

# This is an archived Press Release from NJ Courts

## [New Jersey Courts](#)

[|Press Releases Home|](#)

For immediate release: May 2, 2006  
For further information contact: Winnie Comfort or Tammy Kendig  
609-292-9580

### New Jersey Courts Observe National Drug Court Month Camden Drug Court Celebrates 10th Anniversary

The Camden Vicinage of New Jersey Superior Court is celebrating a decade of success in helping drug offenders rebuild their lives, while drug courts around the state have scheduled commencement ceremonies, public education seminars and other events in observance of National Drug Court Month, today announced Philip S. Carchman, J.A.D., acting administrative director of the courts.

"Drug courts are saving lives and rehabilitating offenders in New Jersey and across the country," said Judge Carchman. "Drug courts are a cost-effective, sensible alternative to incarceration for those who truly want to break their addiction and become productive citizens."

First introduced as a pilot program in Camden County, drug courts have proven successful in breaking the cycle of drug abuse and crime by combining treatment programs with strict oversight by the courts. The judge, attorneys, substance abuse evaluators, treatment professionals and specially trained probation officers on the drug court team work closely with participants to provide them with every opportunity to achieve and maintain sobriety.

Begun as a pilot program in 1996, the Camden County drug court is celebrating a decade of successful operation. Carol Venditto, the statewide drug court coordinator, emphasized that the Camden Drug Court has served as a model for other drug court programs around the state. Noting that many of the probation officers on the Camden drug court team have been with the program since its inception, she said, "We are grateful to them for paving the way for the rest of the state. I don't know anyone who did not come away from a visit to the Camden County drug court impressed and enthusiastic about starting their own program," she said.

More than 5,500 non-violent drug addicted offenders have enrolled in New Jersey's adult drug court program since 1996. Since then, 571 have graduated, and 2,400 currently are enrolled. Studies conducted on program graduates show that, at the time of graduation, 94 percent had obtained full-time jobs, about half had obtained medical insurance and regained their driver's licenses, and 13 percent had improved their level of education. Collectively, the graduates have paid more than \$582,000 in court-imposed fines, fees and penalties.

Within three years of graduation, graduate re-arrest rates remain low at 14 percent, and re-convictions for a new indictable offense are at 6 percent. Successful drug court graduates are employed, supporting their families, remaining clean and sober and participating in positive community activities.

Through the Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice Subcommittee of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, the adult drug courts and county municipal alliances are developing a series of joint presentations throughout the state to share information about their respective programs and collaborate on the common goals of prevention and recovery support. Joint presentation events have been held in Middlesex and Ocean Counties and planning is underway for events in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties.

Below is a list of upcoming drug court events. For more information on New Jersey's drug courts go to [njcourtsonline.com](http://njcourtsonline.com).

**All month**

Passaic County will hold an open house during their drug court sessions. Sessions are held every Tuesday at 9:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. Call Adrien Byrd at 973-247-8343 for details.

**May 2**

Middlesex County will hold their second drug court commencement ceremony in New Brunswick. Call Tammy D'Aloia at 732-981-2131 for details.

**May 4**

Burlington County will hold their first drug court commencement ceremony in Mount Holly. Call Donna Westoven at 609-518-2747 for details.

**May 5**

Camden County will celebrate their drug court's 10th anniversary. Call Scott DeCicco at 856-379-2200 x3358 for details.

**May 15**

Essex County is hosting a treatment provider open house. Call James Dunnemann at 973-693-5983 for details.

**May 16**

Hudson County will host a presentation by Partners in Prevention to be given to the Hudson County drug court participants in Jersey City. Call Patricia DellOsso at 201-795-6882 for details.

**May 16**

Monmouth County will hold a drug court session at the Neptune Municipal Court. Later in the month the drug court will host presentations to the active participants by drug court graduates and representatives from the Council on Compulsive Gambling. Call Adri Lieb at 732-677-4551 for details.

**May 22**

Morris County will hold a commencement ceremony in Morristown. Call Charles Johnson at 973-656-4197 for details.

**May 25**

Sussex County will hold a commencement ceremony in Newton. Call Charles Johnson at 973-656-4197 for details.

**June 1**

Essex County will hold a commencement ceremony in Newark. Call James Dunnemann at 973-693-5983 for details.

**June 6**

Ocean County is holding a commencement ceremony in Toms River. In addition, winners of the month-long art and writing contests will be announced that day. Call Carole Martin at 732-929-2125 for details.