Dear treatment court family,

In these unprecedented times, it is so important we rally behind what brings our communities together. As treatment court practitioners, we are blessed to be surrounded by positive stories of hope and redemption. Even now, these stories hold the power to uplift, engage, and inspire.

**Now more than ever, they are stories worth telling.**

By taking the time to open this toolkit, I already know you’re ready to share the story of your treatment court. Whether you are court staff, a program graduate, or an interested community member, we all have a treatment court story to tell – one that’s unique and special to us.

This National Drug Court Month will look different than any other. That’s ok! Inside this kit you’ll find a wealth of information on ways you can bring attention to your programs while keeping your staff and participants safe and healthy. Through social media, proclamations, op-eds, and the #DrugCourtMonth campaign, you can bring your treatment court stories directly to your community, spreading light when it’s needed most.

As always, NADCP is here to serve you. If you need assistance beyond what’s in the toolkit, just ask. We want to amplify your work to the nation, so be sure to tag us on social media, as well as send us the photos and media stories you collect. Let us help your community tell its treatment court story!

By the end of May, we want the world to know your programs are successfully leading people out of the justice system and into long-term recovery.

This National Drug Court Month and all year round, thank you.

Sincerely,

Carson Fox
Chief Executive Officer
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With the outbreak of COVID-19, consult local health officials and visit cdc.gov/coronavirus for recommendations and policies on holding events.
WHAT’S YOUR TREATMENT COURT STORY?

This May, NADCP wants to tell your treatment court story. Help us flood social media with powerful images that capture the stories of transformation happening every day in treatment courts across the country. You may even find your image displayed at RISE20!

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

1. GET YOUR SIGN

Download and print the official #DrugCourtMonth sign. It can also be found at nadcp.org/advocacy/ndcm

2. WRITE YOUR MESSAGE

In big, clear letters, write a few words that describe your treatment court story. Hint: use a thick permanent marker to make your word(s) stand out on camera.

3. TAKE A PHOTO

Have someone snap a photo of you holding your sign. Make sure your photo is landscape and the word(s) on your sign are clear in the photo!

4. POST AND SHARE

Post your photo to social media using the hashtag #DrugCourtMonth and/or sign a release form and upload it at nadcp.org/advocacy/ndcm

Treatment courts touch the lives of so many, so get everyone involved! Ask your graduates, team, and members of the community to take part. Together, let’s tell our stories!
My story is about . . .
HOW TO GRAB THE MEDIA’S ATTENTION

The lifesaving work your court is doing is newsworthy. With May designated National Drug Court Month, it’s especially true. Start planning now so you can craft something special for your local media outlets to pick up or cover.

To make sure your court is prepared to manage the media and the message, designate a media coordinator and a spokesperson for your court. The media coordinator is responsible for identifying and contacting media for your court. The media spokesperson is the individual providing quotes and interviews to the media. The spokesperson must be knowledgeable about your court and able to speak from a position of authority. This is often the judge but could be another key member of the team.

TWO WAYS TO GET NOTICED

1. SEND A MEDIA ADVISORY

- Make a single strong point clearly and persuasively. Your first paragraph should draw the reader in, but if you choose to open with an anecdote, get to the point quickly.
- Make a specific recommendation about what’s needed to ensure your court can operate effectively.
- Follow up. If you haven’t had a response from the opinion editor in one week, or if your piece is time-sensitive, follow up with a phone call to be sure it was received, and ask about its status.

2. ISSUE A PROCLAMATION

- Ask your governor, county commissioners, city council, mayor, or even judge to make a proclamation declaring May as Drug Court Month.
- Send your proclamation to media outlets to let them know your community is recognizing National Drug Court Month!

We’re here to help! If you need assistance with media outreach or drafting an op-ed or media advisory, contact Brooke Glisson, NADCP associate director of communications, at bglisson@allrise.org.
Celebrating National Drug Court Month

A courtroom is not a place where you expect to find scenes of celebration and tears of joy. Unless, of course, it’s drug court. This May, drug courts throughout [state] will join more than 4,000 such programs nationwide in celebrating National Drug Court Month. This year alone, more than 150,000 individuals nationwide who entered the justice system due to addiction will receive lifesaving treatment and the chance to repair their lives, reconnect with their families, and find long-term recovery. National Drug Court Month is a celebration of the lives restored by drug court, and it sends the powerful message that these programs must be expanded to reach more people in need.

More than 30 years ago, the first drug court opened its doors with a simple premise: Rather than continue to allow individuals with long histories of addiction and crime to cycle through the justice system at great expense to the public, use the leverage of the court to keep them engaged in treatment long enough to be successful. Today, drug courts and other treatment courts have proven that a combination of accountability and compassion saves lives while also saving valuable resources and reducing exorbitant criminal justice costs.

[Insert a brief graduate success story. Example: Several years ago, a young woman entered our treatment court. After years of struggling with a substance use disorder, she resorted to stealing to support her addiction. She was arrested numerous times, but nothing changed. She was facing years in prison when she got the chance to participate in our treatment court.

In treatment court, she met regularly with a case manager and received rigorous treatment and counseling. With the help of the court team, including community-based treatment providers, she began to put her life back together. While in the program, we helped her enroll in college and find part-time work. She completed the treatment court program and went on to get her bachelor’s degree and reconnect with her family.

Today, she has no criminal record holding her back. She is happy, healthy, employed and contributing to our community.]

This is just one of the thousands of individual stories that demonstrate why treatment courts are so critical in the effort to address addiction and related crime. And the scientific research agrees: Numerous studies have found that treatment courts reduce crime and drug use and save money. Research shows treatment courts also improve education, employment, housing, financial stability, and family reunification, which reduces foster care placements.

Treatment courts represent a compassionate approach to the ravages of addiction. This year’s National Drug Court Month celebration should signal that the time has come to reap the economic and societal benefits of expanding this proven budget solution to all in need.
SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS treatment courts have been restoring lives and families for more than three decades; and
WHEREAS there are now more than 4,000 treatment courts nationwide; and
WHEREAS treatment courts are the cornerstone of justice reform sweeping the nation; and
WHEREAS treatment courts have served 1.5 million individuals; and
WHEREAS they are now recognized as the most successful justice system intervention in our nation’s history; and
WHEREAS they save an average of $6,000 for every individual they serve; and
WHEREAS treatment courts significantly improve substance use disorder treatment outcomes, substantially reduce addiction and related crime, and do so at less expense than any other criminal justice strategy; and
WHEREAS treatment courts improve education, employment, housing, and financial stability, promote family reunification, reduce foster care placements, and increase the rate of addicted mothers delivering babies who are fully drug free; and
WHEREAS treatment courts facilitate community-wide partnerships, bringing together public safety and public health professionals; and
WHEREAS treatment courts demonstrate that when one person rises out of substance use and crime, we all rise.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that __________________ declares that Drug Court Month be established during the month of May.
BE CONNECTED

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Social media is one of the best ways to make your court program visible to the community it serves. Done right, social media is an indispensable tool to promote your impact, engage elected officials, broaden support, strategically connect with partner agencies, and make your voices heard.

FOUR WAYS TO MAKE SOCIAL MEDIA WORK FOR YOU:

1. USE WHAT’S ALREADY IN PLACE

If your state supreme court, judicial district, or circuit have social media accounts, reach out to the individuals responsible for them and ask them to help you promote National Drug Court Month by sharing your program’s positive news, events, and success stories.

2. GET THE ATTENTION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Most elected officials and all members of Congress have social media accounts. Click here to get your members’ social media information, and don’t forget to thank them publicly for their support.

3. TAP INTO NADCP’S VAST RESOURCES

Use the samples provided to generate content, and follow our All Rise and Justice For Vets Facebook pages and All Rise and Justice For Vets Twitter accounts for content you can easily share and retweet. Our YouTube channel also has our powerful Voices of Reform video series, celebrity PSAs, conference clips, media compilation videos and much more.

4. LET US HELP YOU

Tag us on Facebook or Twitter so that we can like, share, or retweet your content. And send us your photos, videos, and media coverage so that we can promote your great work!

Remember that posts on social media (including text, photos, and videos) are public content. Put a system in place to ensure that content posted or shared is factual, appropriate, and in accordance with the principles and responsibilities of your court and the U.S. judicial system.
SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS

This National Drug Court Month, [treatment court] joins more than 4,000 treatment courts across the country to celebrate leading people out of the justice system and into long-term recovery!

It’s National Drug Court Month! The [treatment court] is saving lives and reducing crime by offering evidence-based treatment and accountability to people struggling with substance use and mental health disorders.

We know that [jurisdiction] has been hit hard by the opioid epidemic. We can’t incarcerate our way out of this problem. That’s why the [treatment court] is so critical. We provide intense supervision and treatment to lead people out of the justice system and into long-term recovery.

We’re celebrating the lifesaving work of veterans treatment courts across the U.S. the entire month of May. Most veterans return home strengthened by their service. But for those who struggle with the transition, the [veterans treatment court] provides accountability, treatment, and mentoring by other veterans to help get their lives back on track.

We’re celebrating the lifesaving work of DWI courts across the country the entire month of May. Every day, DWI courts keep our roads and communities safer while providing accountability and treatment to help repeat impaired drivers get back on track.

Allen (Indiana) Superior Judge Fan Gull congratulates a new drug court graduate

A drug court graduate and his family in Cleveland County, Oklahoma
CHAPTER 3

SAMPLE TWEETS

We can’t arrest our way out of the opioid epidemic. Treatment courts provide evidence-based treatment to lead people out of the justice system and provide hope and healing through #recovery. Celebrating National #DrugCourtMonth all month long!

#Veterans treatment courts save lives. As part of National #DrugCourtMonth, we’re celebrating serving those who’ve served us. #Justice4Vets

DWI courts make our streets safer and are working to end impaired driving by addressing the root of the problem: addiction. May is National #DrugCourtMonth, and we’re celebrating lives and families saved through #recovery!

This National #DrugCourtMonth, [treatment court] joins more than 4,000 treatment courts across the U.S. to celebrate leading people out of the justice system and into long-term #recovery!

It’s National #DrugCourtMonth! Thank you [@member of Congress] for supporting treatment courts that save lives, reduce crime, and save taxpayer dollars.

May is National #DrugCourtMonth: All month long, we’re celebrating leading people out of the justice system and into long-term #recovery through effective treatment courts!

May is National #DrugCourtMonth! More than 4,000 treatment courts across the country are breaking the cycle of addiction and crime, providing hope and healing through #recovery to people with substance use disorders.

When families are reunited, we all rise. #drugcourtworks #DrugCourtMonth @illinoispolicy herald-review.com/news/local/criminal-justice...
Drug Courts ARE

SAVING LIVES, REUNITING FAMILIES, SAVING MONEY, REDUCING CRIME.

Drug courts are the single most successful criminal justice intervention for seriously addicted offenders. Proven to save lives, save money, and reduce crime, these courts:

- Treat substance use disorders
- Treat mental health needs
- Deliver services for lifelong recovery
- Secure education, employment, and housing
- Produce tax-paying, productive citizens
- Break the cycle of addiction in families
- Reduce re-arrests and re-incarcerations
- Reduce substance use and overdose
- Reduce emergency room admissions
- Reduce foster care placements

1.5 million total served by drug court
4,000+ drug courts in the U.S.
150,000 people served by drug courts each year
up to 58% reduction in recidivism
$6,000 average savings per drug court participant

Learn More: allrise.org
There is a disturbing upward trend in the number of annual impaired-driving-related fatalities due to repeat driving while intoxicated (DWI) offenders and drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .15 or higher. However, the criminal justice system’s traditional response of incarceration and other punishment does not deter these offenders because it does not address the root cause of the problem: addiction.

DWI court participants are 19 times less likely to reoffend. DWI courts are changing the criminal justice system’s approach to impaired driving:

- Provide intense supervision
- Provide individualized, long-term treatment
- Change participants' thinking and behavior
- Demand accountability
- Save taxpayers' money
- Improve public safety

Learn More: dwicourts.org

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3 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) (2009). New Data Shows Disturbing Number of Repeat Drunk Drivers on America’s Roadways.
5 National Association of Drug Court Professionals (2015).
Be Informed

The majority of our veterans return home strengthened by their military service, but many struggle with trauma, mental illness (such as PTSD) and substance use disorders. These issues can be exacerbated by the loss of structure and camaraderie found in the military. Veterans treatment courts (VTCs) provide treatment, accountability and mentoring, and they help connect justice-involved veterans with the benefits they’ve earned. VTCs save the lives, families and futures of our veterans while also saving taxpayer dollars.

The National Facts

- 460,000 Iraq/Afghanistan veterans suffer from PTSD or depression
- 345,000 Iraq/Afghanistan veterans have a substance use disorder
- 407 VTCs in the U.S.
- 15,000 currently served by veterans treatment courts
- 5,700 volunteer veteran mentors in VTCs
- 181,500 incarcerated veterans in the U.S.
- 407 VTCs in the U.S.
- 181,500 incarcerated veterans in the U.S.

The Community Mental Health Journal found that veterans who participate in veterans treatment courts experience significant improvement in:

- Depression
- PTSD
- Substance use
- Mental and emotional health
- Housing
- Relationships and social connection
- Overall functioning and well-being

Learn More: justiceforvets.org

1 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2016)
4 American University School of Public Affairs, Justice Programs Office (2015).
PHOTO RELEASE

For valuable consideration received, and without expectation of compensation or other remuneration, now or in the future, I hereby grant to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, its divisions, legal representatives, licensees, and assigns (NADCP) the irrevocable and unrestricted right to use and publish, as it deems appropriate consistent with its purpose and mission, my image and likeness, my story, interview statements from me, photographs and videos of me, or photographs and videos in which I may be included, in any manner and medium, including in its internal and external publications, editorial trade, advertising or other media activities (including the Internet), such as website feature articles, social media posts, donor letters, grant applications and general publicity. This consent includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Permission to interview, film, photograph, tape, or otherwise make a video reproduction of me and/or record my voice;

(b) Permission to use my name;

(c) Permission to use my story, quotes from the interview(s) (or excerpts of such quotes), the film, photograph(s), tape(s) or reproduction(s) of me, and/or recording of my voice, in part or in whole, in its publications, in newspapers, magazines and other print media, on television, radio and electronic media (including the Internet), in theatrical media and/or in mailings for educational and awareness.

(d) Permission for NADCP, consistent with the terms of this Release and in support of advocacy efforts on behalf of NADCP’s mission and purpose, to release certain information to third parties for their subsequent use, including but not limited to my name, my story, image, likeness, photograph, and or videos. This includes release of such information to government officials, domestic and international, whether employed, elected or appointed, for use in their advocacy efforts on behalf of NADCP.

I hereby release, discharge and agree to save harmless NADCP from and against any claims, damages or liability arising from or related to the use of any of the aforementioned material, including but not limited to any liability by virtue of any editing, blurring, distortion, alteration, optical illusion, or use in composite form, whether intentional or otherwise, that may occur or be produced in the taking, recording, editing, processing, publishing or distribution of my story, testimonials, interviews, pictures, portraits, images and/or likenesses including, without limitation, any claims for defamation, invasion of privacy, right of publicity or violation of any other right.

________________________________________   ______________________________________

Print Name      Signature

________________________________________

Date

Upload signed release form(s) from everyone in your photos!

PRINT YOURS AT NADCP.ORG/ADVOCACY/NDCM