

Macon County Mental Health Court Overview

Program Description

The Macon County Mental Health Court is voluntary program designed for adults with serious and persistent mental illness who have been arrested for misdemeanor or non-violent felony offenses. Rather than traditional punishment, the Court diverts participants away from the criminal justice system by offering alternative comprehensive and therapeutic judicial intervention.

The goal of the Mental Health Court is:

- Decrease reoccurring arrests
- Decrease days in jail
- Increase access to mental health services
- Coordinate mental health services
- Enhance public safety

Participants who consent to join the program will receive:

- Intensive case management services
- Ongoing mental health treatment (including substance abuse treatment as needed)
- Regular court appearances
- Court supervision

Participants who meet criteria for treatment will remain in the program until the Mental Health Court team determines that all requirements have been met for successful completion. Participants may voluntarily terminate their involvement with the program at any time. However, if a participant chooses to quit, or is dropped from the program due to a sanctioned dismissal, the traditional court process will resume.

Acceptance of cases not falling into the above categories to the Mental Health Court will depend on individual circumstances.

To be considered for admission to the Mental Health Court, the defendant must agree to:

- Waive their right to a jury trial
- Sign an irrevocable stipulation of facts, including testimony of witnesses who may not be recalled, and which by itself provides sufficient evidence for a finding of guilt in a bench trial

Eligibility Criteria

1. Adult defendants charged with probation eligible, non-violent misdemeanor and/or felony offenses in Macon County are eligible for the program.
2. Domestic violence offenders may be accepted into the program upon consent of the victim and at the discretion of the Mental Health Court team.
3. The defendants past criminal record will be taken into consideration.
4. The defendant is a current resident of Macon County.
5. The defendant has a documented DSM disorder (Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Bipolar I Disorder, Major Depression and Psychotic Disorder NOS) or is dually diagnosed with a mental illness and a substance abuse disorder.

6. Persons with documented Personality Disorders or Intellectual Disabilities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the team.
7. In cases of co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders, the mental illness must be the primary diagnosis.
8. There must be a causal connection between the mental illness and the crime.
9. The defendant expresses a desire to participate in the program.
10. The defendant must be will to consent to disclose mental health, substance abuse and medical treatment records to the team.
11. The defendant must be screened and approved by the Mental Health Court team to participate.
12. The defendant must be honest with the treatment providers and the team.

Not Eligible

Defendants charged with any of the following criminal offenses are excluded from consideration for the program:

- Non-probation eligible offenses
- Arson
- Criminal fortification
- All offenses involving deadly substances, including methamphetamine-related substances

Submitting a Referral

Referrals must be submitted in writing to:

Ralf Pansch

Specialty Courts Administrator

Macon County Probation and Court Services

141 S. Main St.

Decatur, IL 62523

217.424.1444 ext. 5814 (phone)

217.424.1386 (fax)

Referral forms may be obtained by logging on www.cclerk.co.macon.il.us and clicking on the 'Forms' link. Completed referral forms must be accompanied by a signed Release of Information form. The Mental Health Court team determines admissions and discharges from the program.