



TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
JUDICIAL OFFICE • KENDALL COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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PRESS RELEASE
MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Chief Judge Robert Pilmer and Kendall County State’s Attorney Eric Weis announce that the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts has approved the certification of the Kendall County Mental Health Court. Judge Pilmer and State’s Attorney Weis appreciate the support of the Kendall County Board for this new problem solving court. Judge Pilmer says, “The new Mental Health Court could not be undertaken without the support of the Kendall County and the initiative of the State’s Attorney in recommending it to the County Board members. As seen throughout the nation, more individuals charged with criminal offenses have underlying mental health issues, which if successfully addressed, can result in their leading a productive life in the community.” State’s Attorney Weis stated “I am proud of the efforts by Kendall County and the Judiciary in bringing the new Mental Health Court to Kendall County. The Mental Health Court is a much needed piece of the criminal justice system and has been in the planning process for years. The Mental Health Court will allow for offenders to be held accountable for their actions while receiving mental health services to address mental health issues to prevent recidivism. It is a win-win for all involved.”

Kendall County will soon begin serving court involved individuals in a new Mental Health Court program, the second Problem Solving Court to be launched in Kendall County.

This program, which includes a Veteran's Treatment Court track, will serve individuals with mental health needs who have become involved in the criminal justice system as a result.

The Kendall County Mental Health Court team is excited to have this program available, as stakeholders in the community have increasingly recognized the importance of better serving individuals with mental health needs in the criminal justice system. Incarceration and convictions alone do not address mental health symptoms, leaving the individual with unmet needs and a greater likelihood of ongoing criminal justice involvement. The Mental Health Court and Veteran's Treatment Court track will allow those individuals to have frequent contact with the Judge and team, while also getting their treatment needs addressed. The goal is to build connections to treatment and other support networks in the community to prevent an individual from having recurring contact with the criminal justice system after completion of the program. The Kendall County Mental Health Court will be a partnership between Kendall County Judiciary, Health Department, Probation and Court Services, State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Sheriff's Office, and in the case of individuals in the Veteran's Treatment Court track, a representative from Hines VA will be involved.

In order to participate in the program, an individual must be 18 or older, live in the Kendall County area, be a United States citizen or legal resident, and have a pending misdemeanor or felony determined during the screening and assessment process to be related to a mental health need. For the Veteran's Treatment Court track applicants must be a veteran or service member (former active duty or reserves) and eligible for VA Healthcare Benefits as determined by the Veteran's Justice Outreach Specialist, and can apply to the program with a mental health and/or substance use need. The program is voluntary, and an individual must agree to participate in treatment before receiving approval from the Court to enter the program.

The Mental Health Court team is eager to begin serving individuals in the program now that we have been certified by the Illinois Supreme Court to begin operating. We are hopeful that this will be one avenue by which people with treatment needs can receive comprehensive services to help them achieve their goals and avoid future criminal justice involvement.

Inquiries about Mental Health Court, Veteran's Treatment Court track, or the referral process should be directed to Melissa Moore, Problem Solving Court Coordinator, at 630-553-4926.