

Program Performance Report

Enhancement Grantees of the Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program

April–June 2012



This report was prepared by Jimmy Steyee, CSR, Incorporated, under contract number GS-10F-0114L from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program (ADC)—Enhancement—April–June 2012

Program Performance Report (April–June 2012)

The Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program (ADC) Program, administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), is intended to “build and/or expand drug court capacity at the state, local, and tribal levels to reduce crime and substance abuse among high risk, high need offenders.”¹ Drug courts, which are a significant part of a larger universe of problem-solving courts, have been proven to reduced recidivism and substance use among program participants. When implemented in an evidence-based manner, drug courts have also been proven to increase the likelihood of rehabilitation. Some of the key components that serve as guidelines for drug court operations include early intervention and intensive treatment, close judicial supervision, mandatory and random drug testing, community supervision, appropriate incentives and sanctions, and recovery support services.

BJA awarded grants to state programs, enhancement programs, or implementation programs. Enhancement grants were awarded to operational adult drug courts (operating at least 1 year) that sought to (1) expand their target population, (2) enhance court operations, (3) improve court services, and (4) enhance offender services. The following report examines data entered into the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) for April–June 2012 for enhancement grants awarded in fiscal years 2008–2011.

Table 1 shows that during the quarter, 177 of 188 grantees and subrecipients submitted performance information.

Table 1. Enhancement Grantees and Subrecipients Reported, April–June 2012

Enhancement Grantees (Including Joint and Subrecipients)	Total Responding to at Least One Question
2008 (N=1)	1
2009 (N=29)	28
2010 (N=91)	85
2011 (N=67)	63
Overall (N=188)	177

¹ Bureau of Justice Assistance. (2012). *Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program FY 2012 competitive grant announcement*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Program, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Program- and Participant-Level Key Measures

Table 2. Program Entry and Participant Level Outcomes, *N* (%)

Location	Eligible	Admitted	Successful Completion	Tested Positive	In-program Recidivism
Rural (<i>N</i> =46)	541 (71%)	343 (63%)	179 (51%)	356 (19%)	104 (4%)
Suburban (<i>N</i> =36)	710 (79)	598 (84)	319 (54)	1227 (27)	25 (1)
Tribal (<i>N</i> =8) ²	55 (45)	12 (22)	7 (18)	34 (59)	7 (4)
Urban (<i>N</i> =87)	2562 (64)	1823 (71)	913 (56)	1511 (16)	280 (3)
Overall (<i>N</i>=177)	3868 (67%)	2776 (72%)	1418 (54%)	3128 (20%)	416 (2%)

Overall, 67 percent of screened candidates were deemed eligible for drug court participation during the quarter (Table 2). However, only about 45 percent of tribal candidates were deemed eligible this quarter, down significantly from the two previous quarters, which were at 75 percent. Of those who are eligible, 72 percent were ultimately admitted into drug court programs during the quarter for all locations combined. The admission rate is also low among tribal programs. Well over half (54 percent) of program participants successfully completed their respective drug court programs. This exceeds BJA's target graduation rate which is 48%. The graduation rate is low (18 percent) among tribal programs when compared with other geographic categories in this quarter. Almost 1 in 5 drug court participants who have been in the program for at least 90 days, tested positive at least once for drug and alcohol use, and about 2 percent of program participants reoffended and were charged with a new offense during the quarter.

Table 3. Participants with High Criminogenic Risks and Needs

Location	<i>N</i> (%)
Urban (<i>N</i> =60)	892 (66%)
Suburban (<i>N</i> =21)	605 (37)
Rural (<i>N</i> =34)	258 (71)
Tribal (<i>N</i> =5)	45 (90)
Overall (<i>N</i>=120)	1800 (53%)

Overall, just over half (53 percent) of drug court participants assessed using a risk assessment instrument in this quarter were categorized as having high criminogenic risks and needs (Table 3). In this quarter, about 90 percent of tribal drug court participants who have been assessed were deemed high risk. This compares with about 71 percent for drug courts located in rural jurisdictions, 37 percent in suburban areas and 66 percent in urban areas. Research suggests that drug court programs should target high risk offenders in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of the program.

Table 4. Participants Who Exited Program Unsuccessfully

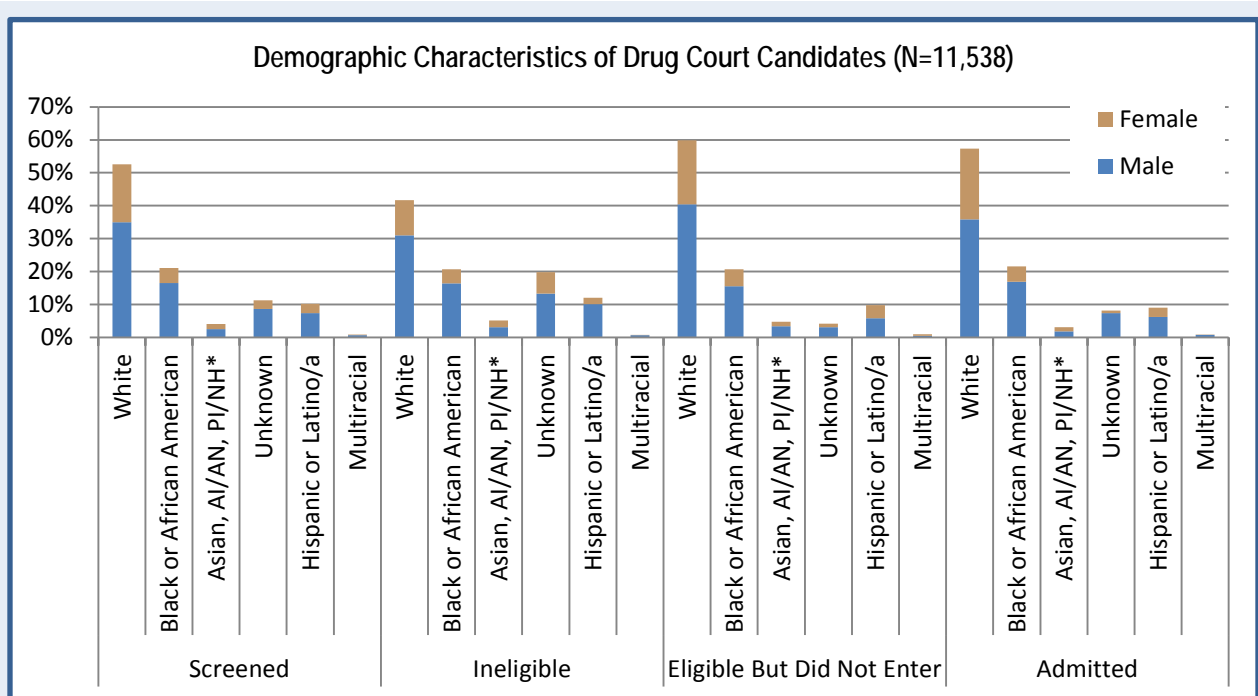
Exit Reasons	<i>N</i> (%)	Time Frame	<i>N</i> (%)
Court or Criminal Involvement	343 (29%)	0 to 3 months	310 (29%)
Lack of Engagement	393 (33)	4 to 6 months	254 (24)
Absconding	289 (24)	7 to 9 months	164 (15)
Relocating or Case Transfer	38 (3)	10 months or more	334 (31)

² One outlier was removed from this analysis because it significantly skewed the results. This data point will be verified and included as part of subsequent analyses.

Death or Serious Injury	16 (1)
Other	117 (10)

About 46 percent of drug court program participants do not complete the program successfully.³ Most (86 percent) exit the program for one of three reasons: lack of engagement (33 percent), further court or criminal involvement (29 percent), or absconding (24 percent). Another 10 percent exit for “other” reasons, including voluntary withdrawal, continued drug and alcohol use, and failure to meet the conditions of the court.⁴

Participants are more likely to unsuccessfully exit the drug court program in the first 3 months or after 10 months than they are in the middle stages of the program.



*American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian.

Figure 1 compares the demographic makeup of potential drug court candidates from when they are screened through admission. Potential drug court candidates are typically identified at the time of arrest or referred to the court by a criminal justice professional. Candidates are first screened for eligibility to ensure they meet certain eligibility criteria. Candidates that do not meet all the criteria are considered ineligible. Drug Court candidates that are eligible are considered for admission into the program. A portion of eligible candidates do not enter the program due to various reasons such as refusing entry or judicial objection (see Table 5 below.) Finally, eligible candidates may be admitted into the Drug Court Program⁵.

- The demographic makeup at each stage from screening through admission does not change considerably. In other words, the demographic makeup of all candidates screened closely matches the demographic makeup of those participants that are admitted into Drug Court programs.

³ This is derived from subtracting the completion rate (54%) from 100%.

⁴ Some grantees classified failure to meet the conditions of the court as “other,” when in fact they could also be classified under the “lack of engagement” category.

⁵ Some drug court candidates may be screened in one quarter, but not admitted until subsequent quarters.

Table 5. Reasons Screened Candidates Did Not Enter the Program by Location Type, *N* (%)

Location	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Tribal	Overall
Eligible But Did Not Enter Total	645 (70%)	77 (8%)	194 (21%)	5 (1%)	921 (100%)
Participant Refused Entry	300 (33)	54 (6)	115 (12)	4 (<1)	473 (51)
Prosecutor or Defense Objection	63 (7)	2 (<1)	33 (4)	0	98 (11)
Judicial Objection	51 (6)	0	5 (1)	0	56 (6)
Out of Jurisdiction	12 (1)	0	4 (<1)	0	16 (2)
Arrest, Conviction, or Incarceration on Another Charge	34 (4)	5 (1)	24 (3)	0	63 (7)
Other ⁶	185 (20)	16 (2)	13 (1)	1 (<1)	215 (23)
Ineligible Total	1406 (74%)	170 (9%)	202 (11%)	115 (6%)	1893 (100%)
No Drug Problem	106 (6)	26 (1)	34 (2)	43 (2)	209 (11)
Exclusionary Prior Nonviolent Offense	294 (16)	24 (1)	30 (2)	5 (<1)	353 (19)
Violent History	179 (9)	24 (1)	61 (3)	14 (1)	278 (15)
Mental Health Problem	60 (3)	18 (1)	17 (1)	2 (<1)	97 (5)
Other ⁷	767 (41)	78 (4)	60 (3)	51 (3)	956 (51)

About half of screened and eligible candidates did not enter a drug court program because they refused entry (Table 5). Another 23 percent did not enter for “other” reasons. In all geographic locations, participant refusal is the most common reason for not entering a drug court program. For those who were ineligible for the drug court program, most (51 percent) were ineligible for “other” reasons. Having an exclusionary prior nonviolent offense was the second most common reason cited for ineligibility (19 percent).

Key Findings

The following key findings are based on analysis of the April–June 2012 Drug Court performance measures.

- The demographic profile across screened candidates, eligible candidates, and admitted participants is consistent, with one exception. The percentage of candidates of unknown race/ethnicity is high (19 percent) at initial screening. This many indicate that grantees may be having a hard time tracking that information.
- For this quarter, 54 percent of participants who exited the drug court programs did so successfully, which exceeds BJA’s target graduation rate of 48%.
- The completion rate was low (18 percent) among participants located in tribal areas.
- Drug court program participants are almost as equally likely to unsuccessfully exit the program in the first 3 months as they are in the latter stages of the program (10 or more months).
- A large percentage of reasons for ineligibility were classified as “other.” BJA has revised this measure so that the “other” category can be examined in more detail in future reports.

⁶ BJA revised the measures so that the “other” category can be examined in more detail

⁷ BJA revised the measures so that the “other” category can be examined in more detail.

Key Performance Measures

Measure	Data Elements Used to Calculate Measure	Definition	Interpretation
Percent Eligible	A. Number of eligible offenders B. Number of candidates screened % Eligible = A/B	This compares the number of candidates meeting eligibility criteria with the number of candidates screened for program participation.	This assesses the eligibility screening process—specifically, how many participants the program can serve and the number of candidates selected to participate in drug court programs.
Percent Admitted	A. Number of participants admitted to drug court programs B. Number of candidates meeting eligibility criteria. % Admitted = A/B	Admitted participants compared with the total number of offenders who were eligible.	Assesses the ongoing capacity of the program by tracking new participant admissions.
Percent Successful Completions	A. Number of participants successfully completing program requirements B. Number of participants who failed the program due to court or criminal involvement C. Number who fail due to lack of engagement D. Number who fail due to relocating or case transfer E. Number who fail due to death or serious illness F. Number who fail for other reason % Successful = A/(A+B+C+D+E+F)	Number of participants who successfully completed the program.	Assesses how many participants have successfully completed program requirements as determined by the drug court program. Can also be thought of as the graduation rate.
Percent Tested Positive for Drug or Alcohol Use	A. Number of participants who tested positive for drug or alcohol use B. Number of participants tested % Positive Drug or Alcohol Test = A/B	Percentage of participants that have failed drug and alcohol tests while in the program.	Assesses how many participants continue to use substances while in the program. Also assesses the use of drug and alcohol testing as a key component of the program.
In-Program Recidivism	A. Number of participants charged with a drug offense. B. Number of participants charged with a non-drug offense C. Number of participants currently enrolled in the program D. Number of newly admitted participants In-Program recidivism = (A+B)/(C+D)	Rate of recidivism for participants who have been charged with a new drug and/or non-drug related offense while enrolled in the program.	Assesses participation in continued criminal behavior while enrolled in the drug court program.
Percent High Risk	A. Number of participants assessed as having high criminogenic risks and needs B. Number of participants assessed using a risk assessment instrument % High risk = A/B	Percentage of participants identified using a valid screening/assessment instrument as having high criminogenic risks and needs.	Assess the percentage of drug court participants that have high criminogenic risks and needs; participants with high criminogenic risks and needs are at higher risk for reoffending when compared with low- and medium-risk individuals.