

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A participant can only be accepted into Veterans Treatment Court as follows [generally stated]:

- Must have served in the US Military, be a current or former US Department of Defense Contractor, or a current or former military member of a foreign allied country
- Must have been arrested for, charged with, and/or sentenced on one or more crimes. Misdemeanor and felony charges may be eligible for Veterans Treatment Court. Each case is reviewed on an individual basis
- Veterans status will be established by a DD-214 and, if eligible, will receive services through Veterans Administration Healthcare benefits. Otherwise, local community providers will be utilized
- Suffering from a substance use disorder, military-related mental illness, mild traumatic brain injury, and/or an eligible severe and persistent mental illness
- Must meet residency requirement
- Must enter a guilty or no contest plea to each charge pending or charges may be deferred by the State Attorney's Office
- Must have ability to comprehend and conform to the Veterans Treatment Court guidelines
- Must be legally competent to proceed

Volunteer veteran mentors are community members who support Veterans Treatment Court participants at each hearing and between court dates. They provide guidance, friendship, and understanding from a shared veteran perspective. Working with a mentor is optional and carries no obligation. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please contact Nicole DiPaola at 941.833.5430



Charlotte County Veterans Treatment Court is a collaborative effort of:

Administrative Office of the Courts
Charlotte County Criminal Division
Office of the Public Defender
Office of the State Attorney
Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare
Charlotte County Sheriff's Office
U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs
Charlotte County Veterans Services
Charlotte County Veterans Council
Florida Department of Corrections
Charlotte County Clerk of Court
Justice for Vets

For additional information and to download the forms please scan the QR code or visit our website at:

<https://www.ca.cjis20.org>



CHARLOTTE
COUNTY

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT



20th Judicial Circuit of Florida
Administrative Office of the
Courts
Criminal Division

350 East Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

WHAT IS VETERANS TREATMENT COURT?

The Charlotte County Veterans Treatment Court Program represents an effort to identify and address the unique needs of veterans living with a mental illness or substance abuse problem who have been arrested.

The program was developed to help veterans improve their quality of life and continue to be productive and responsible members of the community. The program is a voluntary alternative on the part of the participant to the traditional criminal justice system. The judge, court staff, Veterans Administration, legal counsel and treatment team offer participants guidance to successfully complete the program.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Increase effective cooperation between the criminal justice system and mental health and substance abuse treatment in our community.
- Assist participants struggling with a mental illness or substance abuse issue who have committed misdemeanor or felony crimes.
- More efficient case processing, improved access to public and veterans mental health treatment and substance abuse services.
- Improve well-being and quality of life.
- Reduce chance of recidivism through education.
- Improve public safety for community at large.

PROGRAM CRITERIA

Following arrest, participants are identified as eligible veterans through contact with the Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator. Eligibility for the program is determined through a series of screenings intended to protect public safety. Legal counsel explains the program and advises the participant in making a decision regarding participation.

A court supervision plan is developed cooperatively to specifically address the veteran's needs, taking into account existing community resources. The participant, treatment professionals, and counsel must together agree to the court supervision plan. Entry into Veterans Treatment Court is voluntary. Defense counsel continues to provide legal representation throughout the Program.

Successful completion of the court supervision plan results in closure of the case either through dismissal of the participant's charges or completion of the probation. Following closure of the case the participant graduates from Veterans Treatment Court. Failure to complete the court supervision plan or discharge from the program results in prosecution on the pending charges.

Veterans will be successfully linked with mental health and substance abuse providers that they can maintain for the future.

PROGRAM RULES

Requirements, not limited to:

- Regular court appearances.
- Remain alcohol, substance and non-prescribed medication free.
- Random drug and alcohol screens may be at own expense.
- Regular psychiatric and or substance abuse monitoring.
- Treatment recommendations must be followed.
- Take medications as prescribed by a physician.
- Follow all recommendations of the court supervision plan.

Regular contact with Outreach Specialist

PROGRAM COMPLETION

Probation may be terminated or continued on regular supervision. Participants will be successfully linked with mental health service providers that they can maintain for the future. Family and friends are invited to join the court as the Judge congratulates the participant for successfully completing the court supervision plan and achieving his/her goals.