



VETERANS TREATMENT COURT



REPORT 2024



Introductory Letter

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) is proud to present the fourth annual report for the Veterans Treatment Court Program, covering Fiscal Year 2024. In accordance with Texas Government Code 124.007, by December 1 each year this report is submitted to state leadership including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and all members of the Texas Legislature.

TVC is dedicated to advocating for Texas veterans, military families, and survivors by offering services tailored to their unique needs. A key part of this mission is our collaboration with Veteran Treatment Courts across the state, which provide essential support to justice-involved veterans as they work to rebuild their lives.

Each year, many veterans become involved in the justice system due to the ongoing effects of military-related trauma. Veteran Treatment Courts offer a vital path to recovery, focusing on mental health care and community support to help veterans avoid further legal issues. TVC plays a critical role in these efforts through our Veterans Mental Health Department (VMHD) and the Funds for Veterans Assistance (FVA).

VMHD's Justice Involved Veteran Program provides training, technical support, and resources to local communities, assisting in the establishment of new courts and strengthening existing ones. In addition, VMHD supports veterans through the Homeless Veteran Program, which ensures stable housing, and the Military Veteran Peer Network, which connects veterans to mentorship and community resources. FVA grants provide critical financial assistance to Veteran Treatment Courts, helping them meet the diverse needs of veterans.

TVC is committed to reducing recidivism and empowering veterans to reintegrate successfully into their communities. By working alongside local stakeholders, especially the Veterans Treatment Courts, we are dedicated to helping veterans build new futures and thrive.

Thomas P. Palladino
Executive Director,
Texas Veterans Commission

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Introduction from Veterans Mental Health Department

The **Texas Veterans Commission's Veterans Mental Health Department (VMHD)** provides support to all Veterans Treatment Courts as part of its role in ensuring access to competent mental health services for service members, veterans, and their families. In addition to directly connecting veterans and families to local mental health and supportive services, VMHD works with partners at the national, state, and local levels to address veteran-specific issues including suicide prevention, veteran homelessness, military cultural competency, peer support services, military-related trauma, women and rural veterans, and justice involvement. Across all programming, VMHD is fortunate to have the broadest definition of veteran regardless of discharge status, branch of service, or longevity of military service. All VMHD services including training, technical assistance, and direct services are offered at no cost, to all who are in need.

TVC's Veterans Mental Health Department includes the following programs:

1. Justice-Involved Veteran (JIV) Program
2. Veteran Homelessness Program
3. Military Veteran Peer Network
4. Rural Community & Faith-Based Partnerships
5. Provider Training Program
6. Suicide Prevention Program

“We are honored to serve the veterans and military families that call Texas home. If you or anyone you know may be in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to TVC's Veterans Mental Health Department. We are happy to assist all who have served and those community members who support Texas veterans and their families.”

Our contact information is found at the end of this report.

Blake Harris, Ph.D.
Director, Veterans Mental Health Department
Texas Veterans Commission

Justice-Involved Veteran Program Overview



In collaboration with the other VMHD programs, the Justice-Involved Veteran (JIV) Program works to improve veteran services across the entire criminal justice continuum.

A crucial function of the JIV Program is to serve as a resource to all the Veterans' Treatment Courts across Texas. In Fiscal Year 2024, the JIV Program provided Veterans Treatment Courts with *155 instances* of technical assistance aimed at bolstering best practice standards. The JIV Program also provides support to the TVC-Certified Peer Service Coordinators of the Military Veteran Peer Network who participate in the Veterans Treatment Courts as local support resources and court mentors. VMHD's JIV Program Managers are also committed to working with counties and local stakeholders who are interested in starting Veterans Treatment Courts in their areas in accordance with local needs, available resources, and best practices proven to be effective. The JIV Program also collaborates with the local jails, sheriff departments, law enforcement and statewide stakeholders including the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas Commission on Jail Standards, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, Texas Health and Human Services, the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council, and others. The JIV Program also works closely with national partners including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, and the National Institute of Correction as an active member of the nationwide Justice Involved Veterans Network.

The Texas Veterans Commission acknowledges and commends the continued dedication and excellent work of the Veterans Treatment Courts as they make a meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of Texas veterans and their families. We also wish to commend state leaders for their continued support of Texas veterans and the stakeholders who collaborate at the community levels to improve veteran lives, fulfill the promises made to those who served, and reduce recidivism across Texas while promoting mental health wellness. While there are excellent services being provided that keep Texas at the forefront of veteran services, there is still much work ahead for those who aim to address the mental health and supportive needs for the growing number of veterans who make their home in the Lone Star State.

Veteran Treatment Court Background



Texas Government Code 124.007 requires that the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) provides a report, no later than December 1st of each year, to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of the Legislature. In accordance with Texas Government Chapter 124.007, the contents of the report must contain Veterans Treatment Court information from the preceding fiscal year, to include (a) the number of veteran defendants who participated in each veteran's treatment court program, (b) the number of veteran defendants that successfully completed each program, (c) the number of veteran defendants that did not successfully complete the program, and (d) the amount of grant funding received by each Veterans Treatment Court.

Texas Government Code 124.001 defines a Veterans Treatment Court program as having the following essential characteristics: (1) The integration of services in the processing of cases in the judicial system; (2) The use of a non-adversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and to protect the due process rights of program participants; (3) Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program; (4) Access to a continuum of alcohol, controlled substance, mental health, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services; (5) Careful monitoring of treatment and services provided to program participants; (6) A coordinated strategy to govern program responses to participants' compliance; (7) Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants; (8) Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness; (9) Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations; (10) Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations, including the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and (11) Inclusion of a participant's family members who agree to be involved in the treatment and services provided to the participant under the program

Texas Government Code 124.002 grants authority to the Commissioners Court of a county to establish a Veteran Treatment Court. Participants are eligible to participate only if the attorney representing the State consents and if the Court in which the criminal case is pending or in which the participant was convicted or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision (as applicable), finds that the participant is a veteran or current member of the United States Armed Forces, including a member of the Reserves, National Guard, or State Guard.

At the publication of this report, there were 32 verified Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC) covering 41 Texas counties in operation. The data contained in this report is presented as received by the submitting Veterans Treatment Courts from the preceding State fiscal year. There are no standardized statewide reporting requirements for Veterans Treatment Courts, and each Court has the autonomy to track data at their discretion.

2024 Court Statistics Reported by County



County of Court	Name of Court	*Number of veterans served	Number of veterans successfully completed	Number of veterans unsuccessfully completed
Bell	Bell County Veterans Treatment Court	29	17	11
Bexar	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	80	20	1
Bexar	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	210	93	5
Brazoria	Brazoria County Veterans Treatment Court	28	7	4
Cameron	Cameron County Veterans Treatment Court	22	13	1
Comal	Eugene E. Hooper Veterans Treatment Court	24	12	1
Dallas	Dallas County Veterans Treatment Court	93	38	1
Denton	Criminal Court #3	146	25	3
Ellis	Ellis County Veterans Treatment Court	12	0	0
El Paso	346th Veterans Treatment Court	48	9	5

County of Court	Name of Court	*Number of veterans served	Number of veterans successfully completed	Number of veterans unsuccessfully completed
Fort Bend	County Court #2	18	4	1
Galveston	Galveston County Veterans Treatment Court	35	16	3
Guadalupe	Guadalupe County Veterans Treatment Court	25	8	0
Harris	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	64	9	3
Harris	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	28	9	2
Hays	Hays County Veterans Treatment Court	40	16	0
Hidalgo	Hidalgo County Veterans Treatment Court	9	11	3
Jefferson	Jefferson County Veterans Treatment Court	11	3	2
Liberty	Liberty County Veterans Treatment Court	6	3	0
McLennan	McLennan County Veterans Treatment Court	17	12	4

County of Court	Name of Court	*Number of veterans served	Number of veterans successfully completed	Number of veterans unsuccessfully completed
Midland	Midland County Veterans Treatment Court	17	6	4
Montgomery	359th Veterans Treatment Court	58	18	5
Collin, Fannin, Grayson, Kaufman, Rockwall	North Texas Regional Veterans Court	219	52	9
Nueces	Nueces County Veterans Treatment Court	31	11	0
Potter, Randall	Panhandle Regional Veterans Treatment Court	37	13	1
Smith	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	5	0	0
Smith	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	18	11	0
Tarrant	Tarrant County Veterans Treatment Court	135	63	1

County of Court	Name of Court	*Number of veterans served	Number of veterans successfully completed	Number of veterans unsuccessfully completed
Travis	Veterans Treatment Court	14	18	3
Duvall, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Maverick, Starr, Val Verde, Zapata	406th Veterans Treatment Court	35	15	22
Webb	Webb County Veterans Treatment Court	39	13	6
Williamson	Williamson County CC #2	71	28	2
Totals		1655	584	103

2024 Court Grant-Funding Sources Reported by County



County	Name of Court	TVC-Fund for Veterans Assistance (TVC-FVA)	Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division (CJD)	State of Texas Criminal Justice Division	Department Of Justice Grant	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	State Criminal Justice Fund 421 (SF 421) Fund)	Other
Bell	Bell County Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$56,636.20	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bexar	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	\$25,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bexar	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	\$300,000.00	\$87,160.11	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Brazoria	Brazoria County Veterans Treatment Court	\$75,000.00	\$138,932.76	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cameron	Cameron County Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$105,600.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Comal	Eugene E. Hooper Veterans Treatment Court	\$150,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Dallas	Dallas County Veterans Treatment Court	\$300,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Denton	Criminal Court #3	\$0	\$132,016.86	\$0	\$0	\$247,051.00	\$0	(All Rise) \$67,11.00
Ellis	Ellis County	\$110,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

County	Name of Court	TVC-Fund for Veterans Assistance (TVC-FVA)	Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division (CJD)	State of Texas Criminal Justice Division	Department Of Justice Grant	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	State Criminal Justice Fund 421 (SF (421) Fund)	Other
El Paso	346th El Paso Veterans Treatment Court	\$300,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fort Bend	County Court #2	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Galveston	Galveston County Veterans Treatment Court	\$250,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Guadalupe	Veterans Treatment Court	\$100,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Harris	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$101,085.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Harris	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$55,967.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hays	Hays County Veterans Treatment Court	\$300,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hidalgo	Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$98,313.56	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Jefferson	Jefferson County Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

County	Name of Court	TVC-Fund for Veterans Assistance (TVC-FVA)	Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division (CJD)	State of Texas Criminal Justice Division	Department Of Justice Grant	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	State Criminal Justice Fund 421 (SF (421) Fund)	Other
Liberty	Liberty County Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
McLennan	Veterans Treatment Court	\$100,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$187,500.00	\$0	\$0	\$0
Midland	Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Montgomery	Montgomery County Veterans Treatment Court	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Collin, Fannin, Grayson, Kaufman, Rockwall	North Texas Regional Veterans Court	\$400,000.00	\$149,643.20	\$0	\$18,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0
Neuces	Veterans Treatment Court	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Potter, Randall	Panhandle Regional Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Smith	Felony Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Smith	Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

County	Name of Court	TVC-Fund for Veterans Assistance (TVC-FVA)	Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division (CJD)	State of Texas Criminal Justice Division	Department Of Justice Grant	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	State Criminal Justice Fund 421 (SF 421) Fund)	Other
Tarrant	Veterans Treatment Court	\$159,529.53	\$128,593.10	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travis	Veterans Treatment Court	\$50,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Duvall, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Maverick, Starr, Val Verde, Zapata	406th Veterans Treatment Court	\$300,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Webb	Webb County Veterans Treatment Court	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$400,000.00	\$0	\$0
Williamson	Williamson County CC #2	\$210,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$241,370.00	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals		\$3,729,529.53	\$1,053,947.79	\$0	\$446,870.00	\$647,051.00	\$0	\$67,111.00
Grand Total								\$5,944,509.32

Based on the data collected for Fiscal Year 2024, from the total grant funding for the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Program (\$5,944,509.32), 63% of the total funding came from TVC Fund for Veterans Assistance; 18% of the funding came from the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Department; 8% of the funding came from the U.S. Department of Justice; and 11% of the funding came from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. It should be noted that the State Criminal Justice Fund 421 and the Bureau of Justice Assistance did not provide funding this fiscal year.

Program Achievements and Updates



McLennan County Veteran Treatment Court Updates

Submitted by Amy Lowrey MS, LPC-S, LCDC, PSS - Director of Specialty Courts

The McLennan County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) has made significant strides in enhancing its program. A partnership with a local university's doctoral program ensures evidence-based assessments and counseling, reflecting a commitment to high-quality support services for participants. The introduction of program enhancements, such as Relapse Prevention, Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), Seeking Safety, and Strength at Home groups, highlights a comprehensive approach to recovery and rehabilitation. Utilizing a designated Risk Need Assessment Tool (RANT) and other evidence-based assessments for program entry ensures personalized treatment plans tailored to each participant's needs. The implementation of a multi-track model, which targets high-risk/high-need (HR/HN) and low-risk/high-need (LR/HN) justice-involved veterans, allows for more precise interventions and support.

VTC's development of a formal onboarding process for new team members and the update of the operations manual underscore its commitment to organizational excellence, ensuring continuity and consistency in program delivery. Additionally, VTC has established peer support groups within the program, enabling veterans to connect and support one another. Collaboration with the local Veterans One Stop has led to the creation of a peer mentoring program, allowing veterans who have successfully completed the program to mentor newer participants by offering guidance, sharing experiences, and providing valuable support based on their own journey.

The program is continuously improving to better meet veterans' needs within the multi-track model, utilizing a high-risk/high-need and low-risk/high-need phase structure and employing risk assessments. In May 2024, three team members attended the RISE24 Conference, highlighting VTC's commitment to providing training opportunities for staff and volunteers on trauma-informed care, veteran-specific issues, and effective communication strategies. Well-trained staff and volunteers are better equipped to support veterans and create a positive program environment.

The McLennan County Veterans Treatment Court remains dedicated to providing substance use and mental health treatment to justice-involved participants. The emphasis on recruiting new veterans for programming and treatment, as well as increasing peer involvement, demonstrates a strong commitment to community and peer support. VTC recognizes that addressing the complex needs of justice-involved veterans is crucial, and by implementing these strategies and maintaining a focus on continuous improvement, the program can enhance its effectiveness and better serve the veteran community. Overall, McLennan County VTC's dedication to continuous improvement and collaboration with various stakeholders underscores its commitment to supporting the successful reintegration of justice-involved veterans into civilian life.



McLennan County VTC staff at Rise24 Conference in Anaheim, CA



McLennan County VTC Graduation July 2024

Brazoria County Veteran Treatment Court Updates

Submitted by Jennifer Grupe, Specialty Court Senior Officer Brazoria County

My time at Brazoria County Veteran's Court has underscored the value of incremental successes. This is exemplified by clients who, through our program, acknowledge self-neglect resulting from work, substance abuse, or other destructive habits, and veterans who break their silence in group settings. The far-reaching impact of our veterans' accomplishments on their own lives and others cannot be overstated. As the Veteran's Court team, we are honored to witness these achievements, however modest or significant, and remain humbled by the transformative power of our program. I have attached a thank you message from one of our participants.

“Hey there and Good Morning Jennifer,

I'm just sending this little note to let you, Steve, Terrance, and JUDGE Pulcher know how I (and Maxx too) appreciate the positivity. Just knowing that I have people in my corner means a lot to me.

Some days are rougher than others, but as long as I'm able to wake up in the morning, even though insomnia absolutely bites. Hopefully, I can pay it forward and help others struggling and make a difference. Once again, ‘THANK YOU!’ TO every one of you guys in the Veterans Court and taking a chance at helping me and giving me numerous POSITIVE resources.

Make sure you pass along and let everyone know I said THANK YOU!

NICK.....AND MAXX”

(FYI MAXX is this Veteran's Support Animal)

Our funding serves as a catalyst for lasting impact, enabling our clients to harness their strength and resilience to create a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Thank you.

Ellis County Veteran Treatment Court Updates

Submitted by **Brent Dorrrough, Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator, Ellis County**

Of note, I would like to draw attention to a few facts about our court. This is the first Specialty Court for Ellis County, and I was hired to build and run it on Jan. 16th. We were fully operational on 7/1/24 (in only 5.5 months).

I am the only employee of the VTC, we are operating off of one grant, and by the end of October, we will meet our annual quota requirement for that grant of 15 Veterans. We are crushing it down here!

All we are lacking is additional funding, and once we secure that we will grow the number of personnel on the VTC team and grow our footprint in the County!

Contact Information



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