

New Jersey Recovery Courts

Atlantic County	609-402-0100
Bergen County	201-221-0700
Burlington County	609-288-9500
Camden County	856-650-9100
Cape May County	609-402-0100
Cumberland County	856-878-5050
Essex County	973-776-9300
Gloucester County	856-878-5050
Hudson County	201-748-4400
Hunterdon County	908-824-9750
Mercer County	609-571-4200
Middlesex County	732-645-4300
Monmouth County	732-358-8700
Morris County	862-397-5700
Ocean County	732-504-0700
Passaic County	973-653-2910
Salem County	856-878-5050
Somerset County	908-332-7700
Sussex County	862-397-5700
Union County	908-787-1650
Warren County	908-750-8100

CORNELL R. WILLIAMSON
STATEWIDE RECOVERY COURT MANAGER
609-815-3810 ext. 55316
Cornell.Williamson@njcourts.gov

The Judiciary's recovery court program operates within the Superior Court to address non-violent drug addicted offenders who are struggling with substance use.

The program requires completion of distinct phases of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and recovery. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process but also allows the recovery court team to react quickly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants do not comply.



STUART RABNER
CHIEF JUSTICE

MICHAEL J. BLEE, J.A.D.
ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COURTS

LARRY ASHBRIDGE
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PROBATION SERVICES

CN10844 - JULY 2025

New Jersey Judiciary

RECOVERY COURTS WORK

For more information about the adult recovery court program, go to www.njcourts.gov and search for recovery courts.

Why do we need recovery courts?

Recovery courts substantially reduce drug use and recidivism while offenders are in the program by closely supervising offenders in the community, placing and monitoring them within treatment programs, and by providing treatment and related services to offenders soon after arrest.

Recovery courts have generated significant cost savings by replacing costly per inmate annual incarceration costs with less expensive treatment services. Nationally, recovery courts also have helped reduce racial disparity in the prison population.

How do recovery courts work?

Prospective recovery court defendants come under the court's supervision as early as possible after arrest, but they also can enter the program at other stages of their case.

After acceptance to recovery court, participants begin clinical treatment that generally lasts from one to two years. Participants are required to attend treatment sessions, undergo random substance use tests, meet regularly with probation officers and appear frequently before the recovery court judge.

Who is eligible for recovery court?

New Jersey's recovery courts target substance abusing adult defendants who have undergone a legal review and clinical assessment by recovery court team members. Persons excluded from participation in recovery court include those who have previous convictions or pending charges for a violent offense. Other eligibility criteria and exclusions apply.

Mandatory recovery court

A law passed in July 2012 to expand the existing voluntary recovery court and compel additional drug offenders into the program. The "special probation" statute was amended on July 1, 2013, to require admission to the recovery court program for eligible offenders regardless of whether they made a voluntary application. As of July 2017, all recovery courts in the state are mandatory recovery courts.

Clinical screening and assessment

The Judiciary's substance abuse evaluator conducts an interview of the applicant once the applicant has been deemed eligible. The substance abuse evaluation will include the following: the extent of the applicant's drug and alcohol use, substance use diagnosis of the applicant based on criteria such as substance abuse treatment history, medical and psychological issues, level of care needed, and relevant psychosocial concerns.

What do recovery courts offer?

New Jersey's recovery courts include a multi-phased judicial process coupled with treatment services and intensive probation supervision.

Program Elements

- Regular court appearances
- Frequent, random drug testing
- Detoxification, if necessary
- Residential programs, if needed
- Intensive outpatient programs
- Individual and group counseling
- Participation in mutual aid groups
- Engagement in prosocial activities
- Self-help groups
- Relapse prevention
- Sanctions and incentives
- Community service requirements

Medication assisted treatment

Prior to sentencing, participants can obtain detox and outpatient services at no cost. Utilization of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) during the recovery court program is a clinically driven decision.

Participants can enter recovery court on MAT, remain on MAT throughout recovery court and graduation or they can be evaluated and begin the use of MAT while in recovery court.

Expungements

If a participant is deemed eligible, their record will be expunged upon graduation from the recovery court program. Expungement is not guaranteed and not everyone who graduates eligible for expungement.

Best practice standards

The New Jersey recovery courts follow the best practice standards developed by All Rise, formally the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.

The standards document represents 25 years of empirical study on addiction, pharmacology, behavioral health, and criminal justice. These standards are the foundation upon which all adult recovery courts must operate. They transform how the justice system responds to people in crisis.