



STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
22ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



November 15, 2010

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Drug Court Development Continues

In collaboration with the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office, McHenry County Public Defender's Office, McHenry County Court Services, McHenry County Sheriff's Office, McHenry County Chiefs of Police Association, McHenry County Bar Association and area treatment providers the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County continues as the McHenry County Drug Court Taskforce to work towards an operational Drug Court program in McHenry County.

A drug court is a highly specialized, multifaceted collaborative effort, overseen by the court, which diverts individuals who commit crime and are addicted to drugs or alcohol, from the traditional criminal justice system. These individuals will be identified early, screened and upon acceptance be placed into this intensely supervised and highly structured program. The program will target individuals who have a high risk of committing new offenses and a high need for treatment and other services to address the participant's individual issues.

Referrals for Drug Court are expected to come from probation officers, public defenders, private attorneys and police officers. Defendants being assessed for the program must meet program eligibility criteria including; McHenry County residency, age of 17 years or older at the time of the offense, a current felony offense and alcohol/drug dependence as well as statutory eligibility outlined in 730 ILCS 166/20. DUI charges will not be accepted into the Drug Court Program. If general eligibility requirements are met, defendants will undergo evaluations to determine their level of criminogenic risk/needs and substance use.

As part of the specialized docket programs of the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County, a special program track is being developed specifically for veterans. Nationwide, brave men and women who have been serving their country are often returning home with issues related to their service. Unfortunately, these issues often result in their involvement with the court system due to substance abuse and/or mental health related problem. This track will identify veterans early, provide services specific to veterans and assist these individuals with treatment. As part of the track development the Drug Court Taskforce is seeking a grant from the National Drug Court Institute, Veterans Treatment Courts Mentor Court Program which would allow members of the Taskforce to observe an operational Veterans Treatment Court.

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The mission of the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County is to be the guardian of life, liberty and property to all seeking access to justice, by adhering to practices that ensure equality, fairness and confidence in the judiciary.

The McHenry County Drug Court Taskforce has and will continue to meet frequently in order to collaboratively develop policies, procedures and discuss strategies relating to the Drug Court program. Throughout 2011 members of the Taskforce will undertake community education opportunities which will include; law enforcement, attorneys and members of the public. Any public activities will be announced and Taskforce members encourage community involvement and attendance.

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