

NEWSLETTER

VIRGINIA SPECIALTY DOCKETS



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Training Coordinator, Danny Livengood

REFLECTING ON THE 2023 DUI TRAINING

Thank you to the 377 of you who made it to the 15th annual Virginia DUI/Specialty Dockets Training in Norfolk. The 3-day training welcomed presenters from across the field to share about best practices, harm reduction, Veteran specific tools, and more over 17 sessions. It was encouraging to hear the conversations about how to move specialty dockets forward, and to see the connection from dockets across the state working towards creating change in their communities. Thank you to all who provided feedback in order to improve and expand for next year!

THE INAUGURAL VIRGINIA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUMMIT

The inaugural Virginia Judicial Behavioral Health Summit will be held on October 30- November 1, 2023. Chief Judges have been invited to participate with their teams.

FREE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

How Being Trauma-informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses training (4 hrs) and/or Mental Health First Aid training (7.5 hrs) are available upon request.

Please email

specialtydockets@vacourts.gov

for more information or to schedule this training.

In March 2020, the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) created the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness to assist state courts in their efforts to more effectively respond to the needs of court-involved individuals with serious mental illness. With that mission in mind, the Supreme Court of Virginia convenes this important Summit. The Summit will combine educational sessions with opportunities for jurisdictional team planning, geared towards improving systemic responses to individuals with mental illness. The Summit will consist of a dynamic combination of plenary sessions, interactive panel presentations, and jurisdictional team planning sessions.



Miami-Dade Judge Steve Leifman, a national leader in criminal justice reform has specifically worked to reform the way people with mental health disorders are treated inside the criminal justice system. Pictured: Judge Leifman inside the Miami-Dade Criminal Mental Health Project with Virginia Behavioral Health Docket judges & Specialty Dockets Coordinator.

RECONVICTION DATA

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY

The Virginia Department of Corrections and the Virginia Office of the Executive Secretary use the word “recidivism” in specific and technically defined - but different - ways. Therefore, “Recidivism rates” studies and reports from these groups are not comparable. However, details in these reports do overlap – specifically in “reconviction” data.

Both offices report reconviction data for 3 years after exit; this data tracks how many people have been reconvicted within 3 years of their exit (from incarceration for the DOC or drug court for OES). The importance of this longer duration metric is in evaluating sustained recovery and rehabilitation.

While the features of the reconviction status and 3-year duration line up, the below charts are not for directly comparable populations. The OES reports ([Sources 1, 2, 3, 4](#)) are exclusively for offenders with drug and drug motivated offences by those (primarily) with substance use disorder, while the report published by the Virginia DOC in January 2023, “[Recidivism at a glance](#),” gives data for all formerly incarcerated individuals, including an unknown portion of non-similar offences/population. However, in a [news press release](#) published by the DOC, they recognize that “inmates with a history of testing positive for both opioids and cocaine [...] had a re-incarceration rate substantially higher than those with no history of testing positive for opioids or cocaine. “This indicates that substance-using offenders are driving up their recidivism metric by a “substantial” amount. It can be extrapolated that if the DOC report did pull out data for like-offences/populations, that number would be some amount higher than their below reported overall reconviction numbers.

Chart 1 on the following page shows 3-year reconviction data for persons exiting incarceration in 2015, 2016, and 2017 in solid grey. In solid orange and blue, it shows the non-graduate and graduate 3-year reconviction rates for persons exiting drug court in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively.

The trend lines in chart 1 and reframed as a bar graph in chart 2 indicate what the average reconviction rate is per the annual reports (not compiled data) – in other words, drug court graduates tend to have a reconviction rate close to 18% on each annual report. Non graduates tend to have a reconviction rate close to 29% on each annual report. Former inmates tend to have a reconviction rate close to 46% on the DOC report.

RECONVICTION DATA

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY CONTINUED

CHART 1:

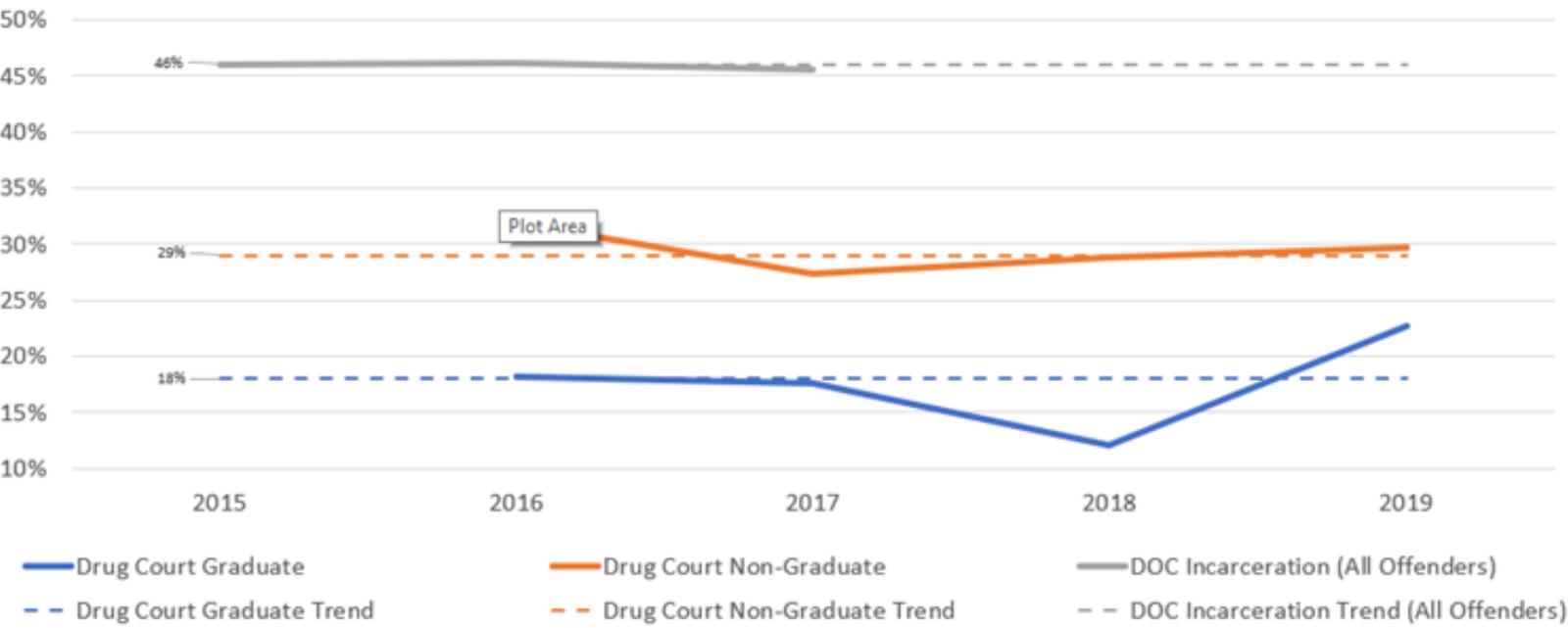
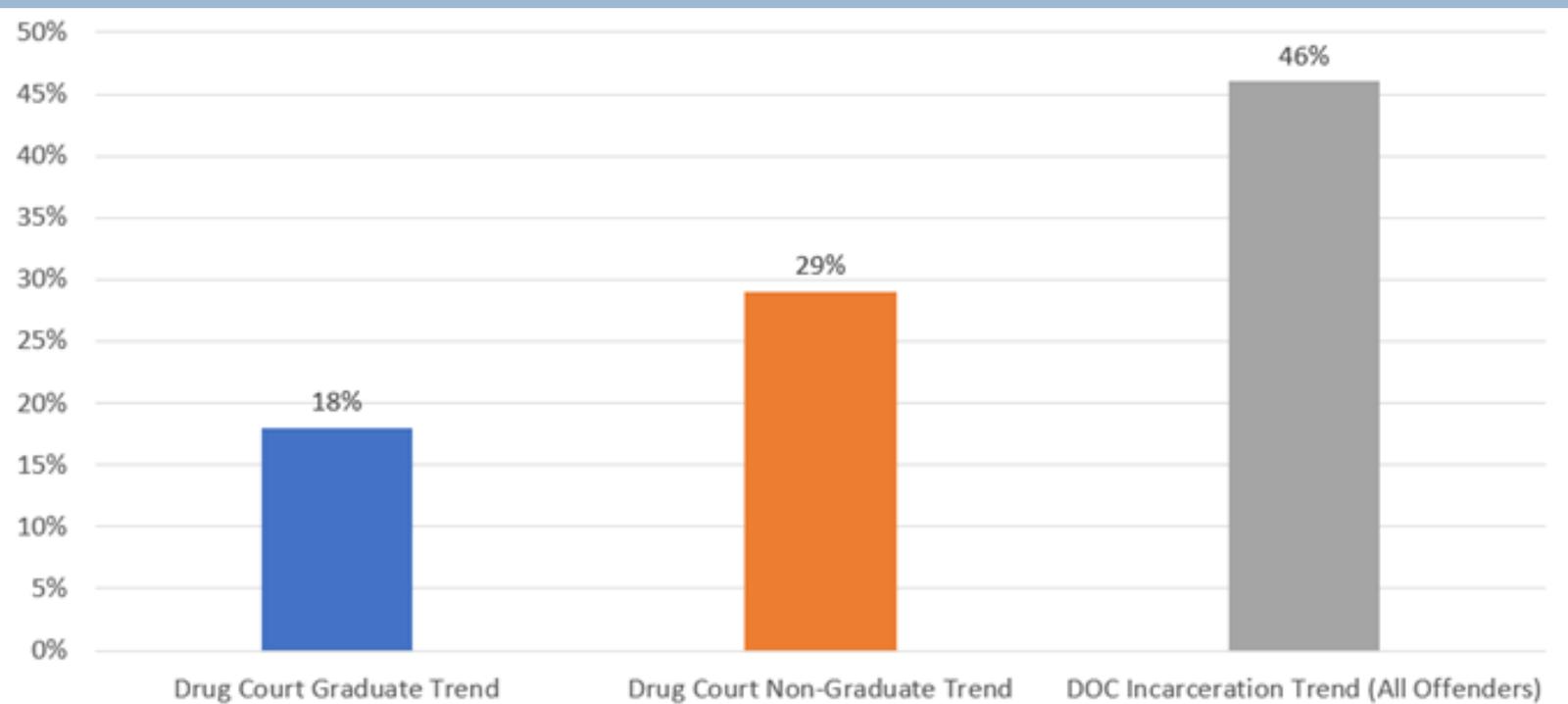


CHART 2:



GRANT UPDATES

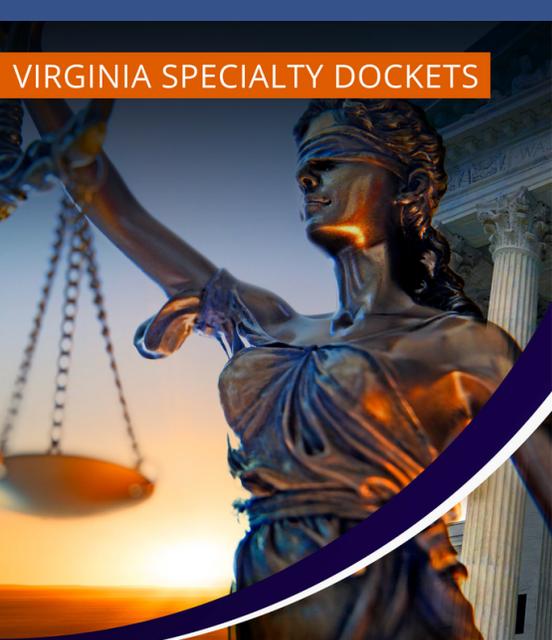
Grant Management Analyst, Auriel Diggs

OPIOID ABATEMENT FUNDS

The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia (OES) was selected to receive \$500,000 from the Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA). OES is tasked with developing a statewide best practices standard for drug testing in all alternative's dockets. A grant program will be formed to offer financial assistance to localities to fund drug testing programs that implement the new standard. Our team is currently working on the statewide drug testing best practice standard and more information will be made available soon.

NOTICE OF DMV FUNDS

The Office of the Executive Secretary was awarded a grant from the Highway Safety Office at Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The grant period starts October 1, 2023, and ends on September 30, 2024. This grant is very important as it funds our Annual DUI Specialty Dockets Training. The grant also provides resources to send staff to the All Rise Conference in May 2024.





Behavioral Health Dockets



Drug Treatment Court Dockets



Veterans Treatment Dockets

specialtydockets@vacourts.gov

Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary
Supreme Court of Virginia

Vehicle crash fatalities are still at an all-time high. In 2023, the total number of traffic fatalities was 1,005. DMV reported of the 1,005 traffic fatalities 53% were unrestrained. The campaign slogan for this year is "Do just 1 more." Reach out to one more person, school, staff, community and it could save a life. We will be sending out information to all Coordinators throughout the year and encourage each program to participate in as many campaigns as possible. Fatalities are 94% behavior related so let's do our part to assist with reducing fatalities by 9%.

We are requesting all Specialty Dockets administer drug/alcohol test to participants for the following holidays, Thanksgiving, New Year's, Memorial Day, and Labor Day. More information will come out closer to the Thanksgiving holiday.



Thank you for joining us at the 2023 DUI Annual Training, the first statewide training that included how to administer and distribute Narcan to all attendees courtesy of the Chris Atwood Foundation

[\(https://www.thecaf.org/\)](https://www.thecaf.org/)

COMING 2024: DATAGAIN/DIMS

Database Analyst, Celin Job

ROLLOUT EXPECTATION

As you may have heard, we are transitioning to a new database system! Datagain/DIMS is used by specialty dockets in states across the country, and Virginia will be joining them. To create a smooth transition, the database is being piloted by 11 localities before being implemented statewide. The coordinators, treatment providers, and others from those counties have been thoroughly trained and are working with the database team to ensure that the features will work well with specialty dockets across the Commonwealth of Virginia. We know new technology can be intimidating, so rest assured that when it's time for all of the dockets to get on board there will be plenty of training and support.

NEW DRUG ALERT

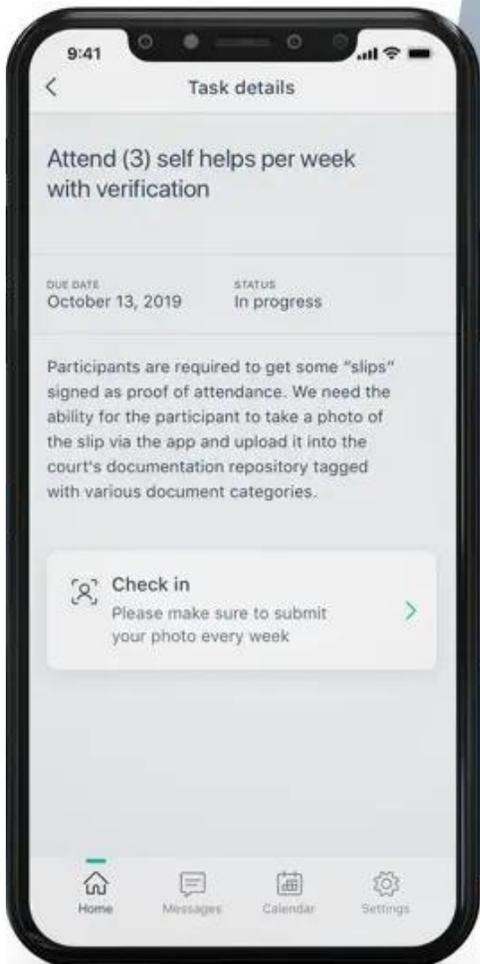
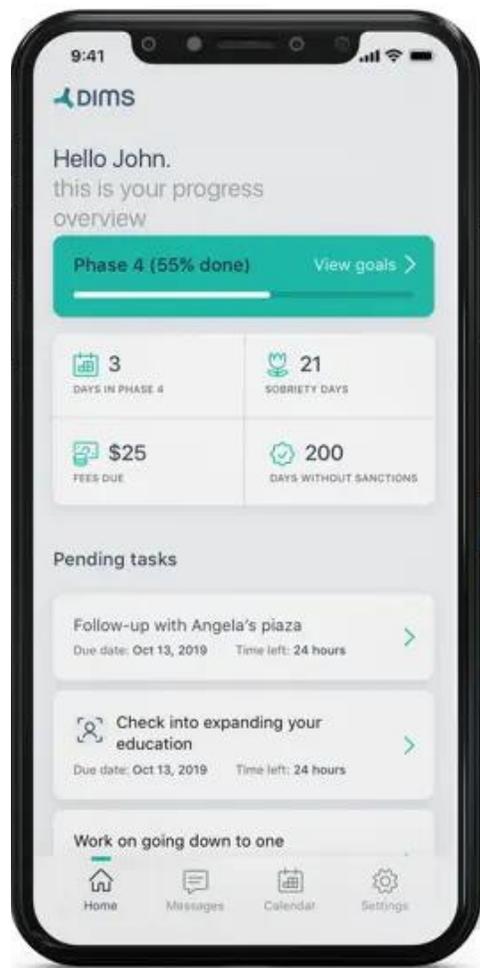
Docket teams should be aware of the rise of Xylazine, a tranquilizer not approved for use in humans but being seen more frequently mixed with cocaine, heroin and fentanyl. Xylazine is a depressant that can lower heart rates, cause labored breathing, skin ulcers, and death. There has been a significant increase in Xylazine. It is recommended to use Naloxone on suspected overdoses because it is often used in conjunction with opioids.

KEY FEATURES

- User friendly.
- Ability to run more local reports.
- Easily track incentives and sanctions.
- Work with an app that allows participants to track their own phase progressions and staff to send positive affirmations and reminders.
- Web based; no VPN connection needed.

WHAT THE PILOT SITE SAYS

One of our pilot users reports she “found DIMS to be very easy to navigate, easy to enter information, and much more streamlined”.



Compliance Analysts, Liane Hanna and Olivia Terranova

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A COMPLIANCE ANALYST?

The Specialty Dockets division added two newly created positions to the team! Specialty Dockets Compliance Analysts, Liane Hanna and Olivia Terranova, are assisting all Virginia Specialty Dockets to ensure that state and national standards and best practices are being implemented. Our specialty docket analysts have already begun conducting familiarity visits across the state to learn about each unique location. The specialty docket compliance analysts strive to assist teams with implementing best practices. Be on the lookout for announcements regarding statewide trainings about Virginia’s best practices. We look forward to working with everyone!

BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT: DRUG TESTING

According to the National Best Practices, dockets should be testing participants at least twice a week at random during the first phase by a trained professional staff member assigned to or authorized by the drug court. This should include holidays and weekends.

MEET THE TEAM

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HOUSING BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS

OVERCOMING BARRIERS

Using grant funds from Roads to Recovery, Russell County Recovery Center had their open house on July 28th after years of planning and coordinating to fill the housing gap in their community. The recovery center addresses a major lack of sober, safe and stable housing for individuals with substance use disorders, a barrier that Specialty Docket teams across Virginia are familiar with. The recovery center used a former nursing home to create a bright, positive, and welcoming home for residents. With encouraging messages covering the walls, 12 bedrooms with 2 beds per room, and support of the community, the recovery center will be sure to support a number of individuals in their journey to sobriety.

NADCP RISE

MAY 22-25, 2024

ANAHEIM CONVENTION
CENTER, CALIFORNIA

FOR MORE
INFORMATION, SCAN
THIS QR CODE:



SUCCESS STORIES

Earlier this year the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority granted \$115,970 to Washington County for a new treatment center for women. When thinking about where to start with transitional housing funding, consider this your sign to look into the possibility of utilizing Opioid Abatement Funds.

DRUG COURT HOUSING COMMITTEE

Retired Judge Cunningham expressed great concern about the lack of safe, sober housing for drug court participants returning from residential treatment. Housing is a critical need for recovery.

He agreed to chair the Ad Hoc Drug Court Housing Committee designated by the Drug Court Executive Committee. Initially the committee started with five drug court judges from around the state with similar concern about safe, sober housing for drug court participants. As the meeting's progressed others have joined the committee, including representatives from the Virginia Housing Authority. As a result, they developed a charter and are now the Joint Committee on Recovery Housing under the Virginia Housing Authority. The goal of this committee is to create a pilot housing program for individuals in recovery after completing drug court, similar to Michigan's Association of Treatment Professionals (MATCP) housing project called Andy's Place.

