



Media Advisory

Alaska Court System, 825 W. 4th Avenue, Anchorage 99501

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Alaska's Therapeutic Courts Recognize National Recovery Month – September 2019 –

Anchorage, Alaska, September 17, 2019 - Throughout the month of September, Alaska's therapeutic courts are participating in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Recovery Month (<https://www.recoverymonth.gov/>). During Recovery Month, SAMHSA, and Alaska's therapeutic courts, work to increase public awareness and understanding of mental health and substance use disorders, and to celebrate recovery.

Therapeutic court participants and graduates are organizing and attending local events to celebrate Recovery Month. Fairbanks Wellness Court co-hosted a Recovery Carnival and sober concert (September 14), and Juneau's Great Bear Recovery Collective has organized Hands Across the Bridge, a chain of people in recovery reciting the Serenity Prayer on the Douglas bridge (September 21), as well as a Recovery Fest on September 28.

As another way of raising awareness, Alaska's therapeutic courts invite the media and members of the public to observe these courts in action to learn more about how the courts operate and to hear how this collaborative process promotes participants' recovery journeys. To observe a court session, contact the Project Coordinator, or complete the attached media release form to photograph, film, record or stream a court session.

Therapeutic courts are an alternative justice model. Eligible individuals may choose to participate in a therapeutic court in lieu of incarceration. Participants must attend treatment and recovery support groups, meet regularly with a probation officer, and appear for frequent in-court status hearings. A collaborative court team made up of a supervising judge, district attorney, defense attorney, probation officer, and/or substance abuse or mental health treatment provider oversees and closely monitors participants. A therapeutic court team meets weekly to review participants' progress and encourages participants' success during court hearings.

Two of Alaska's therapeutic courts are celebrating more than 20 years of helping people towards recovery: the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project was established in July, 1998, and the Anchorage Municipal Wellness Court began in August, 1999.

Attached is a summary of Alaska's therapeutic courts, including the location of the court, the type of court, the judges presiding over the court, the target population, and the Project Coordinators for the court. More information can be found on the court system's website:

<http://courts.alaska.gov/therapeutic/index.htm>.

Summary of Existing Therapeutic Courts

Location	Type of Court	Assigned Judge	Capacity	Target Population	Month/Year Court Began	Project Coordinator
Anchorage	Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project	Washington/ Franciosi	75	Misdemeanor and felony offenders with mental illness, co-occurring disorders, developmental disabilities & other related disorders	July 1998	Kate Sumeey ksumey@akcourts.us (907)264-0886
Anchorage	Municipal Wellness Court	Easter/ Wallace	30	People convicted of DUI and alcohol related Municipal misdemeanor offenses	August 1999	Jennifer Fredericks jfredericks@akcourts.us (907)264-0892
Anchorage	Felony Drug Court	Easter/ Morse	20	People convicted of non-violent drug and drug related felony offenses	June 2001	Jennifer Fredericks jfredericks@akcourts.us (907)264-0892
Anchorage	Felony DUI Court	Easter/ Morse	40	People convicted of felony DUI offenses	December 2001	Jennifer Fredericks jfredericks@akcourts.us (907)264-0892
Anchorage	CINA Therapeutic Court	Guidi	20	Parents with CINA cases with alcohol related substance abuse problems	July 2014	Rachel Varela rvarela@akcourts.us (907)264-0466
Anchorage	Veterans Court	Wallace	25	Veterans with State and Municipal misdemeanor and felony alcohol/drug related cases	July 2004	Desireé Sang dsang@akcourts.us (907)264-0466
Bethel	Therapeutic Court	Haas	20	People convicted of DUI and alcohol related misdemeanor and felony offenses	June 2002	Kimberly Weston-Smith kweston@akcourts.us (907)543-1121
Fairbanks	Wellness Court	Hammers/ Christian	30	People convicted of DUI and alcohol-related misdemeanor and felony offenses	August 2007	Amy Bollaert abollaert@akcourts.us (907)452-9307
Juneau	Therapeutic Court	Swanson	15	People convicted of DUI and alcohol related misdemeanor and felony offenses	June 2005	Michelle Delkettie mdelkettie@akcourts.us (907)463-4756

Juneau	Juneau Coordinated Resources Project	Swanson	15	Misdemeanor offenders with mental illness, co-occurring disorders, developmental disabilities & other related disorders	May 2012	Michelle Delkettie mdelkettie@akcourts.us (907)463-4756
Kenai	Henu' Community Wellness Court	Wells/ Wells	20	People convicted of drug and alcohol-related misdemeanor and felony offenses	December 2016	Shera Burg sburg@akcourts.us (907)283-8552
Palmer	Palmer Coordinated Resources Project	Cagle/ Estelle	25	Misdemeanor offenders with mental illness, co-occurring disorders, developmental disabilities & other related disorders	March 2005	Kristin Hull khull@akcourts.us (907)746-8142
Palmer	Families with Infants & Toddlers	Woodman/ Zwink	12 Families	Parents with CINA cases with children ages 0-3	December 2017	Jessica Clarkson jclarkson@akcourts.us (907)746-8183
Palmer	Wellness Court	Kristiansen/ Zwink	30	People convicted of drug and alcohol-related felony offenses and PACE referrals	March 2017	Kristin Hull khull@akcourts.us (907)746-8142

*Courts highlighted in blue began as separate courts, but were combined and are now collectively referred to as the Anchorage Wellness Court.