



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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## **Michigan Family Treatment Court Receives Major Federal Grant**

*Life-changing, individualized program helps southwestern Michigan families affected by substance abuse*

CASSOPOLIS, MICHIGAN, November 14, 2019 – The Cass County Circuit Court announced that its Family Treatment Court (FTC) has received a \$746,482 three-year federal enhancement grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grant Program. Cass County FTC was one of only six grantees across the country, with the others in Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, New York, and Rhode Island.

The funds will be used to enhance the court’s efforts to improve outcomes for children and families who are involved with the child welfare system and who are affected by parental substance use.

“Understanding that addiction is a disease and that treatment, along with management and intensive supervision, is necessary for successful rehabilitation,” said Chief Judge Susan L. Dobrich, founding and presiding judge of the FTC. “This enhancement grant will enable our program to provide additional evidence-based treatment services.”

“Cass County Family Treatment Court has a long record of extending a helping hand to families who are struggling to remain whole and overcome issues relating to substance abuse,” said Justice Elizabeth T. Clement, who serves as the MSC liaison to problem-solving courts. “I wholeheartedly applaud the work of Judge Dobrich and her entire team because they are engaging with their community in the most meaningful way of all: turning lives around.”

Chief Judge Dobrich explained that Cass County’s FTC does not use a “cookie-cutter approach,” but rather, it implements an individualized treatment plan for each participant. The program adheres to the Family Treatment Court model, which is based on the principle of a multisystem collaborative approach between courts, child welfare, and substance use disorder treatment providers. This model ensures that families affected by parental substance use, including opioids, receive a comprehensive and coordinated response complimented by a range of family-centered services to meet their family’s unique and complex needs. In 2019, approximately 500 FTCs operated in 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

Cass County FTC is one of Michigan’s 188 problem-solving courts, which focus on providing treatment and intense supervision to offenders as an alternative to incarceration. These include drug and sobriety, mental health, veterans, and other nontraditional courts. The Michigan Supreme Court assists trial courts in the management of these programs by providing training, education, operational standards, monitoring, certification requirements, and funding. The Supreme Court recently awarded more than \$11 million to 99 drug and sobriety treatment court programs across Michigan, including Cass County FTC.

According to [FY 2018 data](#), graduates of adult drug court programs were two times less likely to be convicted of a new offense within three years of admission. Also, unemployment dropped dramatically among all drug and sobriety court graduates: by 100 percent for adult drug court graduates; and by well over three-quarters for sobriety and hybrid (drug/sobriety) court graduates.