

Problem-solving Court Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

One of the foundations of the Problem-solving Court model is the establishment of a multi-disciplinary, non-adversarial, and collaborative team. This approach helps to ensure coordination in both supervision and treatment while preserving a defendant's right to due process.

The following sections provide a framework for understanding the roles and responsibilities of each team member on the Problem-solving Court team. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities, but rather recommended functions for team members.

Judge

1. Effectively leads the team in staffings and policy meetings
2. Maintains traditional court proceedings while ensuring program integrity in a non-adversarial atmosphere
3. Encourages motivation of the participant
4. Imposes a series of rewards and graduated sanctions to increase offender accountability and for desired behavior modification
5. Evaluates the current court processes and procedures and thereafter collaborates to develop innovative solutions and is a program advocate by utilizing his/her community leadership role to create interest and continued support for the program
6. Serves as the ultimate decision making authority on all Veterans Treatment Court decisions
7. Utilizes effective practices to assure procedural fairness in all problem-solving court activities

Coordinator:

1. Oversees the daily operations; initiates referral process to the court
2. Coordinates financial operations including participant fee collection, monitoring of any expenditures against treatment and drug testing allocation, and purchasing of supplies and other court materials
3. Submits monthly Utilization Report and assures completeness and accuracy of ISTARs data entry
4. Maintains policies and procedure activity
5. Maintains and tracks client progress (incentives and sanctions) through a data tracking system
6. Coordinates graduation ceremonies
7. Maintains program statistics and performance measures
8. Conducts quality assurance of court operations
9. Coordinates treatment and community services in the local community
10. Attends all court proceedings and participates in the team discussions for incentives, sanctions, graduation and termination decisions based on each participant's progress
11. Collects data and completes evaluation components that contain relevant information critical to the program's effectiveness to help leverage community resources
12. Complies with all applicable federal and state reporting guidelines

13. Works to ensure that the information system assists the team in monitoring the progress of the participant in the program and enhances the ability of the team to act immediately when there are gaps in service
14. Maintains or coordinates legal records and court proceedings throughout status review hearings, sends out the weekly docket in advance to the team members and coordinates with the jail in the transporting of offenders
15. Monitors program adherence to Standards and Guidelines of operation

Prosecutor:

1. Prepares criminal histories, police reports, and/or lab reports for staffing or referrals
2. Ensures community safety concerns by maintaining eligibility standards which focus on the benefits of treatment program outcomes
3. Seeks dispositions that will not only allow the participant to be successful but will promote public safety
4. Attends all staffings and court proceedings and participates in team discussions for incentives, sanctions, and graduation and termination decisions based on each participant's progress
5. Promotes the problem-solving court within the local legal and law enforcement community
6. Participates in training sessions related to the problem-solving court
7. Participates in the decision to dismiss participants who no longer meet eligibility criteria or who are failing to make adequate progress after a significant period of time in the program

Defense Counsel:

1. Informs and effectively advises the defendants of their legal rights, legal options, treatment options, legal program contract of conditions and sentencing outcomes while developing a relationship with the participant that promotes the individual's long term best interest
2. Advocates for fair and equal treatment of the participant
3. Participates in team meetings, graduations and attends non-adversarial staffings and court proceedings
4. Attends all staffings and participates in teams discussions for incentives, sanctions, graduation and termination decisions based on each participants progress
5. Participates in training sessions related to the problem-solving court

Misdemeanor/Felony Probation Officer:

1. Provides comprehensive supervision which includes but not limited to:
 - a. Conducting probation intakes and identifying risk factors,
 - b. Administering an LSI-R to each referral prior to his/her admission and share results with the team as part of eligibility screening
 - c. Routinely meeting with offenders to be re-assessed and completes subsequent LSI-R updates,
 - d. Keeping performance and data
 - e. Performing routine warrants checks
 - f. Monitoring compliance with all conditions of the court to include fines/fees, community service,

- g. Administering random drug screens
 - h. Conducting home contacts for compliance and progress
 - i. Coordinating with the team to reinforce participant compliance with terms of probation and any additional participation rules and requirements
2. Attends all staffings and court proceedings and participates in team discussions for incentives, sanctions, graduation and termination decisions based on each participants progress
 3. Participates in training sessions related to the problem-solving court

Treatment Provider:

1. Fosters a balanced approach in the staffings by offering a recovery-focused and strengths-based perspective regarding the court participants
2. Participates in court staffings, makes treatment recommendations to the court, and as appropriate, identifies and/or provides a continuum of care for participants while advocating on behalf of the client and for the integrity of the court
3. Devises appropriate levels and types of care, and phase expectations, and pre-determines appropriate responses to critical events with the clients (such as interventions after a relapse)
4. Participates in training sessions related to the problem-solving court
5. Assists in providing training in substance abuse, addiction, mental health, recovery and treatment methodologies in order to provide the team with a meaningful basis to implement incentives and sanctions
6. Demonstrates a full understanding of addiction, mental illness, dual diagnosis, recovery and pharmacology and applies that knowledge to respond to compliance in a therapeutically appropriate manner
7. Advocates for participants to receive the most appropriate level of care available
8. Provides documentation and clear explanations of evidenced-based screening tools used, substance abuse curriculum and weekly group sessions, and other programmatic information on participant numbers, group sizes, and billing
9. Facilitates treatment with motivational strategies and the application of evidence-based treatment intervention specifically targeting the needs of the military populations

Law Enforcement Officer

1. Acts as a liaison between patrol officers and the problem-solving court
2. Educates law enforcement officers on identification and recommendations of potential program participants using the sequential intercept model
3. Coordinates and works closely with Probation and Parole on field contacts with participants
4. Participates in staffings and graduations
5. Assists with locating and arresting participants who have absconded from the program and have an active warrant
6. Participates in training sessions related to the Problem Solving Court
7. Law Enforcement officers participating should have completed POST certified Crisis Intervention Team training

Specific to Veterans' Courts:

Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist/Coordinator:

1. Determines discharge status from the military and veteran status eligibility and reports this information to the Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator
2. Performs initial jail screening and makes referrals to the Veterans Treatment Court program
3. Refers veterans to appropriate local agencies for emergency relief/needs
4. Creates interagency links to address client's ancillary needs in the areas of culture, age and gender needs, medical and mental health provision, substance abuse, educational, vocational, skills training and employment training and placement
5. Provides or facilitates comprehensive mental health and/or substance abuse evaluations and intakes in a timely manner
6. Provides or facilitates referral to evidenced-based rehabilitative therapy sessions, case management, and monitoring for Veteran Treatment Court participants in keeping with their individualized treatment plan to achieve stability and holistic recovery of the participant
7. Within the bounds of ethics and legalities and releases of confidentiality, Veteran Treatment Court providers share information regarding the progress of a participant to all Veteran Treatment Court team members, provides vital information to the Veteran Treatment Court team to utilize best practice and evidence-based methods to veteran specific issues/challenges
8. Provides ongoing verbal and/or written treatment progress reports on participants for the team to assist in determining appropriate sanctions or incentives
9. Attends all staffings and participates in team discussions for incentives, sanctions, graduation and termination decisions on each Veterans Treatment Court participants progress
10. Participates in training sessions related to Veterans Treatment Court

Peer Mentor Role

1. Encourages, guides and provides social support for the veteran participants

Duties

1. Attend court sessions with participants when scheduled
2. Participate in and lead mentoring sessions with veteran participants when assigned by the judge
3. Be supportive and understanding of the difficulties returning veterans are facing
4. Aid the participants as much as possible to ameliorate their concerns around court procedures
5. Coach veteran participants toward access and navigation of the Veterans Affairs Systems
6. Be supportive and helpful with other Peer Mentors
7. Work respectfully and professionally with the veteran participants and other Peer Mentors

Veteran Mentor Coordinator

1. Attends court sessions when scheduled
2. Participates in and leads mentoring sessions with veterans when assigned by the Judge
3. Supportive and understanding of the difficulties veterans face
4. Assist with the veterans as much as possible to resolve their concerns around the court procedures as well as interactions with the Veteran's Administrative System
5. Supportive and helpful to the other mentors within the program
6. Arrange recognition events for veterans
7. Make recommendations for ongoing mentor training
8. Veteran Mentor Coordinators will also be responsible for individual and group supervision as well as scheduling mentors to be present during the court session
9. Participates in a limited capacity as determined by the Judge and Court Coordinator in staffings
10. Liaison with the Veterans Justices Outreach Specialist/Coordinator

Veterans Service Officer:

1. Assists in determining eligibility for VA benefits
2. Makes referrals to the VA Medical Center
3. Attends staffing and provides information and perspectives regarding community adjustment
4. Participates in training sessions related to Veterans Treatment Court