
LANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

NEWS RELEASE



DATE/TIME OF RELEASE: November 3, 2010

NATURE OF STORY: Bureau of Justice Assistance and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Grant Award

DETAILS:

A major enhancement of the Lane County Adult Drug Court will be possible with the receipt of a 3-year, \$1,051,138 Enhancement grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (BJA/SAMSHA). The grant is intended to enhance the court services, coordination, and substance abuse treatment capacity of adult drug courts. Lane County was one of only 28 programs nationwide to receive funding and the only applicant selected for funding in the State of Oregon. The purpose of the enhancement project is provide additional support and treatment services to drug court participants with a particular focus on heroin and prescription opiate users. The goal of the project will be to reduce recidivism and substance abuse among offenders and increase the likelihood of successful rehabilitation.

Judge Eveleen Henry who was Drug Court Judge during the design phase of the project stated, "We know that when treatment courts are able to maintain high levels of accountability, and provide targeted support for individuals, we have even better outcomes. We are requiring drug court participants to work harder than ever - not only through intensive treatment but when indicated, through participation in parenting classes, mental health counseling, recovery-based housing, and mandatory job searches. At a time when budgets cuts would otherwise force us to reduce these auxiliary services, this grant will allow us to even better address the issues of addiction, family reunification, employment and educational achievement, mental-health, while maintaining the common goals of accountability, reduced recidivism and improved outcomes for individuals and their families." Current Drug Court Judge Douglas Mitchell adds, "These resources allow drug court a much greater ability to supervise and meet the needs of the high-risk, drug-addicted individuals within our community. This grant offers a great example of multiple community partners working together in a unified response to the changing substance use patterns we have identified in our county, especially the growing use of heroin by young people."

Lane County's adult drug abuse arrest rates remain significantly higher than that of Oregon or the US. The county comprises 9% of Oregon's total population, yet 30% (370) of Oregon's 2008 heroin arrests occurred here. Heroin was the leading cause of overdose deaths in Lane County in 2007, 2008, and 2009. Drug-related deaths in Lane County increased from 21 in 2008 to 33 in 2009. Of those 33 drug-related deaths, 21 were due to heroin. The reported property crime rate rose in 2008 and continues to exceed Oregon and the US, as it has since 1995.

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Drug-addicted individuals also exact a heavy toll on families, the community, law enforcement, public health services, and the judicial system. The enhanced drug court project reflects a collaborative effort among law enforcement, treatment providers, and the court system to break the cycle of drug dependency and criminal behavior.

Towards that goal, grant funds will be used to fund a full-time Probation Officer to provide intensive supervision of drug court participants including attending drug court team meetings and conducting home visits of participants. Mental health and substance abuse counselors will provide integrated treatment for co-occurring substance and mental health issues to drug court participants and their families. In addition, funds are available to provide recovery housing in a highly structured environment as well as HIV and Hepatitis C testing through a partnership with HIV Alliance. Parenting classes will be provided as will on-site child care for participants and family members.

Importantly, funds will cover the cost of buprenorphine for up to 10 uninsured opiate addicted participants, as well as the cost of associated visits with a physician. Buprenorphine is an effective, but often cost-prohibitive, pharmaceutical compound used to treat addiction.

In addition to other provisions, the grant will provide funds for drug court team members, including the drug court judge, administrator, and PO to attend a national conference that includes extensive training opportunities.

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