

# COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OUTCOMES REPORT



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by



Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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# ACCOUNTABILITY COURT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AND GRADUATES

Accountability Courts graduated, discharged or terminated **11,311** participants from FY2020 to FY2023.

## RACE

### Race of Program Participants

66.3% White  
28.7% Black  
3.1% Hispanic  
1.9% Other

This is compared to Georgia's general population:

58.7% White  
33.2% Black  
11.1% Hispanic

*11,311 participants reported their race.*

## GENDER

### Gender of Program Participants

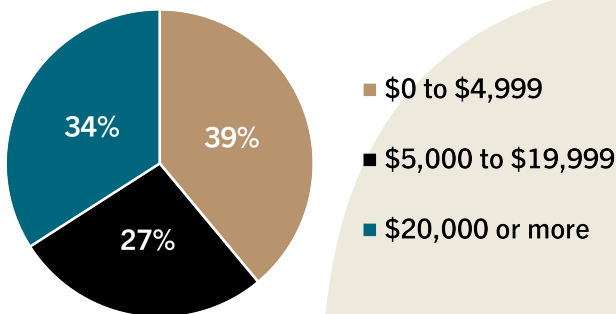
2/3 of participants who reported gender were male.



*11,301 participants reported their gender.*

## INCOME

### Income of Program Participants



*10,918 participants reported their income.*

## EDUCATION

### Education Level of Program Participants

70% of participants reported having at least a high school education, GED, or higher.

Georgia general population:  
89% of Georgians have at least a high school degree.

*10,942 participants reported their education level.*

## TOTAL PARTICIPANTS BY COURT FROM FY2020 TO FY2023

ADULT FELONY  
DRUG COURTS

**49.8%**

MENTAL HEALTH  
COURTS

**17.8%**

VETERANS  
TREATMENT COURTS

**4.1%**

DUI  
COURTS

**20.7%**

FAMILY  
TREATMENT COURTS

**7.6%**

# WHAT ARE ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS?

Accountability Courts offer an alternative to traditional adjudications and incarceration primarily for those who committed nonviolent offenses, namely for offenses related to substance use, a mental health condition, or DUIs. The courts work to lower recidivism rates among program participants, with the goal to restore participants to productive, working, tax-paying citizens.

Council of Accountability Court Judges  
provides support to and oversees

## FIVE COURTS

### ADULT FELONY DRUG COURTS

Courts designed for participants arrested for drug crimes and whose addiction to drugs and/or alcohol led them to criminal behavior.

### MENTAL HEALTH COURTS

Courts that serve participants with significant mental health diagnoses and/or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, and whose crime is related to their mental health issue.

### VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS

Courts that follow the drug court model but are designed to address unique issues veterans face as a result of their military service, often in a war zone.

### DUI COURTS

Courts intended to treat people convicted multiple times of operating a vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS

Courts intended to restore families by treating adults who have lost or will lose their children to foster care due to substance use issues.

In 2023, Georgia had **184** accountability court programs.



**\$ 41.3**  
MILLION IN  
ANNUAL BENEFITS

Benefits of Accountability Courts  
include reduced recidivism and cost-effectiveness.

According to a 2022 Institute of Government study, Georgia saw an estimated **\$41.3 million** in annual benefits, including program fees, healthcare costs avoided, value of community service work, recidivism costs avoided, foster care system costs avoided, and state income taxes paid.

In 2022, the average economic impact per graduate was roughly **\$26,000.**

# PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES BY DEMOGRAPHICS

## Race is associated with graduation outcomes.

Graduation rates across all races varied from **53.1%** to **65.4%**.

Statistical analyses indicated a significant difference in graduation rates among racial groups.

## Gender is not associated with graduation outcomes.

The graduation rate was **60.1%** for males and **59%** for females.

Statistical analyses indicated no significant differences in graduation rates among the two.

## Income level is associated with graduation outcomes.

Overall graduation rates across income categories varies from **49.6%** to **72.4%**.

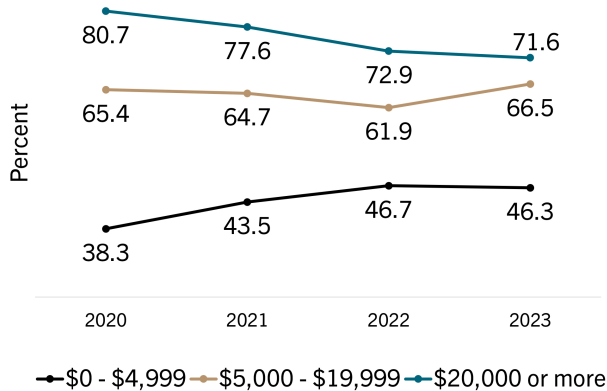
Statistical analyses indicated a significant difference in graduation rates among income groups.

Graduation rates for low-income and middle-income participants increased from FY2020 to FY2023.

## Education level is associated with graduation outcomes.

Participants with an education level beyond high school graduated at a rate of **72.4%**, compared to **67.7%** for those with a high school or GED education and **49.6%** for those with less than a high school education level.

Statistical analyses confirmed a significant difference in graduation rates among education levels.



## GRADUATION RATE BY COURT FROM FY2020 TO FY2023

ADULT FELONY  
DRUG COURTS

**57.2%**

MENTAL HEALTH  
COURTS

**45.8%**

VETERANS  
TREATMENT COURTS

**64.6%**

DUI  
COURTS

**79.5%**

FAMILY  
TREATMENT COURTS

**51.7%**

# OUTCOMES BY TREATMENT DOSAGE AND RISK/NEED SCORES

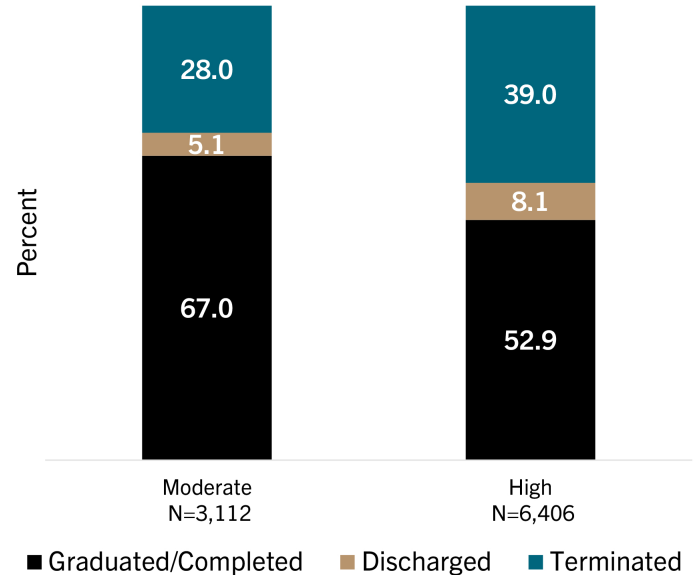
## RISK

Risk was assessed through a range of instruments across the state, including the LS-CMI,<sup>1</sup> LSI-R,<sup>2</sup> NGA,<sup>3</sup> START,<sup>4</sup> and others.

Across these tools, risk was collapsed into three categories including **low**, **moderate**, and **high**. Analyses to examine whether risk was associated with program completion showed that most program graduates were classified as high risk.

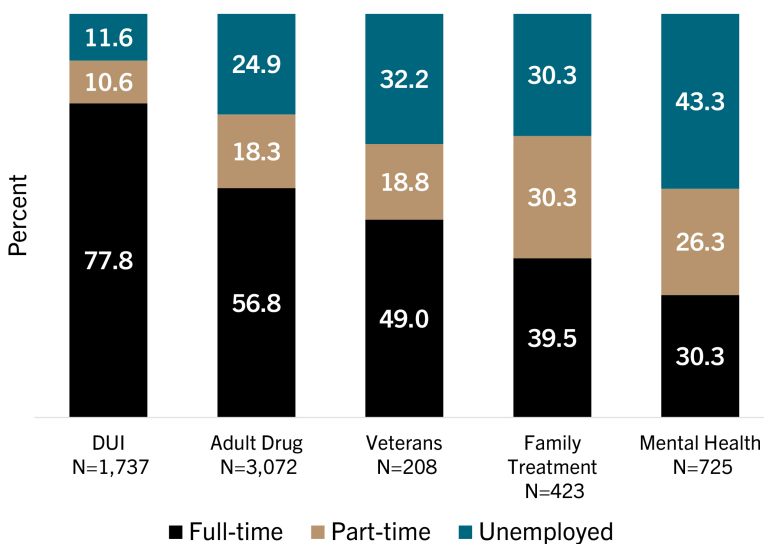
1. The Level of Service-Case Management Inventory is an assessment tool that measures the risk and need factors of late adolescent and adult offenders.
2. The Level of Service Inventory-Revised is a survey of offender attributes and situations relevant for making decisions about levels of supervision and treatment.
3. The Next Generation Assessment is an automated program assessment instrument based on data currently found within SCRIBE-SCHRI (GCIC) – PAROLE databases.
4. The Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability is a clinical guide used to evaluate a client's level of risk or aggression.

Graduation Rates by Risk Level  
FY2020–FY2023



## INSIGHTS ON GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Rates of Employment by Court Type  
FY2020–FY2023



**70.6%**  
female rate of  
employment



**78.9%**  
male rate of  
employment



**76.1%**  
of employable graduates were employed  
full-time or part-time at program exit.

Graduates of **DUI** courts have the highest rate of employment.

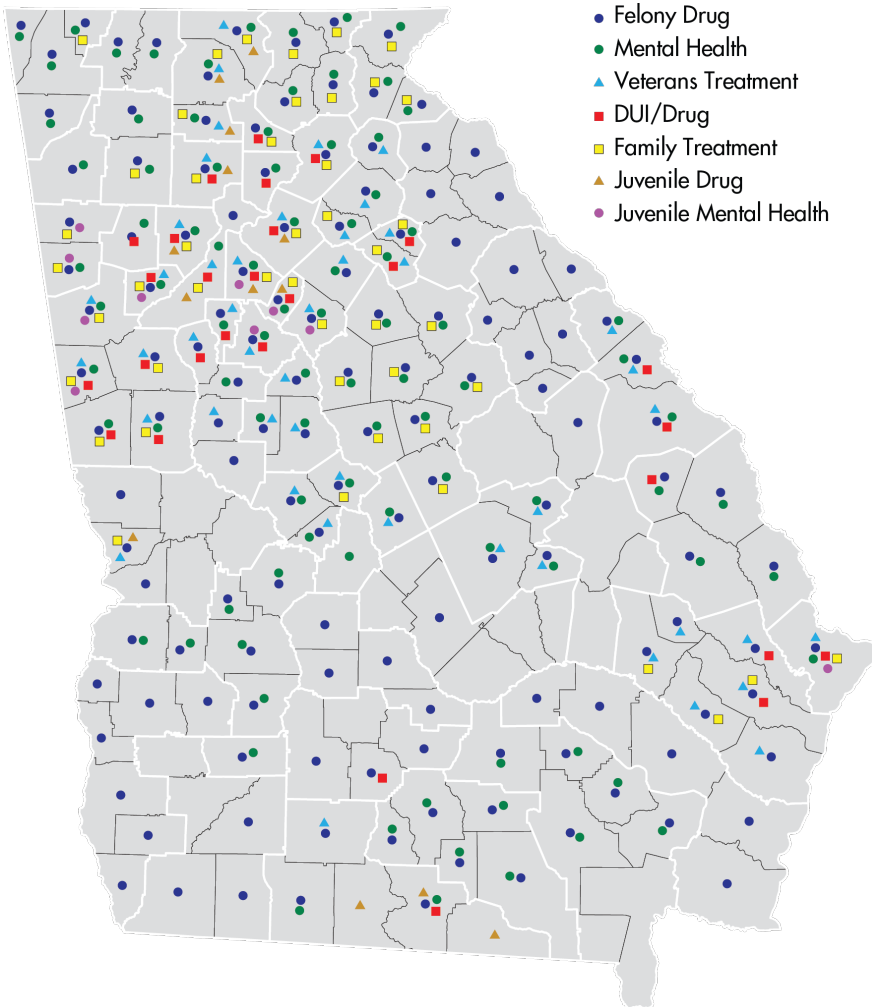


# COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES



## Locations of Accountability Court Programs in Georgia

Map reflects accountability courts in place on July 1, 2022. Juvenile drug and juvenile mental health courts were not included in this study. Some courts serve additional counties within their circuit.



The Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) was created in 2015 to:

- Take Georgia's accountability courts to scale
- Reduce incarceration rates
- Determine funding priorities
- Encourage adherence to standards
- Save lives and restore families
- Perform ongoing review and measurement

## MISSION

To provide a unified framework that promotes and improves the quality, accessibility, and administration of accountability courts.

## VISION

Making accountability courts work for all Georgians.

This report was developed and designed by the



Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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