



news

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 30, 2020

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Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice accredits 1st and 4th Judicial District treatment courts

DENVER – Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan B. Coats recently accredited the 1st Judicial District Family Integrated Treatment (FIT) Court and the 4th Judicial District Recovery Court, which combines the Adult Drug Court and Healthy, Engaged, and Living Sober (HEALS) Court. The accreditation signifies that a treatment court has proven a demonstrated fidelity to evidence-based and proven practices, and that its work is true to the fundamental practices for problem solving courts as outlined in the Colorado Problem Solving Court Standards.

The 1st Judicial District FIT Court is a collaborative program offering families the support, services, and treatment necessary to assist parents in establishing and maintaining sobriety while providing safety for their children. FIT Court strives to push families to look beyond compliance and abstinence, encouraging them to make a commitment to the lifestyle of recovery. FIT Court was established in 2008 by Colorado Supreme Court Justice Brian Boatright, who was then a district court judge, and Judge Gail Meinster, a district court judge currently presiding over the FIT Court docket.

Using comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation programs, the mission of the 4th Judicial District Recovery Court is to serve the community and promote public safety by finding treatment for those who commit crimes because of clinically diagnosed substance use disorders. Approximately 170 parents have successfully completed FIT Court with 41 parents currently enrolled.

The 4th Judicial District Recovery Court is a redesigned drug court program, combining two courts: Adult Drug Court and HEALS Court. The original drug court in the 4th Judicial

District was one of the first drug courts in Colorado, established in 1999. Recovery Court team professionals, led by Magistrate Daphne Burlingame, include court staff, probation officers, treatment providers, law enforcement, and representatives from the District Attorney's Office and the Office of the Public Defender.

Recovery Court currently serves approximately 300 participants per year. In 2019, the program graduated 48 participants. In all, Recovery Court has graduated more than 1,000 participants. These individuals successfully completed a minimum of two years of intensive probation, multiple levels of treatment services, and have regained their lives through employers, families and community.

To pursue accreditation, a program applies to the Colorado Supreme Court Problem Solving Court Advisory Committee for review. After submission, the Advisory Committee may conduct a site visit to the program and may request additional information from the applicant. Following a review of the application, additional questions and a site visit, the Committee votes on whether to recommend accreditation. The Committee's recommendation to accredit a program is sent to the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court for approval. Once approved by the Chief Justice, the accreditation lasts for five years, with subsequent re-accreditation every three years thereafter.

Nearly 80 problem-solving courts are in operation around Colorado including adult and juvenile drug courts, family treatment drug courts, DUI courts, adult and juvenile mental health courts, veteran treatment courts, and truancy courts. For more information on problem solving courts, or to review the description of the accreditation program or the accreditation application, readers can visit www.coloradoproblemsolvingcourts.org