

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

contact: Marcia McBrien | (517) 373-0129

follow the Office of Public Information on Twitter @CourtInfo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mental health court bills hailed by Chief Justice Young as “good government reform”

LANSING, MI, December 30, 2013 – Today’s signing of mental health court legislation represents “common-sense, good government reform” – and a collaboration by all three branches of Michigan state government, Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. said today.

“This reform shows what good government can accomplish, especially when all three branches of government work as partners,” said Young. “Michigan courts showed, through pilot programs, the worth of these mental health court programs in reducing recidivism and returning offenders to productive, responsible lives. The benefits – to the offenders, to their families, and to society – are far-ranging and profound. Mental health courts are changing lives.”

Young said mental health courts are part of the Michigan judiciary’s reform plan, which emphasizes “public service, efficiency, technology, and evidence-based practices – such as mental health courts. I am thankful that the executive and legislative branch share this vision.”

A three-year study of 10 Michigan mental health courts conducted by the State Court Administrative Office found that participants re-offended at significantly lower levels than comparable groups of offenders who do not participate in mental health court. Mental health court participants’ recidivism rate was 300 percent lower compared to similar offenders. The difference persisted even after the courts no longer supervised the offenders: 30 months later, over a year after graduation, participants had a recidivism rate of 18.97 percent, compared to 43.22 percent of the comparison group. Mental health court participants also enjoyed improved mental health, education, and job outcomes, the survey found.

For more on mental health courts and the study, see http://www.courts.mi.gov/News-Events/press_releases/Documents/Mental-Health-Courts-Survey-PR3.pdf.

-- MSC --