

Northeast Nebraska Drug Court

The Northeast Nebraska Drug Court is administered by the District Court of the Seventh Judicial District. The statutory authority for our court is contained in sections 24-1301 and 24-1302 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

The origination of our Drug Court began with the combined efforts of treatment providers, community members, law enforcement, judges and attorneys who realized the need for an alternative Court system. A grant from the National Drug Court Association funded the Drug Court team (District Court Judges, Norfolk Chief of Police, Madison County Sheriff, Public Defender, County Attorney, Treatment Provider, Chief Probation Officer and Coordinator) to attend trainings in California and Utah. With a Nebraska State Patrol COPS Grant of \$15,000, and donations from the community, the team commenced planning and developing policies and procedures.

The Northeast Nebraska Drug Court commenced proceedings on December 22, 2005. It is a post-plea adult Drug Court. We began with the intention of having a pilot program of five participants until funding could be obtained through a federal implementation grant. The grant was not available due to budget cuts.

On April 1, 2006, we entered into an Interlocal agreement with Nebraska State Probation, enabling our court to have a full-time coordinator, supervision officer and the resources for training, travel and drug testing equipment. The staff are hired and supervised by Nebraska State Probation. Drug Court salaries are reimbursed to probation through the Community Corrections Council. Operational costs are covered by State Probation, however Madison County provides office space and equipment.

The Northeast Nebraska Drug Court includes all counties in the Seventh Judicial District. Eligible offenders are screened through the County Attorney's office to determine they are first time felony offenders, have no criminal history of violence, drug manufacturing or distribution, or present indications they could not be safely supervised within the community. After meeting those requirements, the offender is instructed to contact the Drug Court Coordinator who completes an intake process determining the offender's need for drug treatment and their willingness to complete the requirements of the program. If the Drug Court admissions team (which does not include the Judges) agrees upon the admission, the offender appears in District Court with his/her attorney, and pleads guilty to the charge. Sentence is deferred, and the offender enters the drug court that day.

Upon successful completion of the program, which is a minimum of 18 months, the participant reappears in District Court with counsel; the County Attorney dismisses the charge. With termination or withdrawal from Drug Court, the participant again appears in District Court for sentencing on the original offense.

NORTHEAST NEBRASKA DRUG COURT Organization and Personnel

The Northeast Nebraska Drug Court is a post-plea adult Drug Court, and operates in compliance with the rules for said courts as they may be promulgated from time to time by the Nebraska Supreme Court. The Drug Court is operated through an Interlocal Agreement between Nebraska State Probation and the County of Madison Nebraska. The Interlocal Cooperation Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 13-801 et seq. (Reissue 1997) provides that units of local government of the State of Nebraska and Nebraska state agencies may enter into an agreement for the joint and cooperative exercise of powers, privileges, or authority capable of being exercised by either agency.

The Northeast Nebraska Drug Court established a program for adult drug offenders within 7th Judicial District of Nebraska, to enhance public safety by reducing crime and drug use. Court proceedings are held in Madison County, Nebraska. Legislative Bill 321 appropriated certain state dollars for the purpose of funding specialized courts, including Drug Courts. The Nebraska Supreme Court, with the approval of the Community Corrections Council, allocated a portion of such funds to assist with the personnel costs for Northeast Nebraska Drug Court.

Salaried employees for the Northeast Nebraska Drug Court are provided by Nebraska State Probation, and serve under the authority of the Northeast Nebraska Drug Court Judge and the Chief Probation Officer. Job descriptions for Staff are attached as Exhibits A and B. Nebraska State Probation will provide said employees with resources necessary to fulfill duties, and for the operation of the Drug Court Program. Probation staff operating in conjunction with a Problem-Solving Court are likewise under the policies and procedures of the Supreme Court and Office of Probation Administration.

Job Title: Problem-Solving Court Coordinator

Grade 16 -- NE

Location:

Major Duties:

The Problem-Solving Court Coordinator, serving under the authority of the problem-solving court judge and Chief Probation Officer, is a supervisory level position which is primarily responsible for a full range of programs and services for offenders in the community. The person in this position performs administrative, managerial and supervisory work required in planning, delivery, coordination, and evaluation of services, to include case management, and offender supervision to ensure compliance with local, state, and national standards.

This position requires initiative and independent judgment as exercised in a broad framework of existing policies.

Examples of Work Performed: (A person in this position may not be assigned all the duties listed nor do the listed examples include all the duties that may be assigned.)

Supervises and evaluates the work performed by problem-solving court personnel; assists in the applicant interviewing and selection process for employment.

Interprets, develops, reviews and updates agency policies and procedures; communicates and trains personnel on new or revised policies and procedures.

Responsible for the distribution of cases, coordinating court appearances, and management information in order to monitor workload.

Serves as an active member of the problem-solving court team and works closely with the problem-solving court judge to ensure policies are followed, participants' needs are addressed, and program standards are met.

Negotiates and monitors contracts with community service providers.

Maintains appropriate documentation which supports compliance with federal, state, and local laws; collects and monitors data outcomes; prepares reports, as necessary, and oversees program evaluation.

Participates in problem-solving court participant program orientation; coordinates participant program activities, and provides skills training and development to problem-solving court team members and participants.

Responsible for networking with community agencies and developing relationships with stakeholders throughout the community through speaking engagements, participation on various committees and boards, and utilizing media resources.

Problem-Solving Court Coordinator (cont.):

Complies with problem-solving court, district and state Probation policies.

Completes additional tasks or duties as assigned.

Serves on committees, boards, and commissions, as requested.

Desirable Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Ability to establish, promote, and maintain positive working relationships with the court system, other criminal justice agencies, local or regional stakeholders, and treatment providers.

Working knowledge of the Standardized Model, cognitive skill building, relapse prevention, motivational interviewing, and social learning theory, and other appropriate specialized skills.

Considerable knowledge of the justice system including federal, state, and local standards relating to alternatives to incarceration.

Considerable knowledge of the functions and services of community organizations, related human services, mental health and substance abuse resources.

Knowledge of sociological, behavioral, and cultural factors influencing behavior and attitudes of offenders in the criminal justice system.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with offenders, co-workers and the general public, using evidence-based practice skills.

Working knowledge of laws, rules and regulations, and general principles applicable to drug courts.

Working knowledge of supervisory principles and practices.

Ability to interpret and explain laws, rules, and procedures.

Considerable knowledge of present programs and resources designed to reduce the impact of criminal behavior.

Ability to act promptly and effectively in a wide range of crisis situations.

Ability to coordinate multiple services and functions among various staff and programs.

Ability to work independently and assign priorities to pending projects.

Problem-Solving Court Coordinator (cont.):

Ability to use a personal computer including basic word processing and a variety of computer software applications.

Ability to collect and analyze data, evaluate program performance, and develop viable alternatives to remedy deficiencies.

Ability to effectively supervise employees and offenders according to policies, procedures and standards.

Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Desirable Education and Experience:

Graduation from a four year accredited college or university with major course work in criminal justice, psychology, sociology, social work, or related field plus experience in the mental health, substance abuse or correctional field, including some supervisory experience or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the desirable knowledge, abilities, and skills. Licensed in substance abuse counseling (LADC) and extensive experience in the substance abuse treatment field may be substituted for the education requirement.

Advanced degree and considerable experience preferred.

Working Conditions:

Some travel may be required.

Sitting behind a computer for extended periods of time.

Lifting a maximum of 20 pounds.

Approved 8-30-06

EXHIBIT B

Job Title: Problem-Solving Court Probation Officer Grade 10-14 -- NE

Location:

Major Duties:

A Problem-Solving Court Probation Officer serving under the authority of the Problem-Solving Court Coordinator is responsible for the supervision of problem-solving court participants. The person in this position is required to follow the rules and regulations of the Probation System, as well as the rules and regulations of the problem-solving court. Work involves supervision and case management for problem-solving court offenders. The person in this position is responsible for the day-to-day activities of these offenders in the community and will need to communicate with providers and stakeholders within the community.

Due to the nature of work, this position requires flexible scheduling and non-traditional working hours. This position possesses the same statutory responsibilities and authority as a senior probation officer.

The position allows for independent decision-making, however, requires the development of additional knowledge and training.

Examples of Work Performed: (A person in this position may not be assigned all the duties listed, nor do the listed examples include all the duties that may be assigned.)

Coordinates the treatment process of the offenders which may include, but not be limited to, attending treatment groups and communicating with providers under the guidelines of the Standardized Model.

Matches problem-solving court participants' needs to the appropriate treatment modality or service, i.e., substance abuse, mental health, medical, housing, employment, and educational services, etc.

Establishes an appropriate case plan which will incorporate criminogenic factors.

Conducts and prepares reports in accordance with System standards.

Participates in specialized training that addresses supervising specialized offenders.

Creates partnerships with identified community stakeholders.

Evaluates data based on best practices and evidence-based standards.

Creates a comprehensive network of community-wide resources.

Visits other programs and engages providers.

Problem-Solving Court Probation Officer (cont.):

Involves the offender in the early stages of behavioral changes through targeted treatment.

Available for speaking and training engagements within the community and the Nebraska Probation System.

Facilitates groups which may include, but not be limited to, cognitive restructuring, cognitive skill building, life skills enhancement, and general education of offenders.

Familiar with the supervision of offenders as outlined in the Nebraska Probation System Policies and Procedures Manual and be capable of providing appropriate supervision of assigned cases through formal training, review of case files, and observation of other officers.

Completes investigations as may be required by law or directed by a court in which he/she is serving.

Supervises participants in accordance with the rules and regulations of the problem-solving court and in compliance with state and district Probation policies and procedures.

Advises the problem-solving court team of Probation violations of the conditions of problem-solving court participants.

Exercises the power of arrest when necessary.

Cooperates fully with and renders all reasonable assistance to other probation officers.

Exercises all powers and performs all duties necessary and proper to carry out his/her responsibilities.

Serves as a member of the problem-solving court team which entails attending and participating in weekly staffing meetings and problem-solving court hearings.

Complies with problem-solving court, district and state Probation policies.

Completes additional tasks as assigned.

Attends training sessions that are necessary to perform the duties for the position.

Problem-Solving Court Probation Officer (cont.):

Desirable Knowledge, Abilities and Skills:

Ability to establish, promote, and maintain positive working relationships with the court system, other criminal justice agencies, local or regional stakeholders, and treatment providers.

Working knowledge of the Standardized Model, cognitive skill building, relapse prevention, motivational interviewing, and social learning theory, and other appropriate specialized skills.

Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing and demonstrate the ability to interpret data.

Ability to acquaint oneself with judges, court staff, and personnel of criminal justice agencies.

Ability to acquaint oneself with school personnel, mental health facilities, alcohol and drug programs, vocational rehabilitation programs, and other community resources.

Ability to assess individual and group behavior.

Ability to assess substance abuse, criminogenic needs, and criminal involvement.

Ability to motivate offenders toward self-improvement using evidence-based practice skills.

Ability to organize and utilize time properly.

Ability to maintain a positive attitude when engaged in stressful working conditions.

Ability to work well in a team environment and comply with team decisions.

Ability to manage multiple tasks concurrently.

Desirable Education and Experience:

Meet basic requirements for selection as a senior probation officer. Four (4) years as a probation officer preferred or four years experience in a related field with extensive experience in working with substance abusing offenders. Master's degree in criminal justice or social/behavioral sciences is preferred.

Problem-Solving Court Probation Officer (cont.):

Working Conditions:

Some travel may be required.

Sitting behind a computer for extended periods of time.

Lifting a maximum of 20 pounds.

Approved 8-30-06