



## CONNECTICUT'S DRUG COURTS

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### DRUG COURTS

- Connecticut operates "drug courts" or drug intervention programs in Danielson and New Haven.
- According to the [National Institute of Justice](#), 3,416 drug courts exist nationwide.

### ISSUE

Describe Connecticut's "drug courts," including how they operate, how many people use them, how much they cost, and whether they are effective.

### SUMMARY

There are two "drug courts" currently operating in Connecticut: one in Danielson and one in New Haven. Neither is a separate court, with separate staff and

facilities. Rather, they handle their cases separately from other pending cases and have special contracts or arrangements with drug treatment service providers. The Judicial Branch calls this the Drug Intervention Program. The branch states that these programs attempt to decrease criminal behavior and reduce substance abuse through residential and day treatment, supervision, court monitoring, and other strategies.

According to the Judicial Branch, as of November 9, 2015, there were seven active participants in the Danielson program and 33 active participants in the New Haven program. As of November 17, 2015, there were 12 additional candidates being assessed for acceptance into the programs.

The branch previously operated a Drug Intervention Program in Bridgeport as well. In 2013, the programs' case management contractor decided not to continue with the program. Subsequently, bail commissioners provided case management services for the remaining active cases and new referrals into late 2014. These cases were resolved in 2015 and there are no active cases. The branch issued two requests for proposals for contractors in 2014 which were unsuccessful and it currently has no plans to reactivate the Bridgeport program.



The Judicial Branch has not formally evaluated these programs since they took their current form in 2004-2005. The branch provided data for each program showing the number of participants in recent years, how many succeeded in the program, and how many failed. We provide this data in Table 1 below.

For FY 15 and FY 16, the Judicial Branch has contracts with private providers for (1) 16 residential treatment beds at an annual cost of \$515,477 and (2) case management services at an annual cost of \$397,344.

## **DRUG INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

### ***Statutory Authority***

State law authorizes drug dockets and drug courts but does not distinguish the two.

The law authorizes the chief court administrator to establish in any court location a separate docket for hearing criminal or juvenile matters in which a defendant is a drug-dependent person. The docket must be available to offenders who could benefit from placement in a substance abuse treatment program ([CGS § 51-181b\(a\)](#)).

The law requires the chief court administrator to establish, within the appropriations designated in [Public Act 03-1](#) of the June 30 special session, one or more drug courts to hear criminal or juvenile matters in which a defendant is a drug-dependent person, who could benefit from placement in a substance abuse treatment program ([CGS § 51-181b\(b\)](#)).

### ***Program Details***

According to the Judicial Branch, the Drug Intervention Program handles many different kinds of cases with substance abuse as a main issue. The Judicial Branch has limited this program to non-violent drug dependent defendants. A judge, defense counsel, the state's attorney, a supervision officer, or an intake, assessment, and referral specialist (a Judicial Branch employee) can refer someone to the program at any time during the court process of a case.

Once in the program, a defendant:

1. must come to court regularly, usually for 12 to 15 months, so the court can track his or her behavior;
2. must agree to drug testing;
3. may be ordered by the court to undergo substance abuse treatment, including detoxification, in-patient treatment, and intensive outpatient treatment; and
4. may be ordered by the court to take vocational and educational training.

The judge, courthouse staff, and treatment and social service staff work together to monitor a defendant's progress. Defendants may also be supervised daily through alternative incarceration centers.

The branch states that defendants who successfully complete the program may have their cases resolved more favorably, such as through a suspended sentence instead of a prison term.

### **Program Usage and Outcomes**

The Judicial Branch provided us with data for each program showing the number of participants in recent years, how many succeeded in the program, and how many failed. Table 1 displays this data for the Danielson and New Haven programs and the currently inactive Bridgeport program. Data on the Bridgeport program is only available since 2009.

**Table 1: Drug Intervention Participants and Outcomes**

<b>Danielson</b>													
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>*2015</b>	<b>Total</b>
Participants	1	19	28	31	22	22	25	20	13	20	16	7	224
Graduates	0	7	14	19	5	9	10	14	8	11	10	3	110
Graduation Rate	0%	37%	50%	61%	23%	41%	40%	70%	62%	55%	63%	43%	49%
Number Rearrested	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	3	8
Number Failed/Sentenced	1	11	14	12	17	13	13	5	4	9	6	3	108
Rearrest and Failure Rate	100%	63%	50%	39%	77%	59%	60%	30%	38%	45%	38%	86%	52%
<b>New Haven</b>													
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>*2015</b>	<b>Total</b>
Participants	1	56	139	122	95	74	92	71	73	83	55	32	893
Graduates	0	20	73	73	58	54	55	36	40	44	23	17	493
Graduation Rate	0%	36%	53%	60%	61%	73%	60%	51%	55%	53%	42%	53%	55%
Number Rearrested	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	13
Number Failed/Sentenced	1	36	66	49	37	20	37	35	33	39	25	9	387
Rearrest and Failure Rate	100%	64%	47%	40%	39%	27%	40%	49%	45%	47%	58%	47%	45%
<b>Bridgeport</b>													
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Total</b>
Participants	-	-	-	-	-	22	14	40	71	42	16	4	209
Graduates	-	-	-	-	-	17	7	25	24	13	7	2	95
Graduation Rate	-	-	-	-	-	53%	50%	63%	34%	31%	44%	50%	46%
Number Rearrested	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number Failed/Sentenced	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	15	47	29	9	2	114
Rearrest and Failure Rate	-	-	-	-	-	23%	50%	37%	66%	69%	56%	50%	56%

Note: \*Partial year data.

## Program Costs

For FY 15 and FY 16, the Judicial Branch has contracts with private providers for 16 residential treatment beds at an annual cost of \$515,477. Table 2 displays the providers, number of beds, and the cost of each provider's contract.

**Table 2: Contracted Providers of Residential Treatment Beds for the Programs**

Provider	Beds	Cost
Liberation Programs	5	\$155,565
Crossroads	10	292,610
Recovery Network of Programs	1	67,302
Total	16	515,477

The Judicial Branch also contracts with private providers for case management services at an annual cost of \$397,344 for FY 15 and FY 16, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Case Management Contractors, Available Slots, and Cost**

Court	Provider	Slots	Cost
New Haven	Cornell Scott Hill Health/Grant Street Program	60	\$220,690
Danielson	Perception Programs	20	176,654
Total		106	397,344

## DRUG COURT NATIONALLY

According to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), there are 3,416 drug courts nationwide. More than half of these serve adults with drug problems (1,538) and drug and drunk driving problems (448). Others target juveniles, families, veterans, or other groups. NIJ indicates that these drug courts vary in the groups they serve, their design, and the services they offer. But, NIJ states that the drug court model generally includes (1) screening and assessing defendants based on their risks, needs, and responsiveness to programs; (2) judicial interaction; (3) monitoring; (4) graduated sanctions and incentives; and (5) treatment and rehabilitation services. More research is available at:

- <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/238527.pdf> (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *Drug Courts*, June 2015)
- <http://www.nij.gov/topics/courts/drug-courts/Pages/welcome.aspx> (National Institute of Justice, *Drug Courts*)

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