

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Prince George's County Mental Health Court (MHC) is a community-based judicial program established for defendants with mental illness that integrates treatment into the resolution of criminal cases. The program uses a specialized court docket to institute a problem-solving approach rather than the traditional, adversarial court processes.

In order to graduate, each client must successfully complete all court obligations and treatment goals. Depending on a client's progress, he/she will attend MHC hearings every 1-8 weeks. MHC relies on individualized case plans, ongoing judicial monitoring, and close coordination with team members and community service providers to support our client population in this endeavor.

The Judge plays an integral role in the problem-solving model, and may use a variety of sanctions, incentives, and treatment responses to encourage program compliance. Lastly, MHC Case Managers work with clients and treatment providers to establish post-graduation supports through which long-term success for both the participant and the larger community may be achieved.

The District Court for Prince George's County's Mental Health Court is a collaborative effort of:

The District Court for Prince George's County

Office of Problem-Solving Courts
Administrative Office of the Courts

The Office of the State's Attorney

The Office of the Public Defender

Prince George's County Parole and Probation

Prince George's County Health Department, Behavioral Health Services

Prince George's County Department of Corrections

Prince George's County Police Department

Prince George's County Commissioners Office

Office of the Sheriff for Prince George's County

Prince George's County
Mental Health Court
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DISTRICT COURT FOR
PRINCE GEORGE'S
COUNTY

MENTAL HEALTH COURT

A THERAPEUTIC
APPROACH TO
CRIMINAL JUSTICE



Honorable Lisa A. Hall Johnson
Administrative Judge

Honorable Ann Wagner-Stewart
Coordinating Judge

MISSION STATEMENT

The Prince George's County District Court's Mental Health Court (MHC) strives to humanely and effectively address the needs of individuals with mental disorders in the criminal justice system. The program strives to promote engagement in treatment, improve quality of life, decrease recidivism, and increase community safety and awareness. Mental Health Court is a widely collaborative, community-based effort committed to providing access to resources, training, and expertise to address the unique needs of this population.

GOALS

- Identify defendants with mental illness;
- Improve access to public mental health treatment service;
- Improve the quality of life for people with mental illness charged with certain crimes;
- Reduce criminal involvement;
- Improve collaboration between the criminal justice and behavioral health systems;
- Make more efficient use of limited criminal justice and behavioral health resources;
- Expedite case processing; and
- Improve public safety

OUR PURPOSE

This Court works to direct eligible offenders with mental illness away from incarceration and into appropriate community treatment. Our purpose is to:

- Reduce inappropriate incarceration of individuals with mental illness;
- Promote their safety and well-being of individuals with mental illness;
- Slow the "revolving door" of criminal recidivism for individuals with mental illness; and
- Decrease the length and frequency of psychiatric hospitalization for individuals with mental illness

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

In order to be accepted into the Mental Health Court Program, a defendant must be:

- At least 18 years of age;
- Charged with a crime in the jurisdiction of the District 5 Court;
- Diagnosed with a mild to severe mental illness, developmental disability, or trauma-related disorder;
- Willing and able to participate in treatment services; and
- A voluntary participant

REFERRALS

Referrals to the MHC come from a variety of sources, including Judges, state or defense counsel, Commissioners, family members, or medical staff at the County Correctional Facility.

LINKS TO TREATMENT

MHC Case Managers may refer participants to both clinical and non-clinical support services. Clinical referrals include individual therapy, medication management, substance abuse treatment, or group/family counseling. Participants may also be connected to a variety of non-clinical community services depending on need, such as job training /education programs, case management or housing.

THE MENTAL HEALTH COURT TEAM

The MHC program offers a unique team approach to criminal justice. The court and participating agencies are committed to collaborating for the purpose of improving outcomes while increasing public safety. Members of the MHC team include a Judge, state's attorney, public defender, parole/probation and other monitoring personnel, MHC case managers, county core service agencies, and community treatment providers.