



COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

APRIL 2020

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ACCOUNTABILITY COURT NEWS & SPECIAL EVENTS

NORTHERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DRUG COURT

Submitted by Chrissy House, Northern Judicial Circuit Drug Court Coordinator

The Northern Judicial Circuit Felony Drug Court Team attended the National Drug Court Institute Tune-Up Training in Macon in March. The NJCFDC covers 5 counties including Hart, Franklin, Madison, Oglethorpe, and Elbert, with two drug courts in Madison County and Elbert County. We are looking forward to coming together to update policies, procedures, and participant handbooks to ensure we are giving our participants every opportunity to succeed.



CONASAUGA MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Submitted by Angela Anderson, Conasauga Mental Health Court Coordinator



The Conasauga Mental Health Court participated in "Color for a Cause" on March 3. The community event was hosted by Dalton Mall to spread awareness about participating organizations. We won \$250. Because the participants earned the money, they get to decide how they would like it to be spent. They will get to pick a couple of fun activities. We participated last year, and they chose a bowling party and a cookout at Red Clay Resort.



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY DUI TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Rachel Gage, CACJ Certification and Special Projects Officer

The Athens DUI Treatment Court of the Athens-Clarke County State Court was recognized as one of the Four National Academy Courts by the National Center for DWI Courts & National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Congratulations!



ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

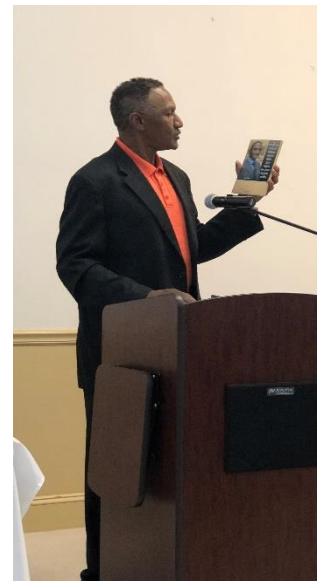
TIFT COUNTY DUI-DRUG COURT GRADUATION

Submitted by Michelle Calhoun, Tift County DUI-Drug Court Coordinator



The Tift County DUI-Drug Court conducted its second graduation ceremony to acknowledge 12 men and women who had successfully completed the program. The event was held at the Leroy Rogers Center on February 26 at 6:00 p.m., and Otis Nixon, former Atlanta Braves outfielder and author of "Keeping It Real", was the keynote speaker. Mr. Nixon shared with each graduate his personal issues with addiction and the steps he took to get his life back on track. He also spoke of his non-profit organization, the Otis Nixon Foundation, which is an organization he established to help others who struggle with addiction to alcohol and drugs.

Judge Herbert Benson congratulated the graduates on their dedication and hard work to successfully complete the 12-month program, and a diploma and gift card were presented to each graduate by Coordinator Michelle Calhoun. The graduates also left with a signed copy of Otis Nixon's book and a personalized baseball.



NORTHEASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRADUATIONS

Submitted by Jessi Emmett, Treatment Services Director

March was a popular month for graduations within the accountability court programs of the Northeastern Judicial Circuit. Dawson County Treatment Court (Adult Drug/DUI) welcomed five participants to their graduation ranks on March 4. Dawson County H.E.L.P. Program (Mental Health Court) celebrated one graduate on March 12. Both programs were able to celebrate the accomplishments of these individuals through a formal ceremony with program participants, team members, family members, and local elected officials present.

Hall County Family Treatment Court, DUI Court, Drug Court, and Parental Accountability Court all had graduations scheduled in the month of March. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, formal ceremonies for each program were postponed. All program graduates received their graduation certificate and accompanying legal documents through the mail and will be able to participate in a formal ceremony at a later date. Each of these participants worked diligently to meet program requirements and achieve such a milestone. While we celebrate with them from afar right now, we look forward to formally celebrating with them once gathering restrictions are lifted. Collectively, the Hall County programs welcomed 22 graduates in the month of March.

ROCKDALE COUNTY RESOURCE COURT GRADUATION

Submitted by Mary-Lou M. Snow, Rockdale County Resource Court Coordinator

On Thursday, March 5, Judge Robert Mumford and the Rockdale County Resource Court Team celebrated three graduates. One of the graduates earned her Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) certification while in the program. After being unemployed for over 10 years, she is currently employed as a CPS! Guest Speaker Commissioner Doreen Williams shared her own struggles of children with mental health issues. The focus of her story was RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE! The Rockdale County Resource Court has celebrated a total of 16 graduates since program inception in July 2016.



TREATMENT CORNER – GROUP & INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING: A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF CORE ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT SERVICES

Submitted by Tara Zellous, CACJ Treatment Fidelity Program Monitor

Being diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) and battling an addiction means more than having a physical dependence on drugs or alcohol. Even after detox, many drug court participants will continue to struggle with intense psychological and social triggers that often lead to relapse. Identifying strategies to cope with these triggers is a very important part of each participant's course of treatment and drug court journey. To help these participants, the Standards for Georgia Accountability Courts, Section 1 (4.4) states that "drug court programs shall offer a comprehensive range of core alcohol and drug treatment services"; group counseling and individual counseling are two of those services.

Group counseling offers a cost-efficient way for a group of participants to gain knowledge, learn new social skills, and benefit from the support of peers. However, group counseling alone is not enough for every participant. Facilitators should be keenly aware of participants who "hide" in groups, i.e. those who are careful not to share or acknowledge any real issues. This could be a signal that additional therapeutic strategies may be needed. Therefore, individual counseling is, or should be, a part of each participant's individualized treatment plan and cumulative treatment dosage hours.

Unlike group counseling where the focus is on the growth and progress of the group, individual counseling helps the participant to identify and develop strategies toward the achievement of his or her own goals. Those goals may include processing trauma, managing cravings, dealing with stress, or any other issue that may potentially threaten one's sobriety. Individual counseling provides a safe space where more in-depth exploration of issues can occur. It is also important to mention that this form of counseling is a part of one's continuum of care. Once participants have graduated drug court, they can choose to continue to receive individual counseling.

By offering a comprehensive range of core alcohol and drug treatment services, drug courts are ensuring that each participant's individualized needs are being met.

REMINDERS

- ❖ Coordinators, please check your inbox for an important update from the Department of Community Supervision (DCS) regarding the Reentry Partnership Housing (RPH) referral process and the COVID-19 pandemic. A memorandum with information about the updated process was emailed to you on Friday, March 27. If there are questions about RPH, please email Ms. Kimberly Howard at Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov.
- ❖ Please submit submissions for the May 2020 newsletter to Debbie Mott (debbie.mott@georgiacourts.gov) by Monday, April 27. If you plan to include a photo where participants can be identified, please be sure to include a signed photo release consent with your submission.

SAVE THE DATE 2020 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE



40+ Breakout Sessions
4 Plenary Sessions
Sunday Networking Event
Model Court, Data Driven &
Star Awards Recognition
Participant Art Exhibit
Plus More!
Registration opens
July 15, 2020
WWW.GAACOUNTABILITYCOURTS.ORG

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MRT GROUPS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Published by Correctional Counseling, Inc.

Since this is an extraordinary time and situation, Correctional Counseling, Inc. (CCI) has decided to impart our recommendations to help continuation of services to your clients. If you or your agency makes the decision to cancel in-person groups to help reduce the further outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, CCI has decided to post a few guidelines concerning MRT and MRT-DV groups.

1. If possible, you can facilitate the groups through a telehealth platform. The recommended platform would include video conferencing so that the participant may show the completed exercises to the facilitator. No other duplication or transmission of the exercises is allowable via email, file upload, or other digital sharing method due to federal copyright laws of all MRT materials.
2. If telehealth is not an available option, you can schedule conference calls for group members to participate as a group. The client would provide a verbal description of the completed exercise and the actual exercise would be required for presentation to the facilitator once regular group activities resume.
3. If neither telehealth nor a group call is an option, you can allow group members to present to the facilitator individually during a phone call. We know this is not the ideal situation for an MRT and MRT-DV group; however, we hope it will keep the client engaged in the program during this time and allow them to continue with their progress in the program. If this option is chosen, once groups resume, we suggest that you have each client provide a verbal summary to the group of each Step/Module passed during this time period. If the client can easily verbalize the Step/ Module to the facilitator and the group, their progress will be honored. If they cannot adequately verbalize the lesson from the Steps/ Modules completed during this time, you will make them repeat the Steps/ Modules to the group.

Check the resource and information page, as well as additional information regarding a complete list of events, at www.ccimrt.com.

REMOTE BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

Published by Reconnect, a Public Benefit Corporation

FOUNDER'S NOTE

The entire world has changed in the last 30 days. Communities are on lockdown, schools are closed, and people everywhere are struggling to adapt. At Reconnect, we've spent the last 11 years building technology for community supervision, and we keep getting the same questions:

- How are other programs operating right now?
- How can my officers stay safe while maintaining compliance?
- How can we run our office while maintaining social distancing?
- Where do I start?

So, we reached out and talked to our customers, over 150 jurisdictions across 35 states, to learn what they were doing and what they needed. We then applied our own experience--as a company, we've operated a highly remote team for years, spread from Maine to Florida to California, but working together closely through online tools. These tools and methodologies are not only a way to answer the needs of this moment, but to address the underlying needs that have been stressing the community justice space for decades...

To continue reading, please visit:

https://app.hubspot.com/documents/5054670/view/70763617?accessId=fdcbce&utm_source=Reconnect+Wrap&utm_campaign=308c6381d3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_11_19_08_11_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5c2b5002af-308c6381d3-594894229

CACJ Compilation of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Resources

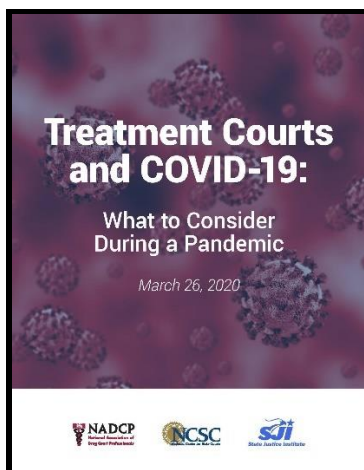
National Resources

- World Health Organization (WHO): [Rolling Updates on Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH): [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): [Tips for Social Distancing](#)



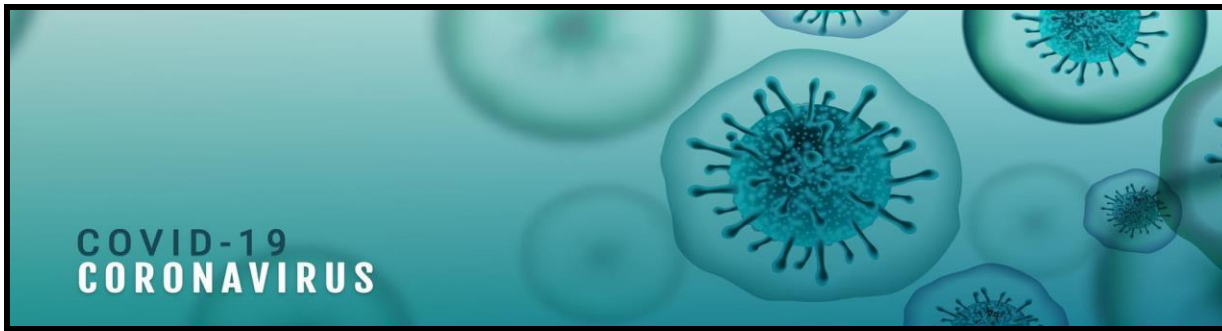
Courtesy of the National Center for State Courts

Drug Courts



Webinar

PowerPoint (<https://www.nadcp.org/covid-19-resources/>)



COVID-19 - PROMOTING SUPPORT GROUP ATTENDANCE: (<https://www.asam.org/Quality-Science/covid-19-coronavirus/support-group>)

Mental Health Courts



CONTINUING EDUCATION

[Free CE series on telepsychology](https://www.apa.org/education/ce)

(<https://www.apa.org/education/ce>)

Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak

(https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

Veterans Courts



https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/?utm_source=Homepage&utm_campaign=Coronavirus



(<https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/all>)

Family/Juvenile Treatment Courts

Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/outbreak_factsheet_1.pdf

Telehealth



(<https://www.healthline.com/health/best-telemedicine-iphone-android-apps>)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS): [OCR Announces Notification of Enforcement Discretion for Telehealth Remote Communications During the COVID-19 Nationwide Public Health Emergency](https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2020/03/17/ocr-announces-notification-of-enforcement-discretion-for-telehealth-remote-communications-during-the-covid-19.html)

(<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2020/03/17/ocr-announces-notification-of-enforcement-discretion-for-telehealth-remote-communications-during-the-covid-19.html>)



<https://doxy.me/>



<https://vsee.com/>



<https://zoom.us/jt?zcid=3172>

State Resources



Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/novelcoronavirus>



[:HTTPS://WWW.CDC.GOV/](https://www.cdc.gov/)