
Issue Brief – Drug Court Expansion

DRUG COURT AND DRUG BOARD

NUMBERDHS-08-04

DRUG COURT EXPANSION

The Drug Courts and the Administrative Offices of the Courts are requesting an appropriation of \$2,844,900 (\$2,475,000 Drug Courts and \$369,900 Administrative Offices of the Courts) from General Funds for FY 2008 to expand substance abuse treatment services to about 678 persons.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Drug Court Program are to reduce substance abuse, promote public safety and integrate treatment services with judicial case processing.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Drug Courts is a judicial process offering nonviolent drug offenders intensive drug treatment with court supervision as an alternative to jail or prison. Offenders enter a plea in abeyance with charges dismissed upon the successful completion of the drug treatment program. The participants work closely with court personnel, treatment providers, law enforcement and correction officers and case management personnel. Local substance abuse authorities and private contractors provide the treatment services.

Funding History

Drug Courts started in Utah with federal grants, local government grants, private contributions, and funding within existing court budgets. The first drug court was started in 1996, in Salt Lake County, with funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Salt Lake County and other sources. For FY 2000, the Legislature directed the Division of Substance Abuse (now the combined Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health) to use \$200,000 from increases in its federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) grant for planning grants to communities and courts in the State. Drug Courts are appropriated \$1,296,300 from the Tobacco Settlement General Fund Restricted Account. During the 2006 General Session, the Legislature transferred \$800,000 of federal SAPT funds from the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health to Drug Courts for treatment programs and appropriated \$425,000 in General Funds. There is also a small amount of \$35,000 transferred from the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ). Drug Courts also receive direct time-limited federal discretionary grants; local funding and dedicated credits.

In [Section 78-3-32 of the UCA](#), outlines that 87 percent of the funding is to be allocated to DHS for testing, treatment and case management and 13 percent to the Administrative Office of the Courts for increased judicial support costs.

Drug Court Models

There are currently 32 Drug Courts operating in the State. However, DHS only provides funding to 20 of the 32 Drug Courts in the State. The courts not funded by DHS rely on direct time-limited discretionary grants, local funding and dedicated credits. In FY 2006, there were 2,893 defendants screened for services with a little over 1,500 enrolled in treatment services. Drug Courts have three distinct models:

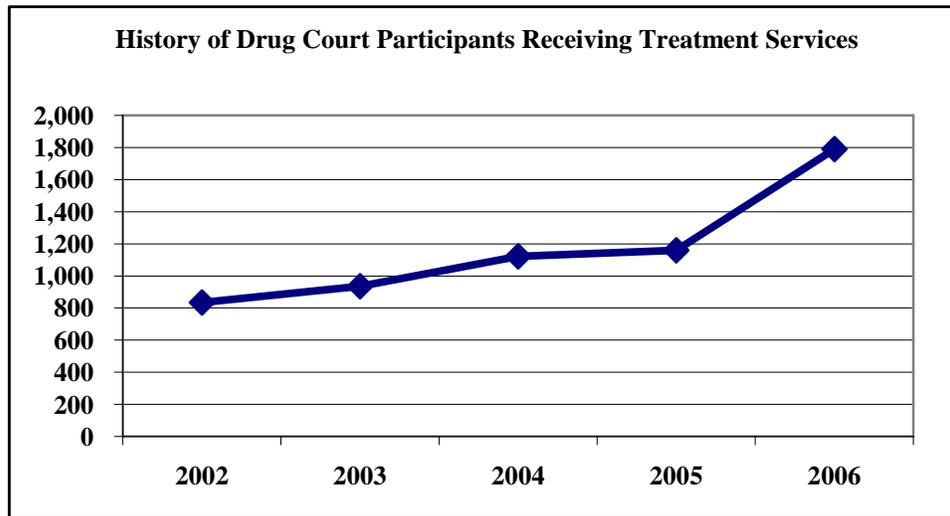
1. Adult Drug Courts – Treatment programs for adult felons (1,112 served statewide in FY 2006);
2. Juvenile Drug Courts – Treatment programs for minors with involvement of parents and schools in creation of the treatment plan (247 served statewide in FY 2006) and;
3. Dependency Drug Courts – Treatment focuses on parents with substance abuse addictions to try to preserve the family unit (217 served statewide in FY 2006).

Substance Abuse Statistics

The following table shows the participants in the Drug Court program for FY 2006:

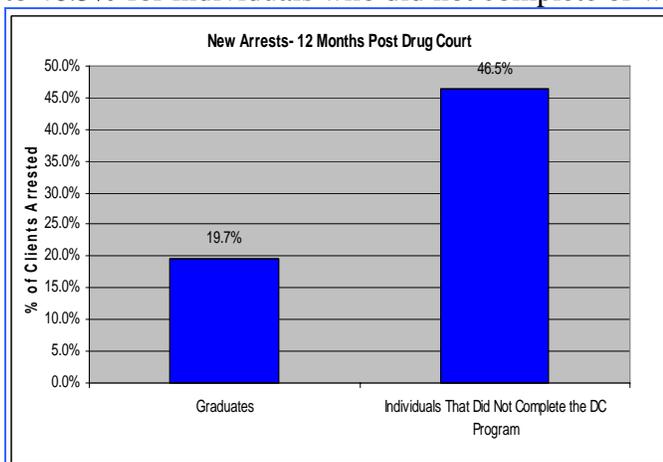
FY 2006 Drug Court Participation				
Status of Participants	Adult	Juvenile	Dependency	Total
Number of graduates from the program	506	100	69	675
Number of participants that did not complete the program	196	53	43	292
Total number of participants	702	153	112	967

Drug Court participation has grown by 114.25 percent since July 1, 2002 as shown in the following chart:



The following statistics illustrate the success of Drug Courts:

- 67 percent of the participants graduate
- 69 percent of all participants report abstinence at discharge (this includes non-completers)
- Adult Drug Court participants between admission and discharge had an employment rate increase by 7 percentage points
- Six months prior to involvement, participants report an average of 2.7 arrests
- 84 percent of the participants report zero arrests while in Drug Court
- The following chart is based on an evaluation of the Salt Lake County Adult Felony Drug Court in 2005. The study compared arrest rates after 12 months for individuals who graduated from drug court and individuals who did not complete drug court. Individuals who graduated were arrested 19.7% compared to 46.5% for individuals who did not complete or were terminated from drug court.



Annual Costs of Substance Abuse & Treatment

The cost of substance abuse treatment is between \$3,500 and \$4,200 per individual. In contrast, the cost of incarceration is \$26,000 per prisoner and the cost of foster care per child is \$30,200.

Expansion and Enhancement of Drug Courts

There are about 4,000 eligible offenders unable to enroll in the Drug Courts because of budgetary constraints. In the past three years, three Drug Courts (Uintah Juvenile, Davis County Juvenile and Box Elder Felony) folded because of insufficient funds. The Drug Courts and Administrative Offices of the Courts are requesting the funding to expand treatment services to 678 individuals as shown in the following table:

FY 2008 Drug Court Funding Request			
Program	Allocation of Funding Request	New Cases	Case Rate
Family/Dependency Drug Court	\$250,000	53	\$4,684
Felony Drug Court	\$1,600,000	375	\$4,268
Parolee Drug Board	\$100,000	34	\$2,925
Juvenile Youth Drug Court	\$525,000	215	\$2,439
Treatment Total for DHS	\$2,475,000	678	\$3,652
Administrative Office of the Courts	\$369,900		
Total Funding Request	\$2,844,900		

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Analyst that Drug Courts receive an appropriation of \$2,000,000 in General Funds for FY 2008 with \$1,740,000 for the Department of Human Services for treatment services and \$260,000 for the Administrative Office of the Courts for court administration. This will provide services for about 476 individuals. The following table shows the allocation of funding:

FY 2008 Drug Court Funding Recommendation			
Program	Allocation of Funding Request	New Cases	Case Rate
Family/Dependency Drug Court	\$175,800	38	\$4,686
Felony Drug Court	\$1,124,800	264	\$4,268
Parolee Drug Board	\$70,300	24	\$2,925
Juvenile Youth Drug Court	\$369,100	151	\$2,439
Treatment Total for DHS	\$1,740,000	476	\$3,652
Administrative Office of the Courts	\$260,000		
Total Funding Request	\$2,000,000		

