

Drug Court Best Practices (Practices Related to Significant Reductions in Recidivism and Higher Cost Savings)

What interests many individuals is the bottom line: what practices reduce recidivism and save money. This list contains drug court practices from NPC Research studies that are related to significant reductions in recidivism, significant increases in cost savings or both. A total of 69 drug courts were included in this analysis. This handout and related presentations and reports can be found at www.npcresearch.com under “What’s New” or “Publications and Resources”

Key Component	Drug Court Practices
1	Law Enforcement is a member of the drug court team
1	Judge, both attorneys, treatment, program coordinator, and probation attend staffings
1	The judge attends drug court team meetings (staffings)
1	The defense attorney attends drug court team meetings (staffings)
1	A representative from treatment attends drug court team meetings (staffings)
1	Coordinator attends Drug court team meetings (staffings)
1	Law Enforcement attends Drug court team meetings (staffings)
1	Judge, attorneys, treatment, probation, and coordinator attend court sessions (status review hearings)
1	A representative from treatment attends court sessions (status review hearings)
1	Law Enforcement attends court sessions (status review hearings)
1	Treatment communicates with court via email
2	Drug Court allows non-drug charges.
3	The drug court allows offenders with serious mental health issues
3	Program caseload (number of active participants) is less than 125
4	The drug court works with two or fewer treatment agencies
4	The drug court offers gender specific services
4	The drug court offers mental health treatment
4	The drug court offers parenting classes
4	The drug court offers anger management classes

Key Component	Drug Court Practices
4	The drug court offers family/domestic relations counseling
4	The minimum length of the drug court program is 12 months or more
4	The drug court has guidelines on the frequency of individual treatment sessions that a participant must receive
5	Drug test results are back in two days or less
5	In the first phase of drug court, drug tests are collected at least two times per week
5	Participants are expected to have greater than 90 days clean (negative drug tests) before graduation
6	Sanctions are imposed immediately after non-compliant behavior/Drug court will impose sanctions in advance of a client's regularly scheduled court hearing.
6	Team members are given a copy of the guidelines for sanctions
6	In order to graduate participants must have a job or be in school
6	In order to graduate participants must have a sober housing environment
6	In order to graduate participants must have pay all court-ordered fines and fees (e.g., fines, restitution)
7	Participants have status review sessions every two weeks in first phase
7	Judge spends an average of 3 minutes or greater per participant during status review hearings
7	The judge was assigned to drug court on a voluntary basis
7	The judge's term is indefinite
8	The results of program evaluations have led to modifications in drug court operations
8	Review of the data and/or regular reporting of program statistics has led to modifications in drug court operations
9	Team members received training in preparation for the implementation of the drug court
9	All new hires to the drug court complete a formal training or orientation