



Supervisor Tony Buffington
Blue Ridge District
NewsFlash



Loudoun County Launches Veterans Treatment Docket

Provides Specialized Court Docket with Expanded Mental Health Services for Eligible Defendants with Military Service

Sent: December 1, 2022



The Virginia Supreme Court has approved Loudoun County's application to establish a Veterans Treatment Docket, which is now scheduled to launch in December. Veterans treatment dockets are specialized court dockets led by the General District Court within the existing structure of Virginia's court system that offer substance use and mental health treatment for eligible defendants.

Loudoun's specialty docket will serve justice-involved veterans of the U.S. military branches who have mental illness or co-occurring disorders.

The Loudoun County Veterans Treatment Docket is part of the county's efforts to expand access to mental health services and to support those who served in the military. The creation of the specialty court docket for veterans is part of a broader criminal justice reform effort supported by the Board of Supervisor's 2020-2023 Strategic Initiatives.

The Veterans Treatment Docket adopts many elements from the existing Mental Health Docket, including frequent court

appearances and individualized treatment plans. Substance use and mental health treatment are made available to justice-involved veterans as an alternative to traditional case processing. Participants receive regular and intense supervision from a team across public agencies that monitors the defendant's treatment and provides resources tailored to the defendant's particular needs. This approach helps keep the defendant on track toward illness management and recovery, reducing re-involvement in the criminal justice system. **One element of the veterans treatment docket model that sets it apart from the mental health docket model is the participation of veterans who serve as peer mentors.**

Individuals eligible for the Loudoun County Veterans Treatment Docket include defendants who are:

- **18 years of age or older and reside in Loudoun County.**
- **Charged with a misdemeanor offense or felony that has been reduced to a misdemeanor.**
- **Experiencing mental health issues meeting the criteria of serious mental illness based on the diagnosis, intensity, and duration or meet the criteria for a co-occurring diagnosis.**
- **Assessed at a medium to high risk of recidivism.**
- **Have prior military service, regardless of discharge, within the six U.S. branches (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, or Space Force) or the National Guard.**

Additional eligibility criteria may apply.

The Loudoun County Veterans Treatment Docket was developed through a comprehensive, two-year process that included the creation of a task force whose members conducted a feasibility study and completed implementation training.

The Veterans Treatment Docket provides support and services from a collaborative team of federal, state and county agencies, including:

- Loudoun County Department of Community Corrections
- Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services
- Loudoun County General District Court
- Loudoun County Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney
- Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
- Loudoun Office of the Public Defender
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Virginia Department of Veterans Services

More information about the county's health and human services programs, including services for veterans, is online at loudoun.gov/humanservices.



All our best!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Buffington".

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