



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Leads the Nation in Serving Military Veterans

LANSING, MI, May 6, 2016 – Highlighting Military Appreciation Month, the Michigan Supreme Court notes that Michigan leads the nation with 23 veterans treatment courts to support veterans who have struggled with the transition back into civilian life.

“What happens to our service men and women when they return home isn’t always a happy ending. Many continue to fight internal battles long after they leave the military and some become entangled in our criminal justice system,” said Justice Bridget M. McCormack. “In the past, courts were not equipped to deal with their unique challenges. By connecting veterans with the help they need, Michigan’s treatment courts are solving problems and saving lives.”

Michigan veterans treatment court graduates have also experienced improved job prospects after completing the program. According to a forthcoming report from the Supreme Court, the unemployment rate among graduates of veterans treatment courts in 2015 was reduced by more than half.

Under the Supreme Court’s strategic priority of improving outcomes, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) supports these courts statewide with funding, most recently granting \$500,000 to veterans treatment courts across Michigan in 2016. In addition, SCAO monitors performance of these courts and provides management assistance.

SCAO has also partnered with the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency and Western Michigan University Cooley Law School to produce a [manual for Michigan judges](#) who are interested in starting a veterans treatment court program. SCAO is currently working with several courts that are pursuing such programs, as the need continues to grow in Michigan.

Veterans treatment courts promote sobriety, recovery, and stability through a coordinated response that involves collaboration with a variety of traditional partners found in drug courts and mental health courts, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, volunteer veteran mentors, and organizations that support veterans and veterans’ families. These courts also link participants to educational resources, job training, housing, and other community services. *For more information, visit www.courts.mi.gov/vetcourt.*

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