



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Problem-Solving Courts Save Lives, Reduce Crime

Programs help military veterans, individuals with mental illness and addiction

LANSING, MI, June 25, 2020 – Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack today announced publication of the [FY 2019 Problem-Solving Courts Annual Report](#), highlighting the success of Michigan’s 199 problem-solving courts (PSCs). In particular, the report said that adult drug court graduates are more than two times **less** likely to be convicted of a new offense within three years of admission to a program, and adult mental health court graduates were about two times **less** likely to be convicted of a new offense within three years.

“Problem-solving courts bring courts and community together to achieve common goals of stronger families, safer neighborhoods, and smarter justice,” said Chief Justice McCormack. “The data in this report lead us to an obvious conclusion: These life-saving courts and the dedicated judges, court staff, and treatment professionals who run them must be a part of criminal justice reform. Diverting more offenders with addiction or mental health issues to treatment can make a profound difference in their lives and fundamentally transform our justice system to be more accessible, engaged, and connected to the communities they serve.”

“I have attended graduation ceremonies all across Michigan, and with each one, my belief gets stronger that this model of justice in the community is the right one,” said Justice Elizabeth T. Clement, the Court’s liaison to PSCs. “Every time, at least one graduate will tell me that this court literally saved their life. But they do even more than that, and this report documents their remarkable record of success. That’s why the Court is so grateful to the judges, staff, and community partners who work so hard to help their neighbors get their lives back together.”

Other key [report findings](#):

- Sobriety court graduates were nearly three times **less** likely to be convicted of a new offense within three years of admission to a program.
- Unemployment dropped dramatically among all PSC graduates:
 - Reduced by 98 percent for adult drug court graduates;
 - Reduced by 88 percent for hybrid (drug/sobriety) court graduates;
 - Reduced by 82 percent for sobriety court graduates;
 - Reduced by 70 percent for family dependency court graduates;
 - Reduced by 87 percent for veterans treatment courts graduates; and
 - Reduced by more than half for all adult mental health court graduates (62 percent for district, 51 percent for circuit).
- Virtually all participants in mental health courts reported an improvement in their mental health status, making their lives more stable and productive.
- Michigan remains a national leader with 27 veterans treatment courts.

Problem-solving courts 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 Supreme Court, through its State Court Administrative Office, assists trial court judges in the management of these courts by providing training, education, operational standards, monitoring, certification requirements, and funding. Find out more about PSCs [here](#).

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