



SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
COUNTIES OF
ATLANTIC AND CAPE MAY
VICINAGE I

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Atlantic/Cape May Drug Court Holds 11th Graduation Ceremonies

The Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage will conduct drug court graduation ceremonies on Tuesday, May 28 and on Wednesday, May 29.

The Atlantic County ceremony will be held on May 28 at 1 p.m. in the jury assembly room on the first floor of the Atlantic County Criminal Courts Building, 4997 Unami Blvd., Mays Landing. Five participants will graduate from the 5-year program, and four participants will commence to the final phase of the program.

The Cape May ceremony will be held on May 29 at 11 a.m. in courtroom D of the Cape May County Courthouse, 9 North Main St., Cape May Court House. Four participants will graduate from the program and four will commence into the final phase.

Superior Court Judge Michael R. Connor, on recall, will preside over the events. Michael DeLeo from Steered Straight, Inc. will be the keynote speaker in Atlantic County. Jennifer McClendon from the John Brooks Recovery Center will be the keynote speaker in Cape May County. Assignment Judge Julio L. Mendez and Trial Court Administrator Howard H. Berchtold Jr. will offer comments at both ceremonies.

The drug court program is a highly specialized team process within the existing Superior Court structure that addresses nonviolent drug-related cases. Drug courts are unique in the criminal justice environment because they build a close collaborative relationship between criminal justice and the drug treatment professionals.

Drug court programs are rigorous, requiring completion of four phases during five years of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and testing. Participants follow a tightly structured regimen of treatment and recovery. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process, but also allows supervisors to react swiftly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants do not comply with the program.

For additional information regarding drug court or the graduation ceremonies, contact program coordinator Celeste Goodson at 609-909-8113.

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