered the program, but they were much more likely to find employment after becoming active in an accountability court program. Program graduates were particularly successful in finding jobs. Children of participants benefitted by reuniting with their parents, and at-risk mothers successfully gave birth to drug-free babies.

Participant Characteristics

Average Age at Admission

36 years old (**15** years old in juvenile courts)

Income Level

85% less than \$25,000 yearly

Unemployment

49% at admission

Education

78% High School Graduate/GED or Less

Gender/Race

66% Male/**71%** Caucasian

Acceptance Type

46% Pre-adjudication/**40%** Post-adjudication²

Risk Level

79% Moderate - or High Risk

Ris Level

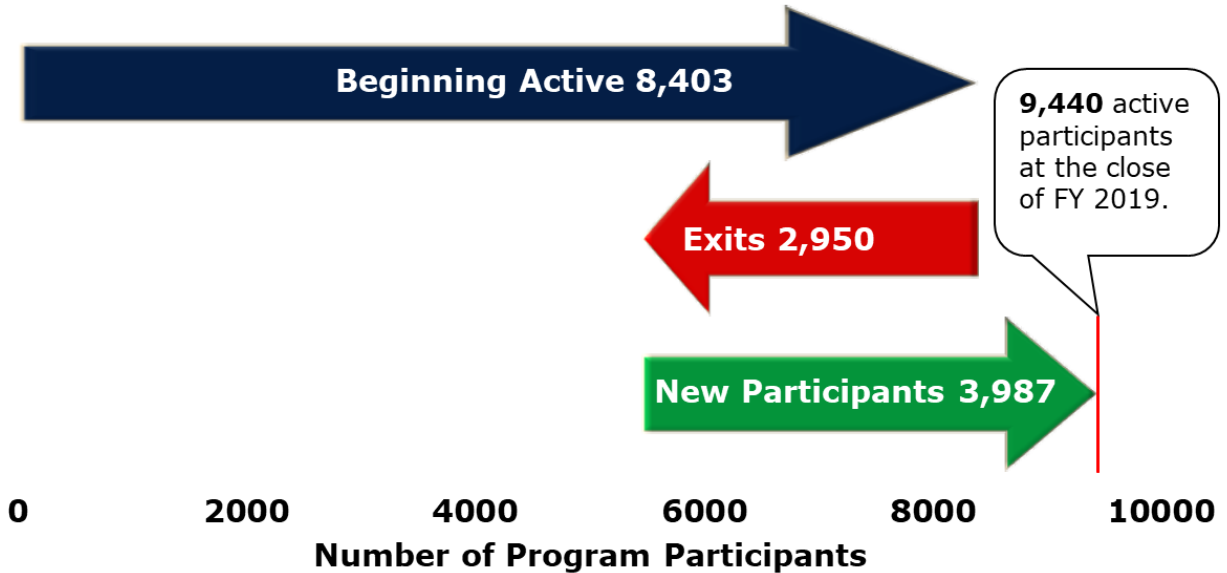
79% Moderate - or High Risk

¹ The analysis and conclusions contained in this document are accurate as of the date retrieved and may not match previous or future publications due to additional reports and/or corrections to previous reporting.

² Figure does not include DUI courts. DUI court participants are 100% post-adjudication.

Program Growth

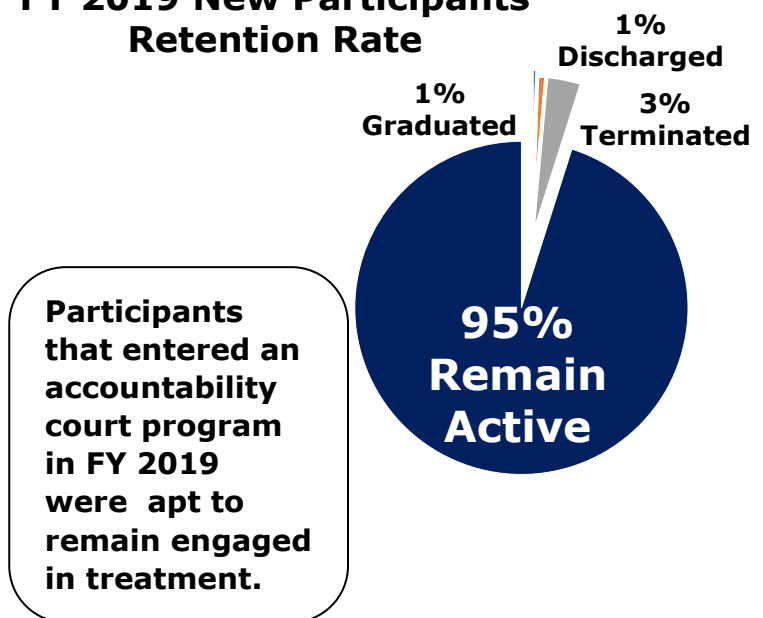
Georgia's Accountability Courts **increased** the number of active participants served by **12%** during FY 2019.



Accountability court programs added and retained more new participants in FY 2019 than previous years.

- **12,390** participants served throughout FY 2019 including new, active, and exited participants.
- **508** more new participants admitted in FY 2019 than were admitted in FY 2018.
- Evidence indicates that more time spent in the program is a signal that treatment is effective and is also a strong predictor for reduced recidivism.³

FY 2019 New Participants Retention Rate



Participants that entered an accountability court program in FY 2019 were apt to remain engaged in treatment.

³Cissner and Rempel, "The State of Drug Court Research: Moving Beyond 'Do They Work'"

Drug Testing Promotes Sobriety

Total Drug Tests Administered

631,349

- 32% more drug tests reported than previous year.

Number of Positive Drug Tests

36,495

Negative Test Rate

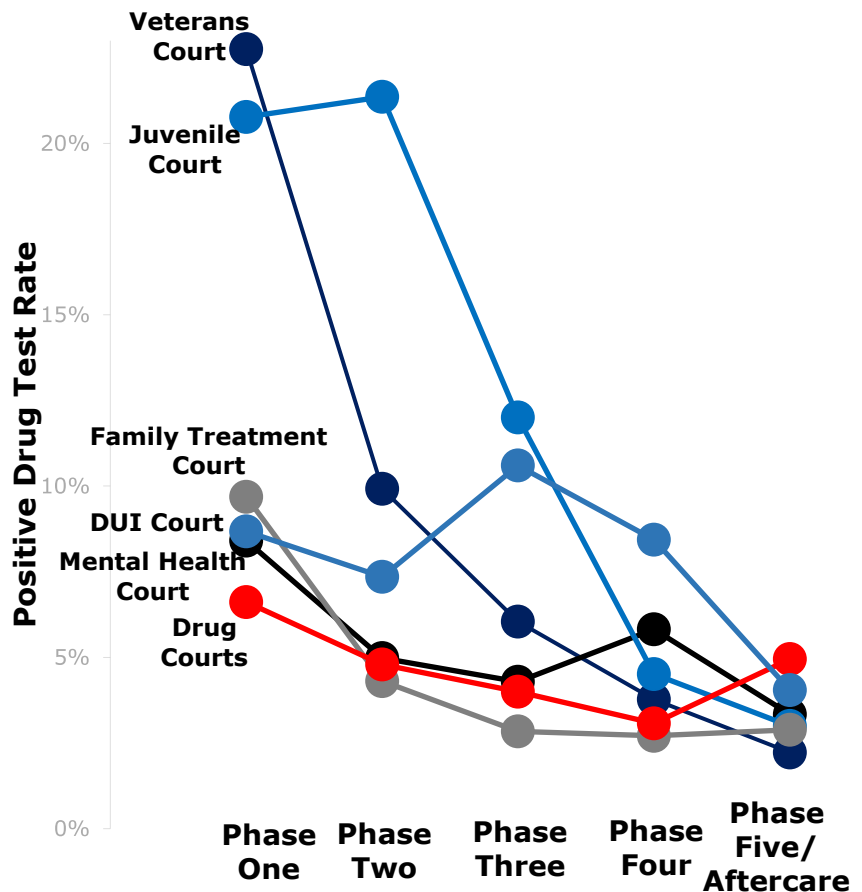
94.3%

- Higher percentage of negative drug tests than previous year.
- Total failed drug test percentage was highest among phase one participants but was progressively lower with participants advancing through each phase.

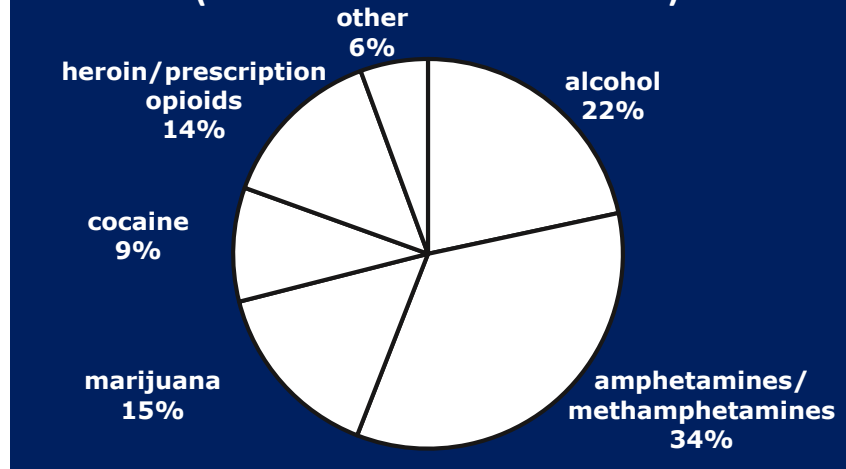
Drug of Choice

- The most frequently reported primary drug of choice for FY 2019 was amphetamines/methamphetamines, followed by alcohol and marijuana.
- In DUI courts (not pictured), alcohol was the most commonly reported drug of choice.

Positive Drug Tests Decrease as Participants Advance

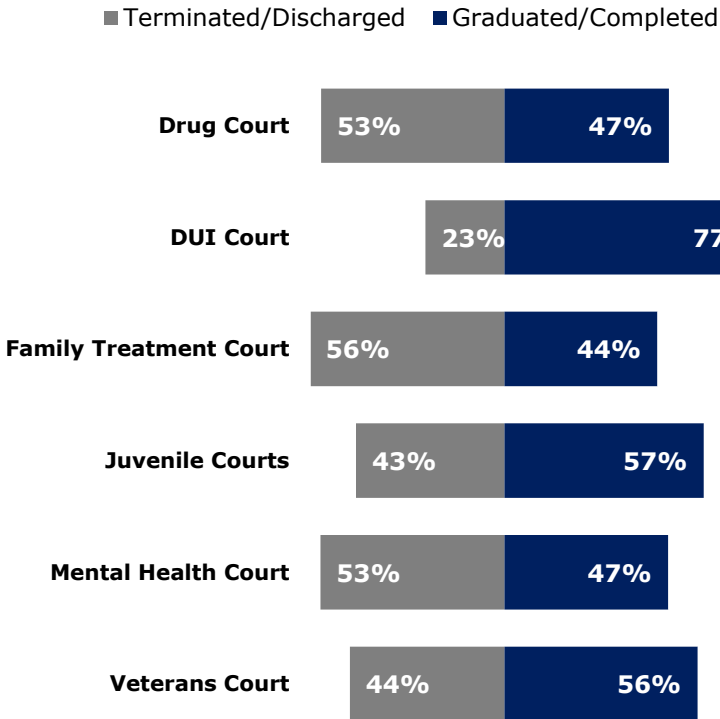


PARTICIPANT DRUG OF CHOICE (EXCLUDING DUI COURTS)



Participant Outcomes

FY 2019 Exits by Program Type



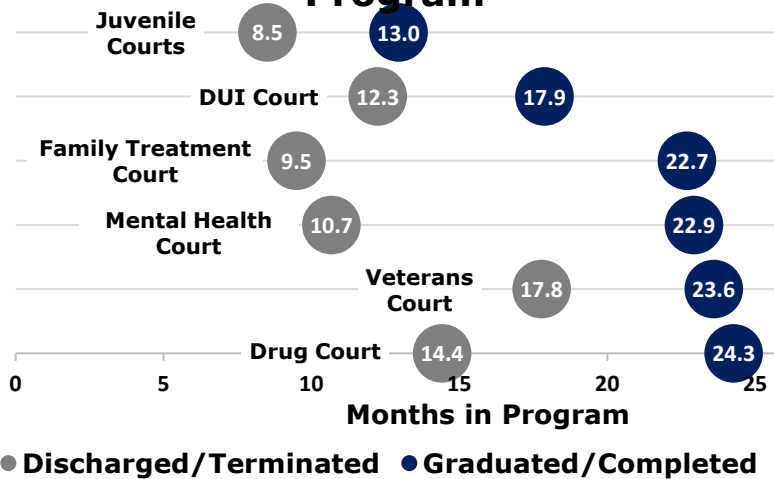
Across all program types, 55% of all participants that exited an accountability court during FY 2019 either **graduated or completed** the program.

Combined FY 2019 Exit Statuses:

- 1,515 Graduated
- 55 Completed
- 167 Discharged
- 1,090 Terminated

Evidence suggests that any participation in accountability court programs is linked to reduced recidivism rates, and this effect is even greater amongst graduates.⁴

Average Number of Months in Program



- In general, participants who successfully completed a program spent longer than did participants who were terminated or discharged.
- Court types vary in their required length of participation, however felony programs require a minimum length of 18 months while misdemeanor programs require a minimum of 12 months to complete.

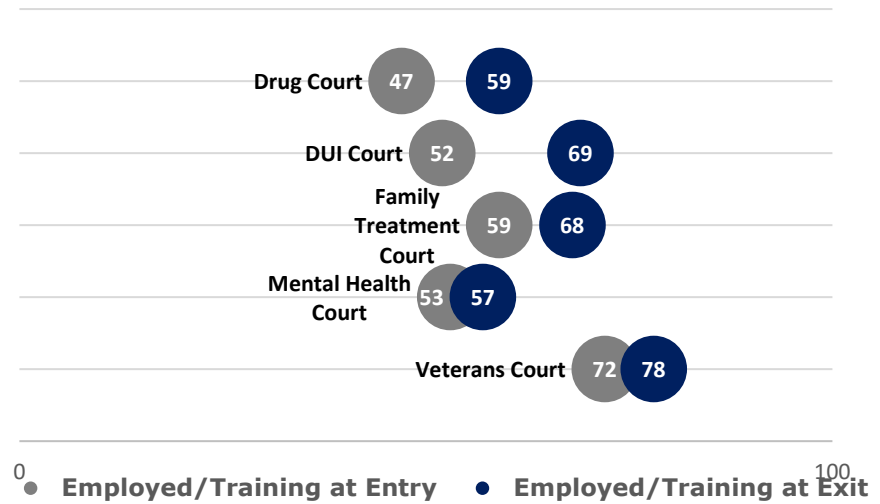
⁴Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia. 2018, July. *Executive Summary: Processes and Outcomes*. Retrieved from <https://www.gaaccountabilitycourts.org/>

Employment at Exit

Participants who **exited** an accountability court program in FY 2019 were more likely to be employed than when they **entered** the program.

Excluding juvenile courts, 63% of all participants who exited an accountability court program in FY 2019 were employed, in training, or on disability. This includes all exit types regardless of program completion.

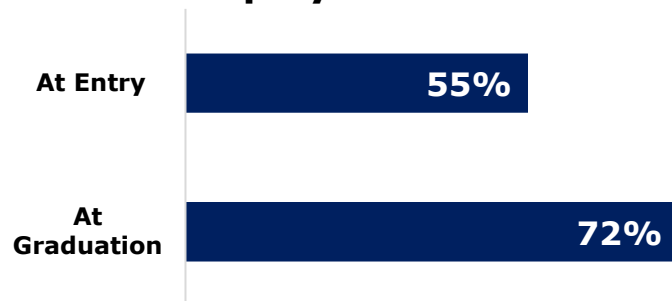
Employment Rate Increase at Entry vs Exit



Participants who graduated from an accountability court program in FY 2019 increased their overall rate of employment by 44%.

Employment at graduation is a key objective of program participation and a data element that is statutorily mandated for reporting.

FY 2019 Graduates' Employment Rate



90 Families Reunified



Families reunified in FY 2019 will benefit from increased stability and better economic prospects.

72 Drug-Free Babies



Each additional baby born drug free saves an average of \$63,200 in delivery and medical costs.⁵

⁵Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia. 2018, July. *The Estimated Economic Impacts and Benefits of Accountability Court Programs in Georgia*. Retrieved from [The Estimated Fiscal Impacts of Georgia Accountability Courts.pdf](#)

Medication-Assisted Treatment Pilot Program FY 2019

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is an evidence-based practice designed to treat drug dependency. Participants in the pilot program received medication to help control the physical symptoms of addiction and relapse. They also participated in counseling and therapy as part of their treatment plan.

Participating Programs

Three drug court programs and one veterans court program reported MAT data during FY 2019. Ten participants received MAT treatment in the pilot program.

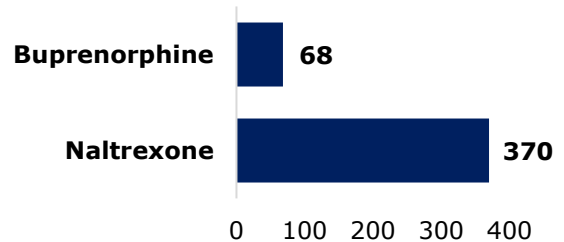
Medications Prescribed

Naltrexone - works in the brain to prevent opiate effects (e.g., feelings of euphoria, pain relief.) This medication is also used to treat alcohol abuse.

Buprenorphine - suppresses the symptoms of cravings and withdrawal, enabling the patient to engage in therapy.

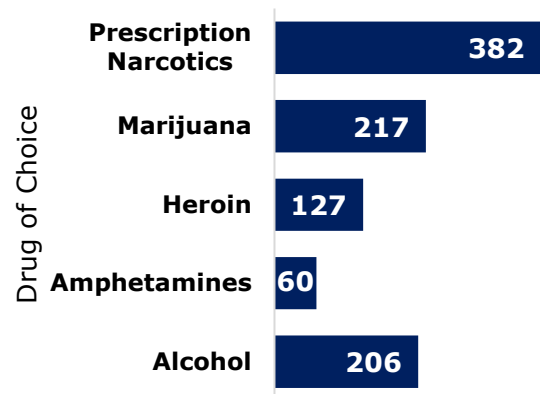
CACJ is focused on supporting the courts to improve data collection in this area, which includes additional data points to provide opportunities for continued analysis on the effectiveness of MAT.

MAT Prescriptions FY 2019 Treatments Administered



Therapy Type	Sessions Attended
Anger Management	10
Criminal Thinking	21
Dialectical Behavior Therapy	16
Matrix	24
Prime for Life	3
Other	337
Moral Reconation Therapy	24
TOTAL	435

Number of Drug Tests Administered to MAT Participants



Out of 992 drug tests administered to MAT participants during FY 2019, only 12 were positive, a passing rate of **98.8%**.