



COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

JUNE 2022

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING FY24 NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

Submitted by Taylor Jones, CACJ Executive Director



CACJ will release the fiscal year 2024 (FY24) Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for state funds form to existing and potentially new accountability courts on June 13, 2022. It will remain open until July 29, 2022. **Please note this SIGNIFICANT CHANGE.** Previously, the annual NOI was released in November of each year. This new NOI timeline will allow CACJ to best communicate funding requests to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

The NOI is MANDATORY for existing courts, existing courts with proposed expansions, and proposed new accountability courts that seek to submit a grant application to CACJ for FY24 state funds. **Each proposed new accountability court must first work with an existing accountability court within its circuit or county to determine if an existing court can be expanded. CACJ wants to invest in sustainable courts that share personnel and other resources.** Please do NOT complete this form without determining if an existing accountability court can be expanded. Additionally, please complete a separate NOI for each accountability court, regardless of intentions to complete a combined grant application.

All received submissions for proposed new accountability courts will be reviewed by the Funding Committee. The NOI point of contact will receive written notice of the Funding Committee's decision on or before September 15, 2022.

The court types included within the NOI are adult felony drug courts, mental health courts, veterans' treatment courts, DUI courts, family treatment courts, juvenile drug courts, and juvenile mental health courts.

ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS GRADUATIONS

CHATHAM COUNTY FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Latrell Gulotta, Chatham County Family Treatment Court Coordinator



On May 17, the Chatham County Family Treatment Court celebrated its last night and graduation ceremony for the Celebrating Families (CF) Spring 2022 session. This was our first in-person session held since March 2020. We were joined at this event by all CF leaders, FTC Coordinator, volunteer and church liaison, FTC Case Manager, DFCS Foster Care, DFCS Family Preservation, and the assigned community surveillance. It was a wonderful celebration. Photos were taken of each graduate. Baby A. accepted the graduation certificate on behalf of his older brother who was not present. It is always a bittersweet occasion when these sessions end as everyone is sad about the final session, but they benefit from the lesson plans and all they learned from the curriculum. We also had great food for the evening celebration including yellow rice, baked and fried chicken, green beans, macaroni and cheese, and banana pudding. Each graduate went home with a certificate of completion, 2022 cupcake, and graduation incentives.



Celebrating Families![™] (CF) is a multi-family, strength-based, skill-building program serving children ages birth through 17, their parents, and caregivers. This program consists of 16 sessions with each beginning with a healthy meal shared by family groups, followed by age-appropriate, skill building groups, and ending with a structured, related family activity. An evidence-based program available from the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, CF emphasizes healthy living skills including addiction prevention/recovery, attachment, the development of a sense of hope and expanded life view, reduction of stress/anxiety, and safety. CF is listed on SAMHSA's National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices. It has been shown by outside evaluators with families dealing with addiction and child abuse/neglect to strengthen recovery, improve family re-unification, and increase healthy living skills for families impacted by substance abuse disorders.

We also partnered with our CASA (Brightside Child & Family Advocacy, Home of Savannah CASA & The Bright House) program that was able to secure a professional photographer through Shot by Somi Studios to capture family photos for our families attending our CF sessions. Each of the families commented how this was the first time they had family photos taken. Each of the children currently in foster care was given a photo of their parent to place on their nightstand for daily viewing. We find that many children in foster care visit their parents once a week, which is not a lot of time. Parents often take photos of themselves but forget the significance of giving a photo to their child. The photo not only reminds children of how that parent looks but forms a closer connection when they are able to see it each day.



ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS NEWS

COBB COUNTY DRUG TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Porsha Middlebrook, Cobb County Drug Court Coordinator

The Cobb County Board of Commissioners presented a proclamation declaring May as National Drug Court Month in Cobb County. For 20 years, the Cobb County Drug Treatment Court has been successful in leading people out of the justice system and into long-term recovery. We set aside this month to raise awareness that Drug Courts are saving lives, reuniting families, saving money, and reducing crime.



FULTON COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

Submitted by Tiffany Barclay, Fulton County Juvenile Court Accountability Courts Program Administrator

The Fulton County Juvenile Court's Drug Court programs, CHOICES Juvenile Drug Court and HOPE Family Treatment Court (FTC), held several events in celebration of National Drug Court Month. In keeping with this year's theme, *A Celebration of Recovery*, HOPE FTC hosted a panel style discussion with program alumni and current participants. The alumni spoke to current participants about their experience in FTC and how they are maintaining their sobriety. The alumni panelists also took questions from the audience. After the panel discussion, participants had the opportunity to paint. The Fulton County FTC program believes it is important to help program participants identify fun and healthy activities in which they can engage. The participants shared that they enjoyed both activities. They were encouraged by hearing from previous program graduates and thankful for the opportunity to learn new and fun skill.



Standing: Tamara Jones (FTC Case Manager); Sitting: Jessica Brumwell, Patricia Espre, and Teresa Hickman (FTC Alumni)



Jessica Shead, FTC Sophomore

The Fulton County Juvenile Court's Drug Court Programs also hosted a lunch and learn on Monday, May 16, 2022. Dr. Greg Raduka with the Council on Alcohol and Drugs was the guest presenter. Dr. Raduka shared information on current drug trends, the impact of the legalization of medical marijuana, and startling drug statistics. Attendees provided positive feedback and were provided informational gift bags for their participation.



Karen Citizen-Wilcox, Dorsey Jones (Drug Court PO), Dr. Greg Raduka, Tiffany Barclay (Accountability Court Administrator), and Tamara Jones (FTC Case Manager)

COBB COUNTY DRUG TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Porsha Middlebrook, Cobb County Drug Court Coordinator

Cobb Drug Treatment Court adds incentives to celebrate success

The team behind Cobb's Drug Treatment Court brought home several new strategies from the National Drug Court Institute Operational Tune-up held in March. Case managers report that participants are excited to attend the weekly court sessions since the court began recognizing stand-out participants as members of the "A-Team" and naming a weekly MVP.

Cobb Superior Court Judge Kimberly A. Childs presides over the Drug Treatment Court, and during the weekly court sessions, she addresses the A-Team members individually. A-Team members get to draw for a chance to receive further incentives, and they can be released from court early that week. In addition, DTC also acknowledges participants' sobriety time at certain increments by issuing certificates. Implementing these new practices has increased the morale amongst participants and has had an obvious impact on motivation for the participants to succeed and do their best in the program.

One participant said, "The addition of the A-Team has added so much life to the program. It gives people a chance to be recognized for the achievements and milestones that they have made toward their goal, which is to graduate and maintain sobriety."



FULTON COUNTY MISDEMEANOR MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Submitted by Georgee Corley, Fulton County Misdemeanor Mental Health Court Coordinator

On May 3, Fulton County Misdemeanor Mental Health Court hosted its first Mental Health Resource Fair to kick off Mental Health Awareness Month. Over 20 local service providers participated and shared their resources and expertise with the community. Attendees and providers were able to visit various booths and learn more about the assistance and support available. In addition to the open booth hour, the MMC was honored to host several guest speakers during the Resource Fair who educated the attendees on the Georgia Health Parity Act, the Launch of 9-8-8, NAMI and MHA of Georgia resources, and the general operation of the MMC and its role in the County. The commitment to mental health wellness was evident as Georgia Senator Kay Kirkpatrick, Dawn Peel, Director of DBHDD Crisis Intervention, Nzingha Shaw, Programs Manager for MHA of Georgia, and Suzy Quenzer, President of NAMI, Northside Atlanta delivered speeches regarding changes and growth needs as we move forward to support mental health in Fulton County and for all Georgians. The MMC would like to thank everyone for their support of our program and for one another.



MODEL COURTS FEATURE

The goal of Georgia's Accountability Court Model Court program is to recognize the great work of accountability courts across the state, as well as identify strong programs that may serve as mentors for other courts. Programs identified as Model Courts are those that have met and exceeded adherence to Georgia's Standards as dictated by strong performance on certification and peer review processes. To recognize the talent and expertise of the accountability court community, each month CACJ will recognize a model court or two and their work in the substance use and mental health fields.

Hall County Drug Court Model Adult Felony Drug Court (2020-2023)

Court type: Adult Felony Drug Court

Presiding judge: Judge Jason Deal has been with the program since 2006 and presides over the Alpha Track. Judge Clint Bearden has presided over the Bravo and Charlie Tracks since 2018.

Coordinator: Suzanne Stanley – since 2019; Served as Dawson County Treatment Court Coordinator from 2017 – 2019.

Inception date: 2001

Number of graduates to date: 911

Current program census: 196

Recidivism rate: 19%

Innovative practices/unique programming:

Ms. Stanley: "Hall County Drug Court has implemented separate tracks designed to treat individuals based on a risk/need assessment as well as age. Our young adult track is intended to treat moderate risk individuals between the ages 18-25 with a separate sanction matrix created to address their developmental executive functioning."

Hall County Drug Court Team Members

Judges: The Honorable Jason Deal and
The Honorable Clint Bearden

Coordinator: Suzanne Stanley

Case Managers: Suzanne Eberhardt (Lead Case Manager),
Jordan Griffin, and John Merck

Assistant District Attorney: Robert Gardner

Defense Attorneys: Hal Walker, Rob McNeill, and Jake Shapiro

Probation Officer: Eric Salgado

Treatment: Hailey Solomon (Lead Counselor), Lathem
Armour, Shannon Earls, Deb Esposito, Matt Groover, Niccole
Noble, and Lura Snyder

Community Supervision Officer: Scott Ware

Why do you choose to preside over the accountability court? What do you hope to accomplish as a model court?

Judge Bearden: "For me, during my time as a practicing attorney, I had firsthand experience working with clients that were able to truly change the course of their lives through accountability court programs. When I was going through the interview process for the Superior Court judgeship, I discussed with the Governor that one of the biggest reasons I wanted to do this job was to have the opportunity to work with our accountability courts due to the opportunity they provide to have a direct, positive impact upon the lives of others. Being a judge often means days in court presiding over cases which are filled with unfortunate and sad circumstances, with no truly 'good' outcome possible. However, the accountability courts offer an exception to that and are absolutely a highlight of the work that I do. As far as what I hope that our program accomplishes as a model court, it is to hopefully foster and support newer accountability court programs in our state, to do so with the level of dedication and commitment that our court has been fortunate to maintain since its creation, and to help these programs be able to see that same beneficial impact upon their neighbors and loved ones within their own communities from the results of a successful accountability court."

Judge Deal: "As a Superior Court Judge there are a lot of things that I 'have to do' like hear domestic cases, rule on discovery disputes, and take criminal pleas. In contrast, I 'get to do' drug court. Presiding over drug court is the best part of my job. I feel blessed that I 'get to do' it. It is one of the few areas in my life where I get to see actual positive results from my work. It is very rewarding. As a model court, I hope to demonstrate to others the benefits of drug court to the community, to the participant, and to the team members. I hope that as a model court we can inspire others to take the leap of faith to start an accountability court and can serve as a resource for those who are growing their programs."

What are you most proud of in terms of the program's success? What does she hope to accomplish as a model court?

Ms. Stanley: "As a coordinator, I am most proud of our ability to successfully operate as one of the largest programs in the state. The reality is, we are not just treating the participant as an individual. There is a ripple effect with each person's success that pours over into their families, friends, and community. It is truly a joy to work with such a talented team of individuals that work so hard to help change people's lives. As a model court, we hope that we can continue finding innovative ways to incorporate treatment into the judicial system so that healthy growth and change is the continuous aspect of our community."

What is something the judge wishes he knew at program inception that he hopes to impart to newer courts?

Judge Bearden: "While our drug court program was well established prior to my arrival, for me as a judge coming into the program for the first time, open communication and not being afraid to ask questions have been key points in hopefully becoming a better drug court judge. My background and experience in the legal field is beneficial in many ways, but it can sometimes serve to limit your openness to understanding situations of the participants. I've found it incredibly helpful to be able to speak openly with our treatment team each week, to draw upon their experiences and insights, to ask questions that provide me more background knowledge, and to use that information gained to help guide the best responses and course of action for our participants. For me, using our communication skills to develop a good team rapport with the other members of our program has been invaluable."

Judge Deal: "We tell participants that recovery is a process and that a failure is only a failure if they don't learn from it. We should take that same advice when it comes to starting an accountability court. It is a process. It will evolve. There will be failures. However, we shouldn't be afraid of failure, we should just learn from it. Ultimately, I believe that Drug Courts Work! Keep learning, working, and praying and you will see your program get stronger and more successful."



Chatham County DUI Court

Model DUI Court (2021-2024)

Court type: DUI Court

Presiding judge: The Honorable Derek J. White since 2021; Senior Judge H.G. Fowler founded the program in 2003 and presided over the program until he retired in 2021.

Coordinator: David Wood since 2003

Inception date: May 2003

Number of graduates to date: 1,519

Current program census: 31

Recidivism rate: 7.9%

Innovative practices/unique programming: "Chatham County levied a 3% tax on distilled spirits by the drink in 2006 to support the DUI Court budget. This, along with the CACJ grant, allows the DUI Court to assist participants in cost that are beyond the weekly treatment fee. This includes MAT, psychiatrist visits, and other assistance as needed."



Why does the judge choose to preside over the accountability court? What does he hope to accomplish as a model court?

Judge White: "A Georgia State Court jurist takes an oath to adjudicate those matters before him/her impartially, in fairness to all, and faithfully according to the constitutions of the State of Georgia and the United States in the name of justice. And those constitutions are augmented by statutes and case law to which a jurist must adhere - having some discretion. However, knowing the restraints of the written law and the limited discretion imposed upon a jurist, I have elected to preside over an accountability court for two reasons. First, my personal beliefs are such that I must do more for others than I do for myself. And, secondly, because I wish to honor my first reason as much as my professional endeavors will allow while keeping my oath, accountability courts allow me more discretion to do more for others than I can in other courts."

What is the coordinator most proud of in terms of the program's success? What does he hope to accomplish as a model court?

Mr. Wood: "I am most proud of the way our DUI Court protects the rights of each participant. This was demanded by Judge Fowler from the beginning and continues today. It is foremost in how we conduct business and has led to others (defense attorneys) that had initial doubt about our abilities to be impartial and to trust that we will preserve everyone's rights."

What is something you wish you had known at program inception that you hope to impart to newer courts?

"Newer courts should strive to create a plan to educate community leaders and other groups about the benefits of Accountability Courts. This will become important if/when funds are needed to sustain the program."

Anything else you wish to include?

Judge White: "Chatham County DUI Court enjoys the support of many to include the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, The City of Savannah, local attorneys, and law enforcement to name a few."

Mr. Wood: "For the first time in our existence, we have experienced a large amount of turnover. Judge Fowler retired in January 2020 and in the past year we have had a 70% team turnover. Judge White has done an excellent job of interacting with participants and motivating them to seek and stay sober. This has inspired other team members to provide service that support our participants' sobriety and compliance with DUI Court."

Chatham County DUI Court Team Members

Judge: The Honorable Derek J. White

Coordinator: David Wood

Prosecutor: Brittny Boston

Defense Attorneys: Amit Navare and Lindy Moody

Treatment Director: Leslie Lunney

Law Enforcement: David Cody

Probation: Nikeya Blake



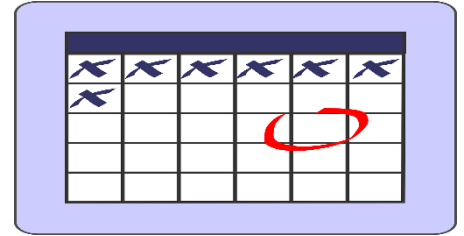
FY23 ACCOUNTABILITY COURT OPERATING GRANT AWARDS SENT



Coordinators and judges should have received by email/mail the program's FY23 Operating Grant award no later than May 30, 2022. If you have not received your award information and packet to date, please contact your assigned CJCC grant specialist or CACJ to assist.

FY23 CACJ TRAINING CALENDAR

CACJ is pleased to release the FY23 training calendar. This calendar includes trainings sponsored by CACJ July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. Please note the specific training dates, events, and locations are subject to change. Specific details (who is eligible to attend, registration dates, prerequisites, and required documents) for each training are in the downloadable version of training calendar on the CACJ [website](#) at the bottom – right of the webpage.



JULY 2022 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Please send submissions for the July 2022 newsletter to Debbie Mott (Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov) by Wednesday, June 29. If you plan to include a photo where participants can be identified, please be sure to send a signed photo consent with your submission.

GEORGIA ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS JOB POSTINGS

Please see the Career Opportunities tab (under About Us) on the CACJ website for information about these job postings:

- | | |
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| *Athens-Clarke County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator | *Columbus Family Treatment Court Coordinator |
| *Cherokee County Case Manager | *North Enotah Circuit Accountability Courts Coordinator |
| *Glynn County Lead Clinical Director | *Glynn County Drug Court Coordinator |
| *Mountain Judicial Circuit Clinical Coordinator | *Richmond County Accountability Court Director |
| *Forsyth County Contract Counselors | *DeKalb County Misd. Mental Health Court Social Worker |

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

Wondering about something? We are here to help Wednesday! Join CACJ Staff for virtual office hours!

Who: CACJ Teams – Data, Executive Director/Legal/Grants, Standards & Certification, Training, and Treatment

When: Every first Wednesday of the month from 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm (times changed as of February 23, 2022)

Where: Zoom – We are pleased to offer this new form of technical assistance!

Why: Virtual office hours give you the opportunity to ask your questions and receive support in a streamlined fashion. You can meet with CACJ Staff on a regular basis to stay informed and get the answers you need.

Meeting Schedule

June 1, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

July 6, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data

August 3, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

September 7, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data



2022 CACJ Annual Training Conference

Athens, Georgia | October 9-12, 2022

After two years of hosting events as completely virtual or hybrid, CACJ is excited to gather with the accountability court community and return to Athens for the 2022 Annual Training Conference!

Overview

The CACJ 2022 Annual Training Conference will feature over 45 training sessions in different subject tracks presented by nationally recognized speakers, partner agencies, and accountability court professionals. CACJ anticipates a full line-up of vendors offering services to your accountability court that attendees can connect with.

Logistics

The CACJ 2022 Annual Training Conference will be an in-person only event. Participation is limited to 8 team members per adult and juvenile accountability court; however, family treatment courts can register 10 team members. State-funded accountability courts received funding in the program's FY23 Operating Grant Award to support conference attendance.

Registration

Registration for the conference will open on Monday, July 11, 2022. **Accountability Court Coordinators are the point of contact to register team members for the conference. Only coordinators (person listed on the CACJ directory as the point of contact) will receive an email from ICJE Event Coordinator, Ms. Laura Kathryne Hogan, with instructions to register team members and a link to the hotel room blocks for overnight lodging in Athens.** Registration for conference attendance will end on September 16, 2022. **Early registration is encouraged as classes and hotels are booked on a first come, first served basis and can fill up quickly.** To help attendees plan and make the most of their conference experience, the conference planning team has released the 2022 conference session agenda and catalog early! Breakout sessions are organized by track and content level. Visit the CACJ website conference webpage [here](#) to view the session line-up. Also, attendees will notice a new look for conference registration! The registration system will allow registrants to filter course selections according to track, keyword, and content level.

Award Nominations

Nominations open on July 11, 2022!

As in years past, CACJ wants to recognize team members across the state for their hard work and dedication to accountability courts. Start thinking about the people who you work closely with on your court team and consider nominating them for an award. CACJ will recognize one person from various team roles for the STAR Award. One outstanding individual from a mental health court will be recognized for their contributions in the field for the Judge Stephen S. Goss Award, and one outstanding individual will be recognized for their contributions in the accountability court community for the Tommy Day Wilcox Award. CACJ created the Data Driven Award to reward programs who fully utilize data and their case management systems to improve program and participant outcomes. The Data Driven Award provides both recognition and financial support (up to \$15,000!) for continued program evaluation. Information on prior inaugural award recipients can be found [here](#).

Updates

Continue to monitor your inboxes for conference updates from the CACJ. There are many exciting activities and details pending confirmation – please don't miss out! The most up to date information is found on the CACJ website [here](#). CACJ anticipates sending bi-weekly updates about *What's New in 2022* regarding continuing education hours, team building & wellness activities, and the mobile app in the months ahead.



Family Treatment Court Training Series: Register Now for Part 2

The second installment of the [2022 Family Treatment Court Practice Academy Series, "Beyond Collaboration to Results,"](#) is coming up on Tuesday, June 7! This series helps professionals from family treatment courts, child welfare, substance use disorder treatment, dependency courts, and other partners advance their collaborative capacity to improve outcomes for families affected by substance use disorder.

This training series is presented by the National Family Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program at the Center for Children and Family Futures on behalf of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Beyond Compliance: Empowering Families to Build Recovery Capital for Sustained Recovery and Family Wellness

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

This course provides family treatment court (FTC) teams information about recovery capital and offers strategies to build on these concepts to promote sustained recovery, child safety, and family wellness. This course will highlight FTCs that integrate recovery capital and protective factor approaches into their phase structures, as well as teams that help create a community welcoming and supportive of people seeking recovery.

Beyond Counting: Strategies to Collect and (Actually) Use Your FTC Data

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

FTC team members often understand the importance of data tracking but struggle to identify specific steps to collect, share, and use FTC data to improve family outcomes. This course is designed for all team members and provides concrete instruction for using metrics to assist with data-driven decision making, identifying disparities and disproportionality, and sustainability planning.