



The Superior Court
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, January 13, 2015

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NEW VETERANS TREATMENT COURT SEEKS TO HELP VETERANS

The Superior Court of California, County of San Joaquin is pleased to announce that on Monday, February 2, 2015, it will hold its first ever Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). The recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken an unprecedented toll on our men and women in uniform. While most return home strengthened by their service, far too many struggle in their effort to readjust to life outside the military. Often, mental health issues are compounded by substance abuse, family strife, unemployment, and homelessness; ultimately leading to incarceration.

The VTC seeks to give veterans the care they need and deserve while keeping them out of jail and giving them the tools they need to once again live as productive citizens. The VTC involves cooperation and collaboration with traditional partners found in Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts, such as a judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, treatment provider, probation, and law enforcement. Added to this interdisciplinary team are representatives of the Veterans Health Administration, as well as the California Departments of Veterans Affairs, Vet Centers, Veterans Service Organizations, Department of Labor, volunteer Veteran Mentors, and other veterans support groups. VTC provides a holistic community based approach to address the specific needs of justice-involved veterans, keeping them out of jail and engaged with their families and communities where they belong. The VTC will admit only those veterans with a clinical diagnosis of a substance abuse and/or mental health disorder in accordance with Penal Code §1170.9.

The VTC team is comprised of staff from San Joaquin Superior Court, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, San Joaquin County Veterans Services, San Joaquin County District Attorney, San Joaquin County Public Defender, San Joaquin County Behavioral/Mental Health Services, San Joaquin County Probation, San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department, and veteran mentors. There are no costs associated with establishing the VTC or training team members.

"This VTC will provide a catalyst for eligible men and women to break the destructive cycle of criminality and incarceration by offering alternatives, support and links to vital rehabilitation and treatment resources," said Virginia Wimmer, Deputy Director of Veterans Services with the San Joaquin County Healthcare Services Agency, who will also serve as the VTC's Coordinator.

Judge Barbara Kronlund, who will preside over the Veterans Treatment Court, had this to say about the new program, “With the VTC, we are broadening services for our veterans and walking them through their legal troubles with the hope of easing their reintegration into society. We are providing a “one-stop shop” of services and support. I am excited and look forward to continued collaboration with our VTC team, so that we can help our veterans.”

The Veterans Treatment Court will be held the first Monday of each month beginning February 2, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in Department 11 of the Stockton Courthouse located at 222 E. Weber Avenue, Stockton, CA 95202.

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