

Illinois Problem-Solving Court Training Checklist

Training and Education Plan Checklists for Defense Attorneys



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Defense Attorneys

Congratulations on your new assignment in a problem-solving court (PSC). If you've ever presided in a traditional criminal court, then you know that almost sixty percent of all individuals arrested for any crime test positive for one or more illegal drugs at the time of arrest; eighty percent of incarcerated individuals used substances before their arrest; and fifty percent of all jail and prison inmates are clinically addicted ([Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)). Nearly 15 percent of men and 30 percent of women booked into jails have a serious mental health condition ([NAMI](#)). Incarceration has little or no impact on either recidivism or recovery. Sixty to eighty percent who struggle with substance use are charged with a new crime after release from prison ([Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)). Nearly ninety-five percent also return to drug use after release from prison.

Fortunately, there is a solution – problem-solving courts. The mission of a problem-solving court is to enhance public safety and promote a participant's recovery and self-sufficiency through intensive judicial supervision coupled with community-based treatment and support services. Utilizing a non-adversarial team approach, a problem-solving court crafts novel, coordinated solutions to create the structure and environment needed to help its participants achieve recovery. Over time, PSC participants transform themselves into productive, law-abiding citizens.

The following curriculum outline is designed for the defense attorney of a problem-solving court. Rest assured, the task of getting through the materials will not be as daunting as it might first appear. The materials have been prepared by highly respected experts in their fields and are designed to equip you with the tools and knowledge necessary to be an effective member of a problem-solving court.

By studying these materials, some of the principles you'll learn include the "Ten Key Components" – the philosophical foundation upon which all problem-solving courts are built. You'll learn about the effectiveness of incentives and sanctions and how they are utilized to change a participant's behavior. You will learn the difference between proximal, distal, and managed goals and how the distinction between the two will impact the incentives, sanctions, and service adjustments delivered in response to a certain behavior. You will learn to advocate against sanctions that create a "ceiling effect" or "habituation." You will learn about trauma and co-occurring disorders and how they impact a participant's recovery. You will learn the importance of terminology and how certain phrases can stigmatize the participant and get in the way of recovery.

Congratulations again on your new assignment. You are now part of a community of courts that is much more effective in reducing crime than any other alternative because a problem-solving court is the only court in our system of justice which addresses and treats substance use and mental health diagnosis.

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Completed	Defense Attorney Training Requirements	Applicable Court				
		DC	MHC	VTC	JDC	DUI
Complete Upon Assignment to the PSC and Prior to Starting the New Role						
Review the following resources from the Illinois Statutes on Problem-Solving Courts						
☐	Drug Treatment Court Act (10 min)	X				X
☐	Mental Health Court Treatment Act (10 min)		X			
☐	Veterans and Servicemembers Court Treatment Act (10 min)			X		
☐	Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Act (10 min)				X	
☐	Illinois Problem-Solving Courts Standards (2 hrs)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Conditional Certification Document (15 min)	X	X	X		X
Review the following national best practice guidance						
☐	Defining Drug Court: The Key Components (1 hr)	X				X
☐	Improving Responses to Persons with Mental Illnesses: The Essential Elements of a Mental Health Court (30 min)		X			
☐	Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Court (10 min)			X		
☐	Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines (OJJDP)				X	
☐	Receive and read the program policy and procedure manual	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Receive and read the program participant handbook	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Complete the Council of State Courts Mental Health Court Curriculum modules: Introduction to Behavioral Health (16 min), Introduction to Criminal Justice (19 min), and Module 3: The Mental Health Court Team (25 min)		X	X		
☐	Meet with a supervisor, manager, or other relevant leadership position within your agency to understand how you fit into the problem-solving court team, review role expectations and responsibilities as a member of the team, discuss program history including challenges, barriers, and successes (1-2 hrs)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Attend staffing and court (3 hrs)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Review SAMHSA's Working Definition of Recovery by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (10 min)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Meet with program coordinator to understand how you fit into the problem-solving court team and review role expectations and	X	X	X	X	X

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	responsibilities as a member of the team, discuss program history, including challenges, barriers, and recent successes					
	Complete Within 6 Months of Joining PSC					
Complete the All Rise E-Learning Sessions (You will be asked to create a user log-in to save your progress)						
☐	Essential Elements: Assessment and Treatment (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Essential Elements: Co-Occurring Disorders (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Essential Elements: Confidentiality and Ethics (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Essential Elements: Drug Testing (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Essential Elements: Introduction to the VA (1 hr)			X		
☐	Essential Elements: Military Culture (1 hr)			X		
☐	Essential Elements: Psychopharmacology (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Essential Elements: PTSD (1 hr)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Essential Elements: Recurrence (1 hr)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Essential Elements: Role of the Mentor in VTC (1 hr)			X		
	Complete the remaining Council of State Courts Mental Health Court Curriculum modules					
☐	Module 1: Understanding Mental Health Courts (27 min)		X			
☐	Module 2: Your Community, Your Mental Health Court (22 min)		X			
☐	Module 4: Target Population (22 min)		X			
☐	Module 5: Designing Policies and Procedures for Program Participation (30 min)		X			
☐	Module 6: Case Planning (20 min)		X			
☐	Module 7: Facilitating the Success of Mental Health Court Participants (21 min)		X			
☐	Meet with a treatment provider on the team to understand confidentiality, HIPAA, and treatment reports	X	X	X	X	X
	Review the following All Rise Publications					
☐	Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards All Rise	X	X	X		X
☐	Practicum for Treatment Court Defense Attorneys	X	X	X	X	X

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☐	Reference Guide for Treatment Court Defense Attorneys	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Monograph Series: Critical Issues for Defense Attorneys	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Targeting the Right Participants for Adult Drug Court at All Rise	X		X		X
☐	Incentives, Sanctions, and Service Adjustments Reference Guide	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Behavior Modification 101 for Drug Courts: Making the Most of Incentives and Sanctions at All Rise	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Six Steps to Improve Outcomes for Your Drug Court Outcomes for Adults with Co-Occurring Disorders at All Rise	X		X	X	X
☐	Visit another problem-solving court from the AOIC list of approved PSCs in Illinois from outside of your jurisdiction, meet with the designee from your profession and learn about their role, and observe how the team collaborates and consider what your own team might do to improve	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Visit a community treatment facility used by the PSC	X	X	X	X	X
Complete the All Rise E-Learning Sessions (You will be asked to create a user log-in to save your progress)						
☐	Standard: Target Population (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Standard: Role and Responsibility of the Judge (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Standard: Complementary Treatment & Social Services (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Standard: Drug and Alcohol Testing (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Standard: Multidisciplinary Team (1 hr)	X	X	X		X
☐	Veteran Mentor Coordinator (1 hr)			X		
Complete Within 1 Year of Joining PSC						
☐	Attend any in-person trainings offered through All Rise or the Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts Conference.	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Review article " Exercises for Developing MI Skills in Corrections " on motivational interviewing (2 hrs)	X	X	X	X	X
☐	Naloxone Training for Treatment Court Professionals and Families (10 min)	X	X	X	X	X
	All Rise E-Learning Center					

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☐	Veterans and Trauma (1 hr)			X		
☐	Understanding Opioid Use Disorder (1 hr)	X	X	X		