



Veterans Treatment Courts (VTCs)

BRIAN CLUBB

Military & Veterans Advocacy
Program

Battered Women's Justice
Project

HONORABLE VANCE PETERSON

District Judge
Spokane County District Court

Agenda

Drug Courts

Why VTCs and How They
Differ from other
Treatment Courts

Team Approach

Key Components



Drug Courts

- Response to drug wave in the 1980's
- Revolving door in criminal justice system
- Miami-Dade Co followed by several other jurisdictions
- Approx 3,000 “Drug” Courts in the US
- Why?
 - Decrease recidivism
 - Save money

Why Veterans Treatment Courts?

- Judge Robert Russell, veteran court staff, & a justice-involved veteran
- Change of attitudes towards military servicemembers & veterans
- Recognition of visible and invisible wounds of war
- Perceived increase/coming wave of justice-involved veterans



Interdisciplinary team

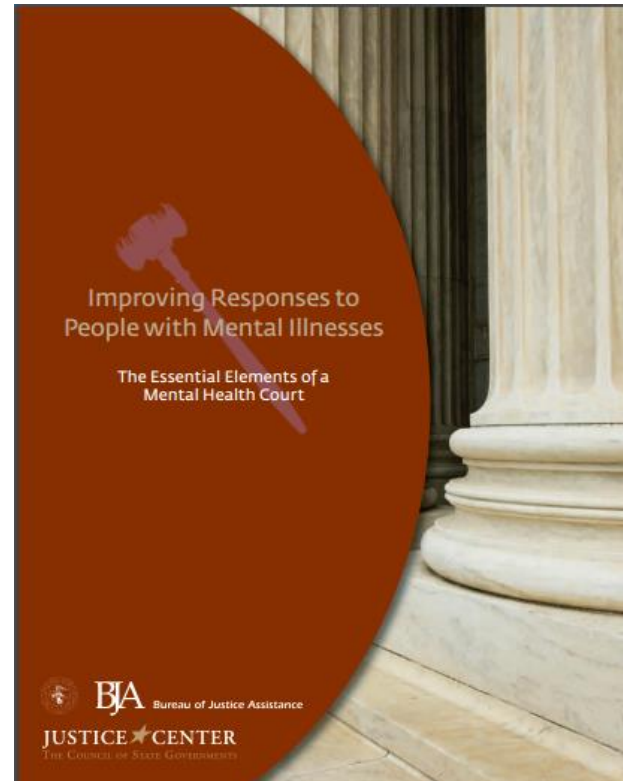
- Judge
- Prosecutor
- Defense Counsel
- Pretrial/Probation/Parole
- Law Enforcement
- Court Coordinator
- Treatment Provider

How Veterans Treatment Courts differ?

- US Dept of Veterans Affairs
 - Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Specialists
- Mentors / Peer Specialists
- Community, Veteran, & Legal support
- More likely to accept violent offenders
 - ***81% take domestic violence offenses***



“Drug Court Key Components” and “Essential Elements of Mental Health Courts”



VTC Key Components

Integrate alcohol, drug treatment, and mental health services with justice system case processing

Using a nonadversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights

Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the VTC program

VTC provides access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, mental health and other related treatment and rehabilitation services

Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing

VTC Key Components (Cont'd)

A coordinated strategy governs VTC responses to participants' compliance

Ongoing judicial interaction with each Veteran is essential

Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness

Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective VTC planning, implementation, and operations

Forging partnerships among VTC, Veterans Administration, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances VTC effectiveness

Questions and Answers

