

CERTIFICATION FAQ

State Court Administrative Office
Updated: March 13, 2017

1. What is certification?

Drug courts, mental health courts, and veterans treatment courts each have a national model. Following these models is what leads to good outcomes. Courts that do not follow the model can actually negatively affect outcomes such as recidivism. Certification is a way to ensure that all problem-solving courts in Michigan are following the model, thus leading to better outcomes for participants. It also allows us to protect our sources of funding. If programs are not implementing standards and best practices, their data will not be included in reports of the results of our problem-solving court programs that are used by funders. Finally, participants, attorneys, the public, and judges who are transferring supervision of participants into neighboring courts will know what the participant will experience.

Certification is a way to ensure that courts are following the model. Only courts that have implemented standards and best practices will be certified by the State Court Administrative Office.

2. What are the consequences of not becoming certified?

Possible consequences of not being certified include ineligibility for state grant funds or letters of support from SCAO in order to apply for federal grants; restrictions on issuing an ignition interlock restricted driver's license in drug/DWI/RDWI/veterans court; inability to collect program fees; ineligibility to offer dismissals of cases under PSC statutes; and not being recognized by the State Court Administrative Office or the Michigan Department of State as a problem-solving court. The determination of the consequences rests with the legislature and will be determined by a statutory amendment.

3. What problem-solving court programs are involved in this new certification initiative?

In FY 2018, certification goes into effect for all adult drug court programs, DWI court programs, drug/DWI hybrid programs, RDWI programs, and family dependency drug court programs. Since it starts in FY 2018, the program types just named will *apply* for certification from April 24 to June 2, 2017. Certification will go into effect for VTC and MHC in FY 2019.

Juvenile courts (drug and mental health) will not begin the certification process until after the results of the National Center for State Courts study that is scheduled to end in 2021.

4. What grant types are affected by this new certification initiative?

If you have a drug, DWI, RDWI, hybrid, or family dependency court program – *whether or not you receive a grant* – you will need to apply for certification in order to become a certified drug court.

For those that do receive a grant, the following grant types will move to certification applications in FY 2018:

- MDCGP (except Juvenile and Planning)
- OHSP (except Planning)
- Byrne JAG

Additionally, the following grant types will move to certification applications in FY 2019:

- MVTCGP
- MMHCGP (except Juvenile)

5. How does my court apply for certification?

If you want your adult drug, DWI, RDWI, hybrid, or family dependency court program to be a certified program in Michigan, you must submit a certification application in WebGrants each year. This year, the application opens on April 24 and is due on June 2, 2017. For those familiar with grant applications, the certification application should take you less time to complete. We've simplified it as much as possible by replacing lengthy text boxes with drop-down options, check boxes, and yes-or-no questions.

6. How does my court apply for grant funding?

Courts that are part of the certification process can apply for grant funding by submitting in WebGrants a grant request, including budget information and a few answers to financial questions. This grant request is in addition to your certification application.

If you are not requesting grant funding, you will submit only the certification application.

Courts that are not yet part of the certification process will apply for grant funding as usual in FY 18. Applications are open as follows:

Adult Drug/DWI/RDWI/Hybrid/Family Dependency Courts, AND Juvenile Drug Courts (MDCGP, Byrne JAG, OHSP)	Applications open April 24, 2017, through June 2, 2017
VTC, MHC, SSSPP	Applications open April 3, 2017, to May 5, 2017

7. What happens after I submit an application for certification?

Over the summer, SCAO staff will read and score all of the certification applications and budget requests and in September, will issue provisional certification to all programs that submitted certification applications. SCAO staff will also determine grant amounts and make those awards in September. So, no matter how many standards and best practices your program has implemented, by October 1, 2017, your program will be provisionally certified and eligible to receive grant funding.

From there, all of the programs will be divided into four groups, and each group will follow one of four certification cycles. The certification cycle that your program is on will drive the timeline for an onsite review and how long provisional certification will last for your program.

8. Who do I contact with additional questions?

You can contact the State Court Administrative Office at 517-373-4835 or trialcourtservices@courts.mi.gov.