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November 25, 2025

The General Assembly of Virginia
201 N. Ninth Street
The General Assembly Building
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senators and Delegates:

The Virginia Recovery Court Act (Virginia Code 18.2-254.1) directs the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia, with the assistance of the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, to develop a statewide evaluation model and conduct ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness and efficiency of all recovery courts established in accordance with the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. Please find attached the current annual report.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With best wishes, I am

Very truly yours,

Karl R. Hade

KRH:hlb

2025 VIRGINIA RECOVERY COURTS ANNUAL REPORT

December 2025

Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary
Supreme Court of Virginia

2025 Virginia Recovery Courts Annual Report is prepared by

Specialty Dockets Services Division
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December 2025

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Preface

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 18.2-254.1 (Appendix A), the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) of the Supreme Court of Virginia, with assistance from the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, is required to develop a statewide evaluation model and to conduct ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness and efficiency of all local recovery courts.[1]

The primary data presented in this report pertain to Fiscal Year 2025. However, for a longitudinal perspective, some tables and figures may include data dating back to 2018. In the section on criminal recidivism, the focus is on individuals who exited an adult recovery court in 2022, as detailed in that section.

[1] Va. Code §18.2-254.1 directs OES to develop a statewide evaluation model and conduct ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness and efficiency of all local recovery courts. The following recovery courts annual report fulfills that requirement.

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Recovery Courts Overview

During fiscal year FY 2025, 61 approved recovery courts operated in Virginia. These included 53 adult courts, 3 juvenile courts, 4 family courts, and 1 regional driving under the influence (DUI) recovery court. Data from the recently approved Maury River Regional and Central Virginia Adult Recovery Courts are not included in this report, as those programs did not begin operations during FY 2025.

Goals of Virginia recovery courts include:

- Reducing substance use among offenders;
- Lowering recidivism rates;
- Decreasing substance-related court workloads;
- Enhancing personal, familial, and societal accountability among offenders; and
- Promoting effective planning and resource allocation among criminal justice and community agencies.

Recovery courts provide substance use and mental health treatment as alternatives to traditional case processing. This approach often results in alternatives to incarceration, such as case dismissal, charge reduction, or reduced supervision, when appropriate.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, substance use disorders (SUDs) are mental conditions that affect the brain and behavior, leading to an impaired ability to control the use of substances including alcohol, medications, and legal or illegal drugs. Referring to SUDs as a "brain disease" highlights the significant neurological changes associated with chronic substance use.[2] Nearly a quarter million adults in Virginia live with co-occurring mental health and SUDs, underscoring the need for effective treatment-focused interventions.[3]

By integrating evidence-based strategies within a public health framework, recovery courts address the specific needs of justice-involved individuals whose challenges are often not adequately treated in traditional court settings. This integrated approach enhances public safety by linking the criminal justice system with treatment providers and community resources.

This report reviews the operations and outcomes of Virginia's recovery courts during FY 2025. Analyses are based on data from participants enrolled in recovery court programs between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, regardless of their participation outcomes.[4] The report includes measures such as participant demographics, program entry offenses, program duration, graduation and termination rates, and post-exit rearrest and reconviction rates.

Data presented in this report were drawn from two primary sources:

1. The Virginia Specialty Dockets Division database, maintained by OES, and
2. Arrest data obtained from the Virginia State Police (VSP).

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[2] National Institute for Mental Health. Finding Help for Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Disorders. March 2025.

[3] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. National Survey on Drug Use and Health. 2025.

[4] The primary data reported here are the FY 2025 data. However, for longitudinal perspective, years dating back to 2018 may be presented in certain tables or figures. For the section on criminal recidivism, the focus is on persons who left a recovery court in 2022, as is detailed in that section.

Due to the number of limited participants in the DUI, family, and juvenile recovery court models during FY 2025, only basic descriptive data is provided for these program types.

Best Practice

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the recovery court model is recognized as a best practice for several key reasons:

- Graduates acquire essential tools needed to rebuild their lives and maintain long-term recovery;
- Recovery courts provide intensive treatment and supportive services for a minimum duration of one year;
- Participants are required to make frequent court appearances and undergo random drug testing, supported by a structured system of sanctions and incentives to promote compliance and program completion;
- Successful completion may result in dismissal of charges, reduced or suspended sentences, lesser penalties, or a combination of these outcomes; and
- Recovery courts rely on the daily collaboration of judges, court personnel, probation officers, treatment providers, and other social services professionals.[5]

In 2019, All Rise published the *Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards*, which were updated July 28, 2025. This comprehensive guide synthesizes more than two decades of research in addiction science, pharmacology, behavioral health, and criminal justice.

The standards offer research-based, practitioner-focused guidance designed to:

- Strengthen the effectiveness of recovery courts;
- Promote fidelity to evidence-based practices; and
- Improve the judicial system's overall response to individuals with SUDs or co-occurring mental health conditions.[6]

Specialty Dockets Division Database

The Specialty Dockets Services Division successfully transitioned its data management system to a new platform—the Specialty Dockets Division database—representing a significant enhancement in efficiency, functionality, and user accessibility. The data migration was completed, and the database officially became operational in early 2025. Comprehensive training sessions were provided to all existing users, and ongoing sessions remain available for new users to ensure a smooth transition and maintain consistent data quality.

Designed to be both user friendly and robust, the new database improves users' ability to perform accurate data entry and generate meaningful analytics. It offers advanced capabilities for producing staff reports, tracking docket activities, and analyzing program performance. These improvements support the division's broader goals of transparency, operational efficiency, and data-driven decision-making.

[5] Obama White House Archives. ONDCP Fact Sheets, Drug Courts Smart Approach to Criminal Justice.
[6] All Rise. Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards. July 28, 2025.

Administration of Recovery Courts in Virginia

OES supports the development, implementation, and monitoring of adult, juvenile, family, and DUI recovery courts through the Specialty Dockets Services Division within the Department of Judicial Services.

The state Recovery Court Advisory Committee was established pursuant to Va. Code §18.2-254.1 to:

i. Evaluate and recommend standards for the planning and implementation for recovery courts;
ii. Assist in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of these programs; and
iii. Encourage and enhance cooperation among agencies involved in their planning and implementation.

Virginia Code § 18.2-254.1.F outlines the membership composition of the Advisory Committee, which includes directors of various executive branch agencies and representatives of key stakeholder organizations whose involvement is essential to the development and long-term sustainability of recovery courts.

As part of the annual evaluation process required by statute, two Best Practices Specialists provide dedicated support to Virginia's specialty dockets. Their work focuses on improving participant outcomes, reducing recidivism, and maximizing program effectiveness. These specialists deliver expert technical assistance, training, and guidance to ensure adherence to evidence-based best practices and to support comprehensive evaluations of docket performance.

The term "specialty dockets" refers to specialized court dockets operating within the existing framework of Virginia's circuit and district court system. Rule 1:25 of the Supreme Court of Virginia states:

> The Supreme Court of Virginia currently recognizes only the following three types of specialty dockets:
>
> (i) recovery court dockets as provided for in the Recovery Court Act, § 18.2-254.1;
> (ii) veterans dockets; and
> (iii) behavioral health dockets as provided for in the Behavioral Health Docket Act, § 18.2-254.3.
>
> Recovery court dockets specifically offer judicial monitoring of intensive treatment and strict supervision in drug and drug-related cases. [7]

Funding for Virginia's Recovery Courts

Virginia's recovery courts operate under a sustainable funding strategy approved by the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee. The strategy is designed to meet the long-term funding needs of all recovery courts in Virginia, supporting both currently funded and unfunded courts, as well as those in planning stages. The Committee uses a data-driven formula to ensure that

[7] Supreme Court of Virginia Rule 1:25 3(b)

funding is allocated accurately, fairly, and transparently, with the overarching goal of supporting as many recovery courts as possible.

- Accuracy is assessed through data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database.
- Fairness is achieved by applying a consistent methodology that promotes equitable distribution of resources across all Virginia recovery courts.
- Transparency is maintained by clearly outlining the funding process and making allocation procedures accessible to each recovery court.

The Committee continues to encourage jurisdictions to establish recovery courts to address substance misuse, emphasizing adherence to national evidence-based criteria to ensure predictable and consistent outcomes.

While the Committee actively seeks additional funding to eventually support all eligible Virginia recovery courts, state funds are not intended to be the sole source of support. Therefore, each recovery court must demonstrate sufficient local commitment to sustain operations.

All recovery courts receiving state funds must:

- Obtain approval from the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee to begin operations;
- Enter all required data into the Specialty Dockets Division database;
- Submit quarterly grant reports on time;
- Report retention and recidivism rates;[8]
- Demonstrate a 25% match (cash or in-kind) in accordance with the Bureau of Justice Assistance federal formula grants requirement; and
- Maintain a minimum of 10 active participants in the program.

Currently, state funds are administered to 35 adult recovery courts through a reimbursable grant process. These funds primarily support personnel essential to recovery court operations. Treatment services are generally provided through local public substance use treatment systems, including Community Services Boards (CSBs) or Behavioral Health Authorities (BHAs). Participant supervision is conducted by state probation and parole officers or local community corrections officers.

Recovery courts receiving state grant funds must establish:

- A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with their local CSB for treatment services; and
- A MOA with the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) or local community corrections for participant supervision.

These agreements outline personnel responsibilities and financial commitments. Dockets that do not receive state funding rely on a combination of local funds, in-kind services, federal grants, and other available resources. Notably, DUI recovery courts operated by local Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) are funded through offender fees.

All Virginia recovery courts continue to face challenges in securing and maintaining adequate funding, particularly for addressing the complex needs of participants. While dockets generally

[8] This requires tracking and accurately reporting the number of months each participant was in the docket after entry into Phase 1, and whether and when a participant was convicted of a new criminal offense; this will be identified by VSP data.

support core staff training, additional funding is needed to support specialized professional development, including training on:

- Injectable naltrexone, naloxone, other medications;
- Evidence-based relapse prevention strategies; and
- Cultural competency and trauma-informed practices.

These training initiatives are critical for improving staff expertise and enhancing program quality.

Statewide Universal Drug Testing Grant

The Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) is an independent organization that provides funding and support through grants, donations, and other efforts to assist in the treatment, prevention, and reduction of opioid use disorders and misuse throughout the Commonwealth. Financial assistance offered through the OAA consists of settlement funds paid to Virginia by prescription opioid manufacturers and distributors.

For the 2024–2025 performance period, OES entered a MOU with the OAA to:

- Develop a statewide best practice standard for drug testing;
- Promote awareness of these standards among localities that financially support such programs; and
- Establish a grant program to assist localities with covering the costs of drug testing for specialty dockets, ensuring compliance with the new drug testing standard.

Best practice standards per the MOU include:

- The most comprehensive, research-based guidance available.
- Use of evidence-based drug testing practices, including:
    - Random selection and testing 365 days a year;
    - Reliable, next-business-day results with 97% accuracy to enable timely interventions;
    - Reduced costs and processing time associated with confirmation testing;
    - Broad, customizable testing panels with rotating options;
    - Daily engagement through text, website or phone check-ins, including messages of affirmation; and
    - Pre-relapse intervention using predictive analytics to identify participants at elevated risk before relapse occurs.

To achieve these objectives, OES revised its statewide drug testing standards pursuant to the OAA grant award. The updated standards require adherence to the following evidence-based best practices:

- Urine testing at least twice per week until the participant reaches the final program phase;
- Ethyl glucuronide (EtG) or ethyl sulfate (EtS) testing one per week weekly during the first two program phases;
- Urine specimens submitted within eight hours of notification of a scheduled test;
- Random and unpredictable testing, including weekends and holidays; and

- Test results communicated within 48 hours of sample collection to both the court and participants.

OES awarded funding on a reimbursable grant basis to 10 recovery and behavioral health court dockets across the Commonwealth. Many of these dockets initiated or expanded partnerships with industry-leading drug testing providers in the criminal justice field. Through these partnerships, programs are meeting the goals set forth in the MOU between OES and the OAA and are adhering to best practices and cost-efficient protocols.

FY 2025 Summary Measures

Figure 1. Recovery Court FY 2025 Summary Measures

- **Virginia adult recovery courts save an estimated $19,234 per participant** compared to traditional case processing. In FY 2025, **322 participants successfully completed** an adult recovery court program.
- **Estimated cost savings** for FY 2025 were **$6,193,348**.
- The **number of adult recovery court participants increased by 7.8%** compared to FY 2024.
- **High levels of sobriety** were demonstrated through negative drug screen results, with **73.9%** of alcohol and drug tests returning negative in adult dockets and **50.1%** in family dockets.
- **Family treatment dockets reported 62 participants**, representing a **10.7% increase** from FY 2024.
- The **three-year reconviction rate** for those who successfully completed an adult recovery court docket in FY 2022 was **17.7%**.

FY 2025 Activity Summary

Active Participants

Adult recovery courts reported **1,486 active participants** in FY 2025, a **7.8% increase** from the 1,378 reported in FY 2024. Family recovery courts reported **62 participants**, representing a **10.7% increase** from the 56 reported in FY 2024.

Graduates

A total of **556 participants** exited an adult recovery court program during FY 2025, of whom **322 successfully completed** the program. Family recovery courts reported **24 program exits**, with **8 participants successfully completing** the program.

Terminations

There were **207 terminations** from adult recovery court programs and **9 terminations** from a family recovery court program in FY 2025.

Referrals

Adult recovery courts received **1,092 referrals**, a **2.7% increase** from the 1,063 referrals reported in FY 2024. Family recovery courts received **51 referrals**, an **8.5% increase** from the 47 referrals reported in FY 2024.

New Admissions

Of the 1,092 referrals made to adult recovery court programs, **643 participants were accepted**, resulting in an **acceptance rate of 58.9%**.

Of the 51 referrals to family recovery courts, **38 participants were accepted**, resulting in an **acceptance rate of 74.5%**.

Recovery Courts in Virginia

The Virginia Recovery Court Act (Va. Code § 18.2-254.1), enacted by the General Assembly in 2004, establishes the framework for the creation, implementation, and oversight of recovery courts in the Commonwealth. Under the Act, the Supreme Court of Virginia is responsible for administrative oversight, while the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, chaired by the Chief Justice, provides guidance on the implementation and operation local recovery courts. The Committee is also authorized to review and approve new recovery courts applications.

Recovery courts are specialized dockets within Virginia's existing court system that focus on judicial monitoring, intensive treatment, and strict supervision of individuals with SUDs who are involved in drug cases and drug-related cases. Local officials must complete a formal application process and receive authorization before establishing a recovery court in Virginia.

Once operational, recovery courts serve as a critical bridge between the judicial system, the behavioral health system, and community-based services. As more treatment-focused dockets are implemented and more Virginians are served, the Commonwealth continues to experience substantial cost savings compared to traditional case processing. By leveraging evidence-based practices and fostering cross-system collaboration, Virginia's recovery courts demonstrate improved outcomes for justice-involved adults, justice-involved juveniles, and parents engaged in abuse, neglect, or dependency cases.

This report provides data for adult recovery court models, with separate program descriptions for juvenile, and family recovery courts. The analyses are based on participants served at any point during FY 2025 (July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025) based on data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts. Due to the limited data availability for one DUI recovery court and three juvenile recovery courts, this data is not included in this year's analyses.

Recovery Courts Approved to Operate

Adult recovery courts operate within circuit courts, DUI recovery courts within general district courts, and juvenile and family recovery courts within juvenile and domestic relations district courts (see Figures 2 and 3).

Family recovery courts are distinct from other treatment dockets because they involve civil, rather than criminal cases. These dockets are typically initiated through petitions filed by local departments of social services.

Figure 2: Recovery Courts Within the Virginia Judicial System

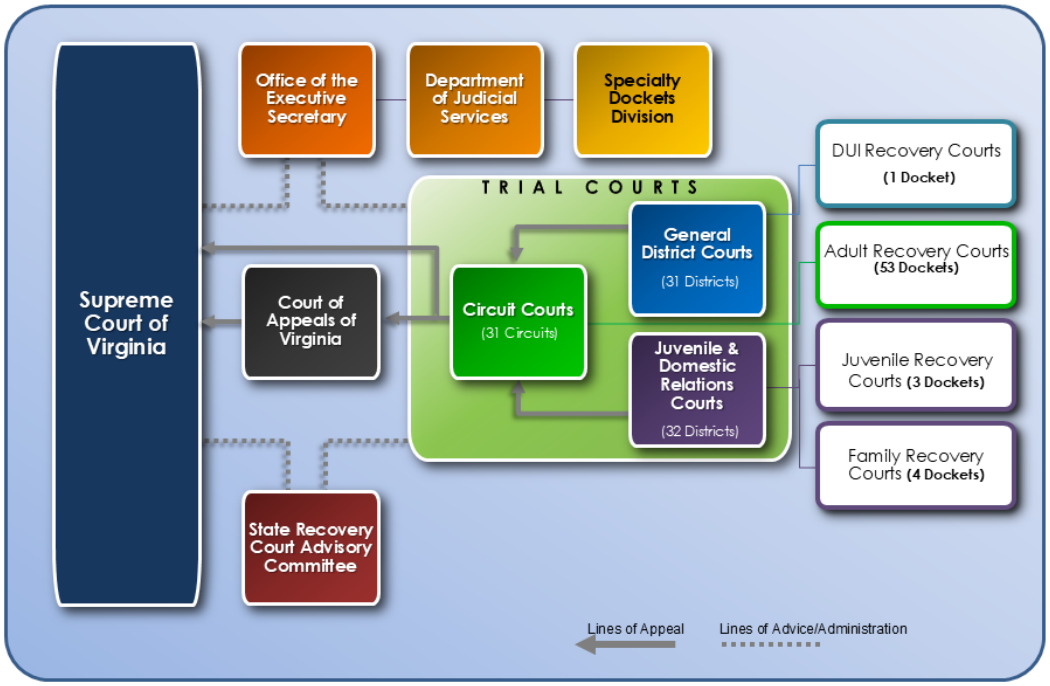


Figure 3: Types of Recovery Courts in Virginia

• **Adult** recovery courts in circuit courts monitor sentenced offenders and deferred prosecution defendants on supervised probation.

• **Juvenile** recovery courts in juvenile and domestic relations district courts monitor adjudicated delinquents on supervised probation.

• **DUI** recovery court in general district court monitors (post-conviction) sentenced DUI offenders through the local ASAP.

• **Family** recovery courts in juvenile and domestic relations district courts monitor select abuse, neglect, and dependency cases where parental substance use is a primary factor. These are civil dockets. Judges, attorneys, child protection services, and treatment personnel unite with the goal of providing safe, nurturing, and permanent homes for children while simultaneously providing parents the necessary support and services to become drug and alcohol abstinent. Family recovery courts aid parents in regaining control of their lives and promote long-term, stabile recovery to support family reunification within mandatory legal timeframes.

For a map of Virginia's recovery courts, see Figure 5. For a list of these courts, see Appendix C.

Adult Recovery Courts

Adult recovery courts are an alternative to incarceration for nonviolent offenders diagnosed with a SUD. Instead of incarcerating offenders, these courts offer a voluntary, therapeutic program aimed at breaking the cycle of substance use and criminal behavior. Participants receive early, continuous, and intensive judicial supervision combined with treatment, periodic drug testing, community supervision, sanctions, and other rehabilitative services. Recovery courts reflect a high level of collaboration among judicial, criminal justice, and treatment systems. These programs function as a specialized team within the existing judicial system structure, addressing nonviolent drug and drug-related cases. A distinctive aspect of recovery courts is the close collaboration between criminal justice professionals and substance use treatment providers. The goal is to reduce return to substance use and reduce criminal recidivism by employing a comprehensive approach that includes treatment needs assessments, judicial interaction, monitoring, community supervision, graduated sanctions and incentives, treatment, and rehabilitation services.

Within a cooperative courtroom environment, the judge leads a team of recovery court personnel that includes a coordinator, attorneys, probation officers, and substance use treatment counselors, all working together to support and monitor participants' compliance with drug treatment, testing, and court appearances. In some cases, the team may also include law enforcement officers and jail staff. Various local, state, and federal stakeholders provide support to these programs in addition to the support provided by OES (see Appendix B).

The recovery court process begins with a legal review of the participant's current and prior offenses, followed by a clinical assessment of the individual's substance use history. Offenders who meet the eligibility criteria and are found to have a SUD may volunteer to enter the recovery court program and receive referrals to additional service providers as needed. A unique feature of recovery courts is the requirement for participants to appear regularly, often weekly, before the recovery court judge to report on their compliance with program requirements. The judge's direct involvement in participants' lives is a key factor contributing to the success of these dockets.

Evidence shows that criminal justice supervision and sanctions, when not combined with treatment, do not significantly reduce recidivism among offenders with SUDs. Recovery courts achieve better outcomes by combining swift, certain, and fair sanctions with positive incentives. Long-term behavioral change is most effectively influenced by incentives, and contingency management approaches that provide systematic rewards for reaching treatment milestones have been shown to reduce recidivism and substance use.[9]

As a result of this multifaceted approach, participants in recovery courts exhibit lower recidivism rates compared to drug-involved offenders who are incarcerated. This success is largely due to the comprehensive and structured regimen of treatment and recovery services established through recovery court partnerships. The primary difference between recovery courts and traditional case processing is the judge's continued oversight and involvement throughout the monitoring process. By closely supervising participants, the court actively supports their recovery journey and swiftly imposes therapeutic sanctions or reinstates criminal proceedings

[9] Prendegast, M.L. "Interventions to promote successful re-entry among drug-abusing parolees" in *Addiction Science and Clinical Practice.* April 2009, 4-13.

when participants fail to comply. The treatment team maintains a critical balance of authority, supervision, accountability, support, and encouragement.

Virginia FY 2025 Adult Recovery Court Cost Savings

According to the Virginia Drug Treatment Courts Cost Benefits Analysis, every adult participant accepted into a Virginia recovery court saves the Commonwealth an estimated $19,234 compared to traditional case processing (see page 12 of the analysis).[10] These savings result from positive recovery court outcomes, including fewer arrests, reduced court cases, and less time spent on probation, in jail, or in prison, compared to the outcomes associated with the traditional system.

In FY 2025, adult recovery courts produced an estimated $6.2 million in savings for local agencies and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

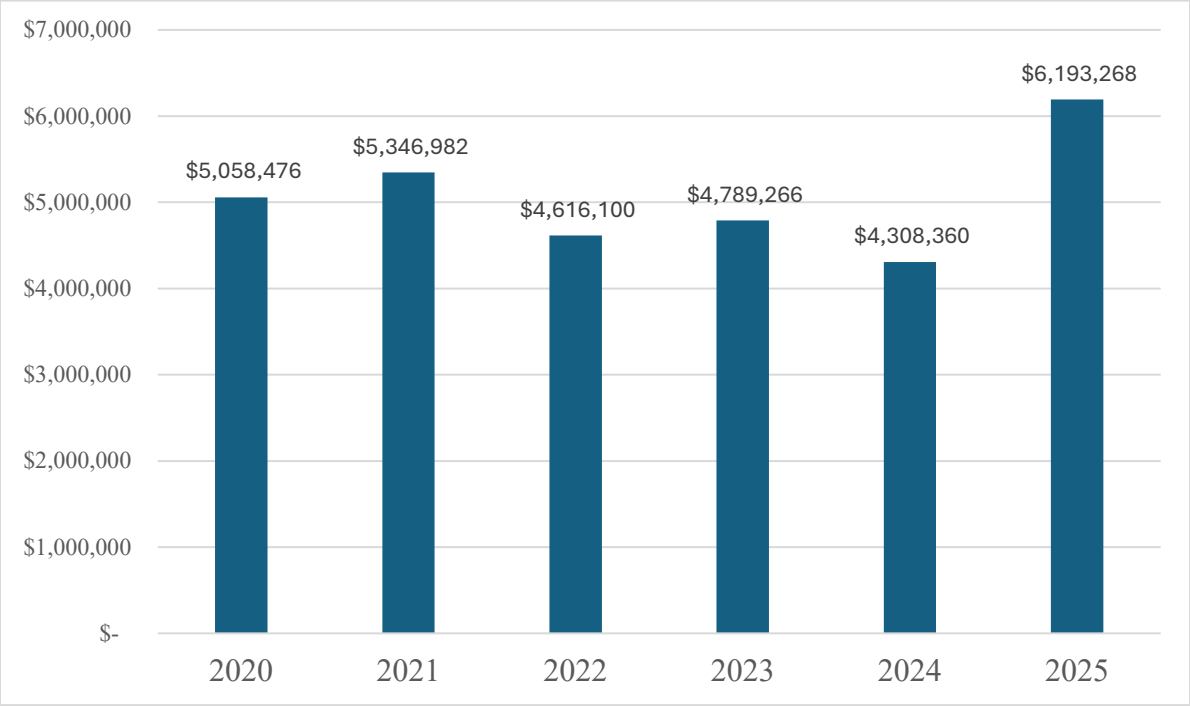
The 2012 evaluation included data from 12 out of the 16 recovery court dockets operating in Virginia at that time. As of FY 2025, there are 53 adult recovery courts in operation, reflecting significant growth in program availability across the Commonwealth.

A critical finding of the 2012 evaluation was that adult recovery court participants were significantly less likely to recidivate than a carefully matched comparison group processed through the traditional court system. This reduction in recidivism demonstrated a strong and sustained impact, highlighting the effectiveness of recovery court interventions.[11]

Increasing the number of recovery courts and the number of participants completing these programs leads to greater estimated savings for the Commonwealth compared to processing these offenders through the traditional justice system (see Figure 4).

[10] National Center for State Courts. Virginia Adult Drug Treatment Courts Cost Benefit Analysis. October 2012.
[11] *Ibid*.

Figure 4: Estimated Adult Recovery Court Savings by Fiscal Year, 2020–2025



Criminogenic Screening

A critical task for most jurisdictions is to develop a rapid, reliable, and efficient system to assess drug-involved offenders and direct them to the most effective programs, without unnecessarily increasing costs. This process requires careful consideration of each individual's criminogenic risks and clinical needs.

Criminogenic risks refer to characteristics that decrease an offender's likelihood of success in traditional rehabilitation and increase the chance of returning to substance use or criminal activity. In this context, "risk" encompasses participants' behaviors, history, and actions. High-risk factors, as identified by criminogenic screening tools, may include early onset of substance use or criminal behavior, recurring criminal activity, and past unsuccessful rehabilitation attempts.

Clinical needs are psychosocial factors that, if addressed effectively, can significantly reduce the likelihood of relapse into substance use, criminal activity, or other misconduct. High-needs factors include addiction to drugs or alcohol, psychiatric symptoms, chronic medical conditions, and illiteracy. Importantly, a high score does not imply that individuals should be excluded from rehabilitation or diversionary programs; rather, it indicates a need for more intensive, skillful community-based interventions to improve outcomes.

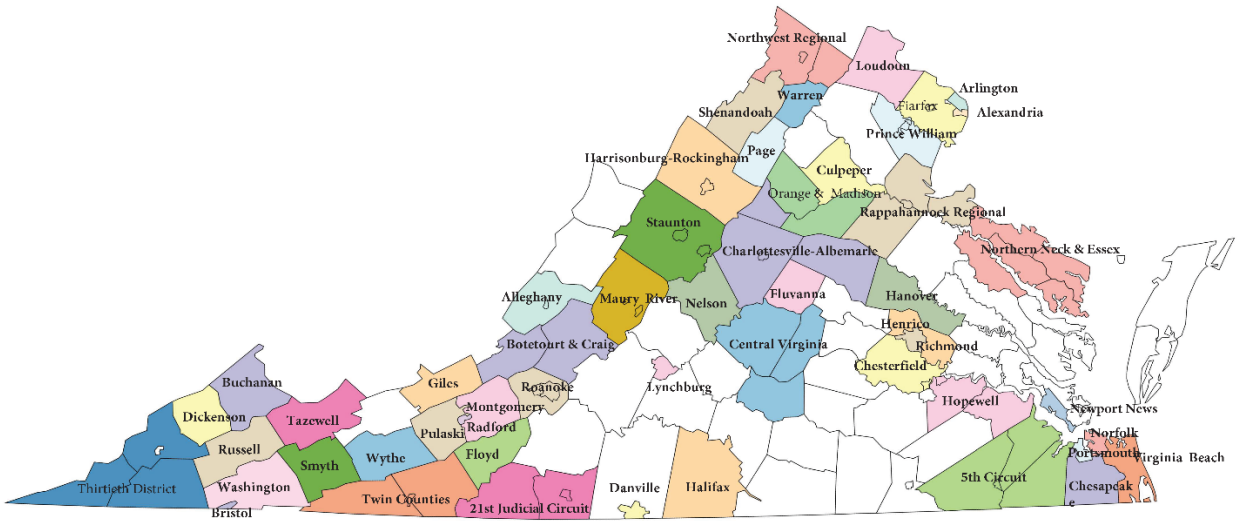
All Virginia adult recovery courts are now required to complete a criminogenic screening prior to accepting candidates. By matching participants to services based on their assessed risks and needs, recovery courts can allocate resources more effectively and ensure that interventions are tailored to those who will benefit most. Research consistently underscores the importance of aligning the risk and need levels of drug-involved offenders with appropriate levels of judicial supervision and treatment services.

The Specialty Dockets Division is currently working to select a statewide criminogenic screening tool that will integrate with the Specialty Dockets Division database, further enhancing consistency and data-informed decision making.

Adult Recovery Courts Approved

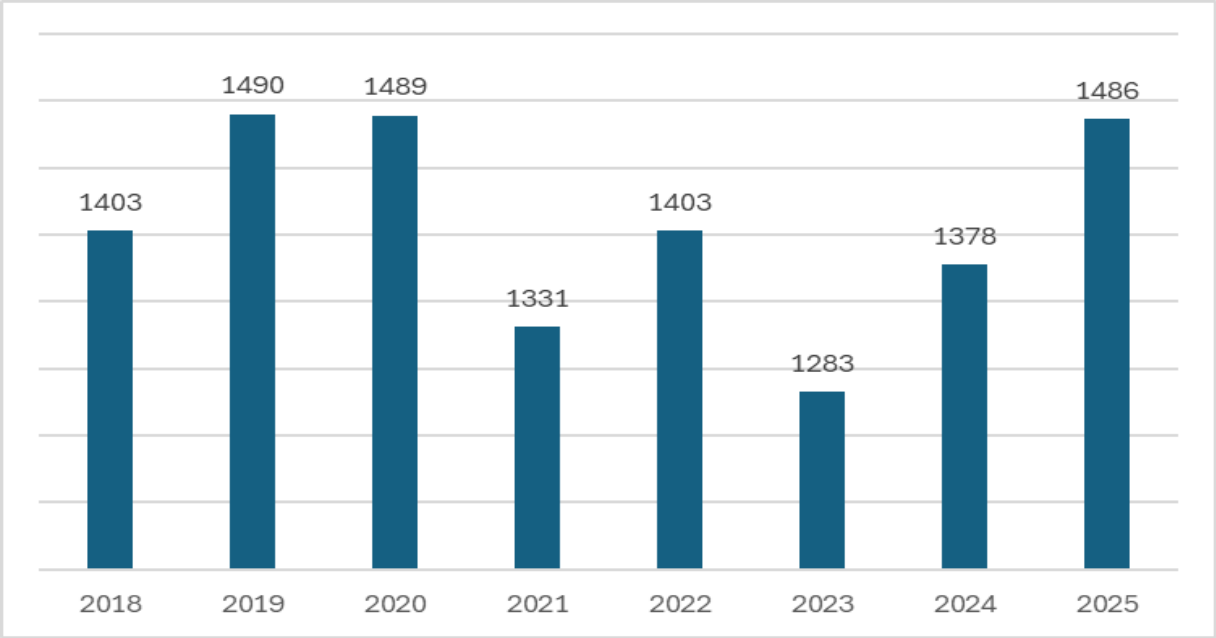
Figure 5 shows the 53 courts approved to operate in FY 2025. Data was not available for all of these courts because they began operating too late to be included in the data used for this report.

Figure 5: Approved Adult Recovery Courts in Virginia FY 2025



As shown in Figure 6, the number of adult recovery court participants generally trended upward until FYs 2019 and 2020, followed by a decline in FY 2021, likely due to the pandemic. Numbers rose again in FY 2022 but decreased in FY 2023. After FY 2023 there has been a steady increase in the number of participants in FYs 2024 and 2025.

Figure 6: Number of Adult Recovery Court Participants by Fiscal Year, 2018–2025



Summary of Adult Recovery Court Activity FY 2025

These results are based on data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts. Characteristics of individuals where no data was entered are excluded.

Referrals: Programs reported a total of 1,092 referrals in FY 2025, a 2.7% increase from the 1,063 reported in FY 2024.

Admissions: Of the 1,092 referrals reported, 643 were accepted into an adult recovery court, a 58.9% acceptance rate.

Participants: Programs reported 1,486 participants in FY 2025, a 7.8% increase from the 1,378 reported for FY 2024. (See Figure 6)

Gender: Most participants identified as male (931, or 62.7%), while 551, or 37.0%, identified as female.

Race: Most participants identified as white 1,069 (71.9%), and 356 self-identified as Black/African American (23.9%).

Age: Ages 35–49 were the most common starting age group for active participants (698, or 47.0%).

Marital Status: Among active participants, 428 (57.8%) were single, while 89 (12.0%) were married at the time of referral. These results are based on data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts. Characteristics of individuals with no data entered are excluded.

Employment: Participants were most commonly unemployed at the time of referral (404, or 42.2%), while 300 (31.3%) were employed 35+ hours a week. These results are based on data

entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts. Characteristics of individuals with no data entered are excluded.

Education: Of 854 participants, 394 (46.1%) reported having a high school diploma or equivalent at the time of referral. These results are based on data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts. Characteristics of individuals with no data entered are excluded.

Table 1: Demographics of Adult Recovery Court Participants, FY 2025

Gender	**#**	**%**
Male	931	62.7%
Female	551	37.0%
No data	4	0.3%
Race		
White	1,069	71.9%
Black/African American	356	23.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	0.2%
Native American	1	0.1%
Other	54	3.7%
No data	3	0.2%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	62	4.2%
Non-Hispanic	1,387	93.3%
No data	37	2.5%
Age at Start of Program		
25 years and under	98	6.6%
25–34 years old	443	29.8%
35–49 years old	698	47.0%
50–59 years and older	241	16.2%
No data	6	0.4%
Total	**1,486**	**100.0**

Table 2: Reported Social Characteristics of Adult Recovery Court Participants, FY 2025

Marital Status	**#**	**%**
Single	428	57.8%
Married	89	12.0%
Divorced	101	13.6%
Separated	76	10.3%
Cohabitating	22	3.0%
Widowed	15	2.0%
Other	10	1.3%
Total	**741**	**100.0**

Employment		
Unemployed	404	42.2%
35+ hours/week	300	31.3%
Less than 35+ hours/week	123	12.9%
Disabled	66	6.9%
Retired	3	0.4%
Self-employed	28	2.9%
Not in labor force	33	3.4%
Total	**957**	**100.0**

Education		
High school/GED	394	46.1%
High school not completed	223	26.1%
Trade or technical school completed	124	14.5%
2-year college degree	83	9.7%
4-year college degree	25	2.9%
Advanced degree	5	0.7%
Total	**854**	**100.0**

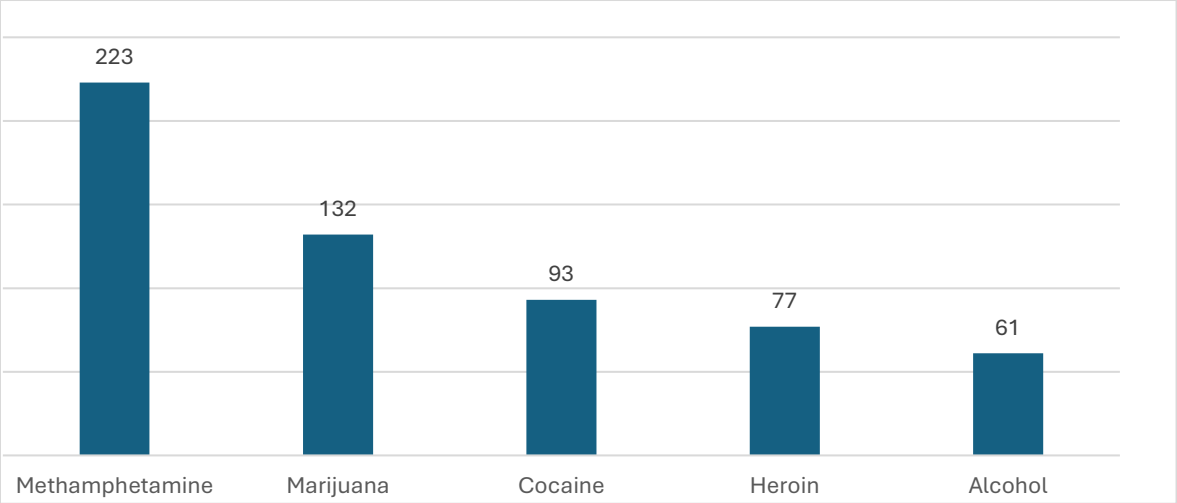
Note: Excludes participants with no information reported by the local court.

Drug History and Drug Screens

Drug History: When referred to a recovery court, participants are asked to disclose previously used primary, secondary, and tertiary drugs. As the number of drugs reported is greater than the number of participants reporting drug use, the data confirms that participants used multiple

substances prior to referral. The five most frequently reported primary substances were methamphetamine (223 participants) followed by marijuana (132 participants), cocaine (93 participants), heroin (77 participants) and alcohol (61 participants).

Figure 7: Drugs Most Frequently Used by Adult Recovery Court Participants, FY 2025



Note: Figure 7 should be interpreted with caution. Data are based on self-reported drug use. Participants may report using more than one substance or may choose to not disclose previous drug use. These results are based on data entered in the Specialty Dockets Division database by the local courts.

Program Drug Screenings: In adult recovery courts, a total of 57,021 drug screens administered were included in the specialty dockets database resulting in an average of 47 drug screens per participant. As listed in table 3, "allowed substances" are positive drug test result for participants who have a legitimate prescription for this substance. "Administrative positives" refer to cases where participants failed to appear for drug testing, which is recorded as a positive result in the absence of a sample. Of the 57,021 drug screens conducted, 42,130 (73.9%) yielded negative results (see Table 3).

Table 3: Adult Recovery Court Drug Screens, FY 2025

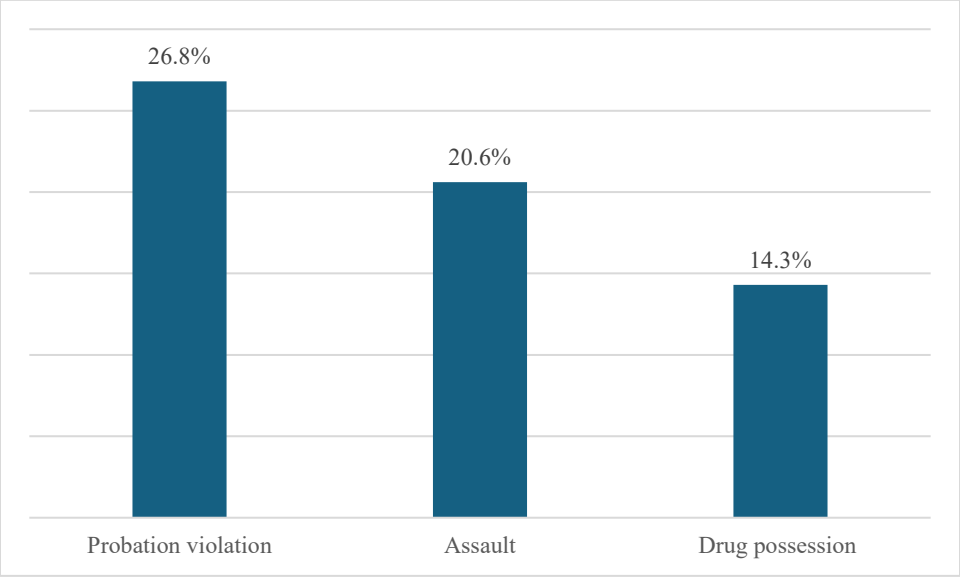
Result	#	%
Negative	42130	73.9%
Positive	5665	9.9%
Positive: allowed substances	7151	12.6%
Administrative positive	2075	3.6%
Total Screens	57021	100.0%

Note: Excludes participants with no information reported by the local court.

Offenses

Analyses of the types of offenses that lead to referral for adult recovery courts show three major areas: probation violation, assault, and drug possession (see Figure 8). Of all listed offenses for adult recovery courts, most of the docket participants were charged with a probation violation (26.8%), followed by assault (20.6%) and drug possession (14.3%).

Figure 8: Offense Types: Adult Recovery Courts, FY 2025



Note: Excludes participants with no information reported by the local court.

Departures

Graduation and Termination Rates: Among the 1,486 FY 2025 adult recovery court participants, 556 exited the program by graduation, termination, or neutral discharge. The graduation rate was 21.7% (322 participants) and the termination rate was 13.9% (207 participants).

Length of Stay: Length of stay was calculated as the number of days from program entry to departure (graduation, termination, or withdrawal). The mean length of stay for graduates was 658 days compared to a mean length of stay of 338 days for those who were terminated and 295 days for those who withdrew (see Table 4).

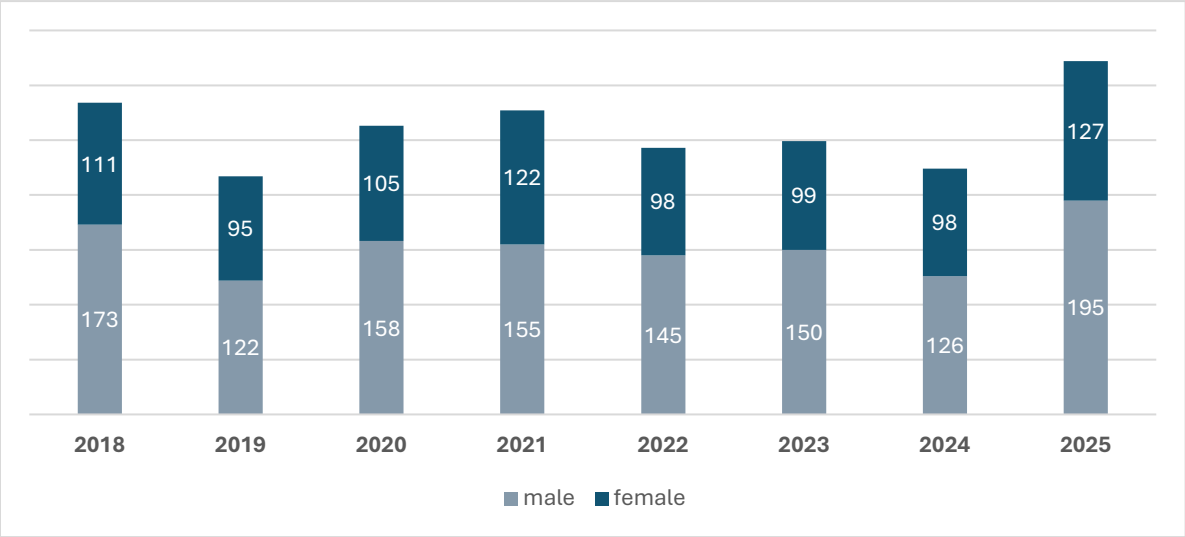
Table 4: Adult Recovery Court Length of Stay, FY 2025

Mean Length of Stay (Days)	
Graduations	658
Terminations	338
Withdrawals	295

Departures by Gender

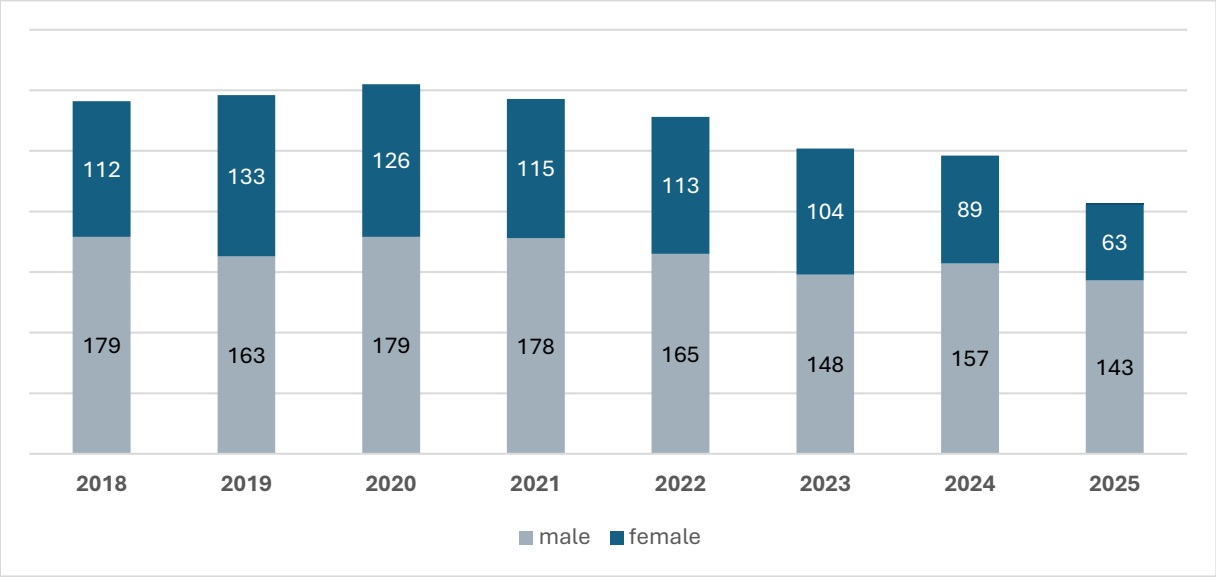
Graduations: Of the female participants, 127 graduated, a 29.6% increase from the 98 female graduates reported in FY 2024, and 195 male participants graduated, a 54.7% increase from the 126 reported in FY 2024 (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Adult Recovery Court Graduates by Gender, FYs 2018–2025



Terminations: Sixty-three female participants were terminated in FY 2025, a 29.2% decrease from the 89 reported in FY 2024, and 143 male participants were terminated, an 8.9% decrease from the 157 reported in FY 2024 (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Adult Recovery Court Terminations by Gender, FYs 2018–2025



Note: One participant was reported as unknown gender.

Adult Recovery Court Recidivism

Criminal history records obtained from VSP for all recovery court participants who exited in FY 2022 were used to calculate recidivism. For this report, recidivism is defined as any rearrest or reconviction, excluding offenses related to good behavior, probation violations, and contempt of court.

In accordance with national standards, recidivism rates were calculated over one-, two-, and three-year periods.

- The one-year recidivism rate includes participants whose first rearrest occurred within 0–365 days of program departure.
- The two-year recidivism rate includes participants whose first rearrest occurred within 0–730 days.
- The three-year recidivism rate includes participants whose first rearrest occurred within 0–1,095 days.

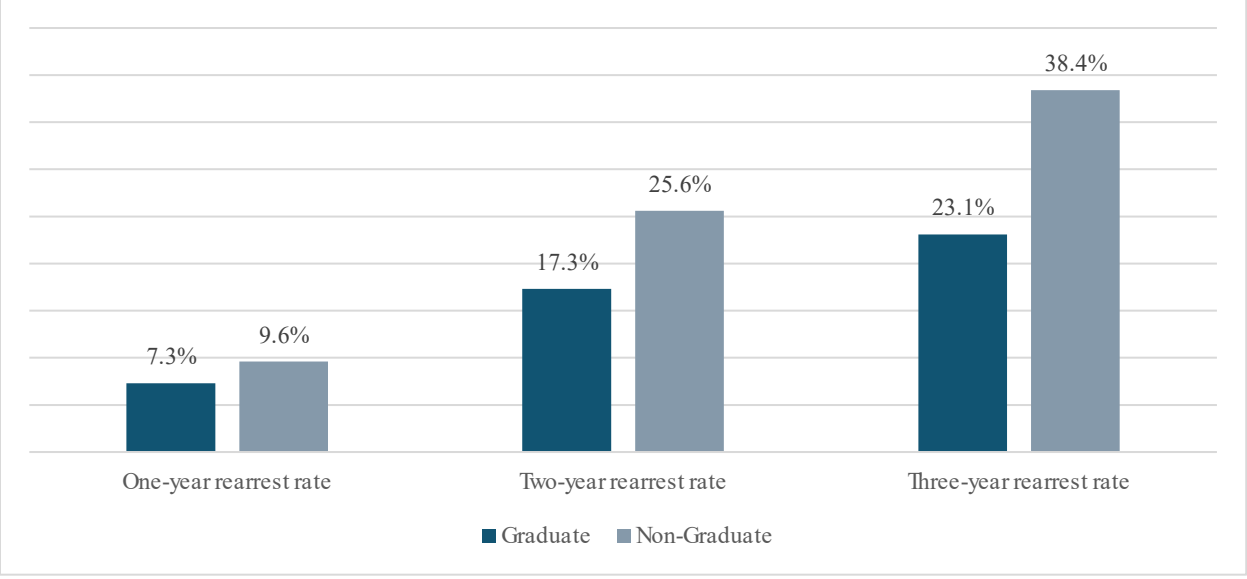
Rates for graduates and for participants with unsuccessful departures were compared to identify differences in post-program outcomes.

Caution should be exercised when comparing recidivism rates for individuals exiting an adult recovery court to recidivism rates reported by the DOC, as methodological differences may affect comparability and results.

FY 2022 Rearrest Rates

The overall rearrest rate for non-graduates was 1.7 times that of graduates (see Figure 11 and Table 5).[12]

Figure 11: Adult Recovery Court Graduate and Non-Graduate Rearrest Rates, Post Departure, Persons Exiting a Docket During FY 2022



[12] The one-, two-, and three-year rearrest rates are cumulative.

The overall rearrest rate for graduates (23.1%) was lower than for non-graduates (38.4%). This data suggests that those who do not graduate from a docket have an increased risk for recidivism, but that being involved with the docket for a longer period may also have a protective factor, even if graduation is not achieved.

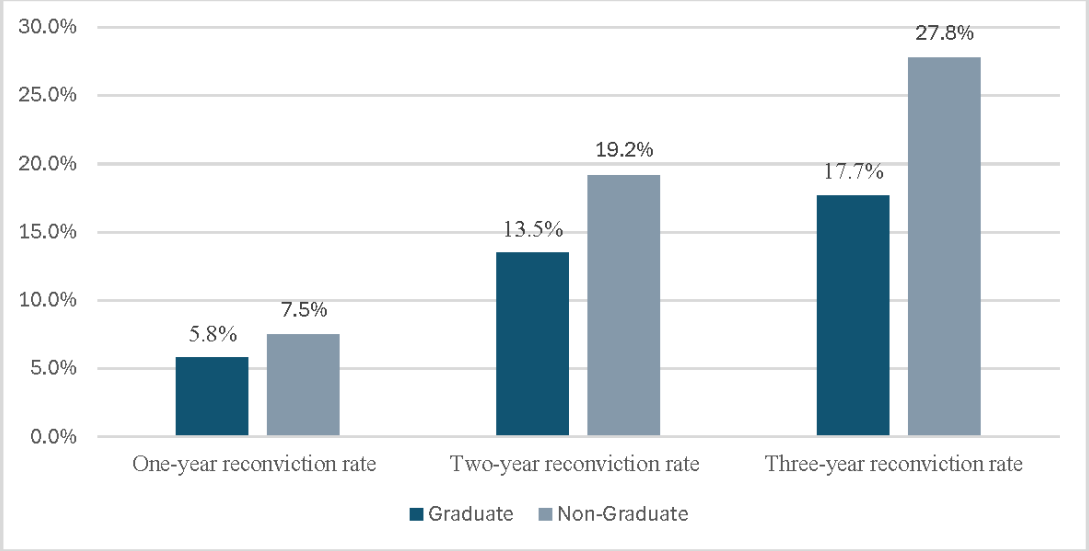
Table 5: Adult Recovery Court Graduate and Non-Graduate Rearrest Rates, Post Departure, Persons Exiting a Docket During FY 2022

Time Post Departure	Graduates	Non-Graduates	Total
One-year count	19	27	46
One-year rearrest rate	7.3%	9.6%	8.5%
Two-year count	45	72	117
Two-year rearrest rate	17.3%	25.6%	21.6%
Three-year count	60	108	168
Three-year rearrest rate	23.1%	38.4%	31.1%
Total Departures	**260**	**281**	**541**

FY 2022 Reconviction Rates

The data aligns with trends from previous annual reports, showing that graduates have a lower reconviction rate than non-graduates. Overall, the reconviction rate for those who did not successfully complete the program was higher than that of graduates (see Figure 12 and Table 6).[13]

Figure 12: Adult Recovery Court Graduate and Non-Graduate Reconviction Rates, Post Departure, Persons Exiting a Docket During FY 2022



[13] The one-, two-, and three-year rearrest rates are cumulative.

Table 6: Adult Recovery Court Graduate and Non-Graduate Reconviction Rates, Post-Departure, Persons Exiting a Docket During FY 2022

Time Post Departure	Graduates	Non-Graduates	Total
One-year count	15	21	36
One-year reconviction rate	5.8%	7.5%	6.7%
Two-year count	35	54	89
Two-year reconviction rate	13.5%	19.2%	16.5%
Three-year count	46	78	124
Three-year reconviction rate	17.7%	27.8%	22.9%
Total Departures	**260**	**281**	**541**

Adult Recovery Court Equity and Inclusion

In 2010, the Board of Directors of All Rise passed a resolution directing recovery courts to examine and monitor disparities among gender, racial, and ethnic groups within their programs and to take steps to actively reduce or mitigate disparities. In alignment with this resolution, OES monitors the distribution of key demographics at the referral, acceptance, and completion stages (both successful and unsuccessful) to ensure equitable access to adult recovery courts and equitable retention among demographic groups.

To support this effort, OES adopted the Equity and Inclusion Tool developed by All Rise and the National Center for State Courts.[14] This tool tracks a referral cohort as its members progress through the various stages of their respective adult recovery court programs.

The 2022 cohort includes individuals referred to an active adult recovery court during FY 2022 (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022). Particular attention is given to tracking each individual's movement from referral to admission, and then to successful or unsuccessful completion. Members of the FY 2022 cohort were monitored for three fiscal years, through June 30, 2025.

The data presented in Tables 7 and 8 may assist in evaluating fairness in the referral process and equitable access to program participation by comparing acceptance rates across demographic groups. Additionally, the accompanying figures provide insights into the equivalent retention, based on comparisons of successful completion rates among demographic subgroups.

[14] National Center for Drug Court Professionals. Equity and Inclusion: Equivalent Access Assessment and Toolkit.

Table 7: Adult Recovery Court 2022 Cohort, Admission and Graduation Rates, Race and Ethnicity

Race	Referrals			Admission Rate	Graduation Rate
	Total	Admitted	Graduated		
White	**689**	378	200	54.9%	52.9%
Black/African American	**205**	111	55	54.1%	49.5%
American Indian/Alaska Native	**1**	1	0	100%	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	**4**	0	0	0%	0%
Other Race	**11**	8	4	72.7%	50.0%
Total	**910**	**498**	**259**	**54.7%**	**52.0%**

Note: Excludes persons with unknown or with no information reported by the local court.

Ethnicity	Referrals			Admission Rate	Graduation Rate
	Total	Admitted	Graduated		
Hispanic	**17**	8	5	47.1%	62.5%
Non-Hispanic	**875**	493	255	56.3%	51.7%
Total	**892**	**501**	**260**	**56.2%**	**51.9%**

Note: Excludes persons with unknown or with no information reported by the local court.

Table 8: Adult Recovery Court 2022 Cohort, Admission and Graduation Rates, Gender

Gender	Referrals			Admission Rate	Graduation Rate
	Total	Admitted	Graduated		
Male	**364**	200	97	54.9%	48.5%
Female	**562**	301	163	53.6%	54.2%
Total	**926**	**501**	**260**	**54.1%**	**51.9%**

Note: Excludes persons with unknown or with no information reported by the local court.

Juvenile Recovery Courts

Juvenile recovery courts operate through a collaborative partnership among the judicial system, the juvenile justice system, and behavioral health treatment providers. These courts aim to reduce rearrests and substance use among juveniles who are actively using substances and are charged with delinquent acts in the juvenile and domestic relations district courts.

The juvenile recovery court model mirrors the adult model by integrating probation, supervision, drug testing, treatment services, regular court appearances, and behavioral sanctions and incentives. However, juvenile programs also address factors unique to adolescents and their

families, including school attendance, conflict resolution, family dynamics, and parenting skills. Family involvement is a critical component of the juvenile recovery process.

Cases handled in juvenile recovery courts are often complex, involving severe or aggressive delinquent behavior coupled with escalating substance use. Many of the circumstances that bring juveniles under court jurisdiction are closely connected to SUDs.

Over the past several years, the number of participants in juvenile recovery courts has declined, and some programs have ceased operations, reflecting national trends. This decline is believed to be associated with the increased availability of community-based programs and early intervention initiatives.

During FY 2025, there were only three operational juvenile recovery courts throughout Virginia, each with very limited capacity. As a result, there is insufficient data to conduct a meaningful analysis for this model in the current reporting period.

Figure 13: Approved Juvenile Recovery Courts in Virginia, FY 2025

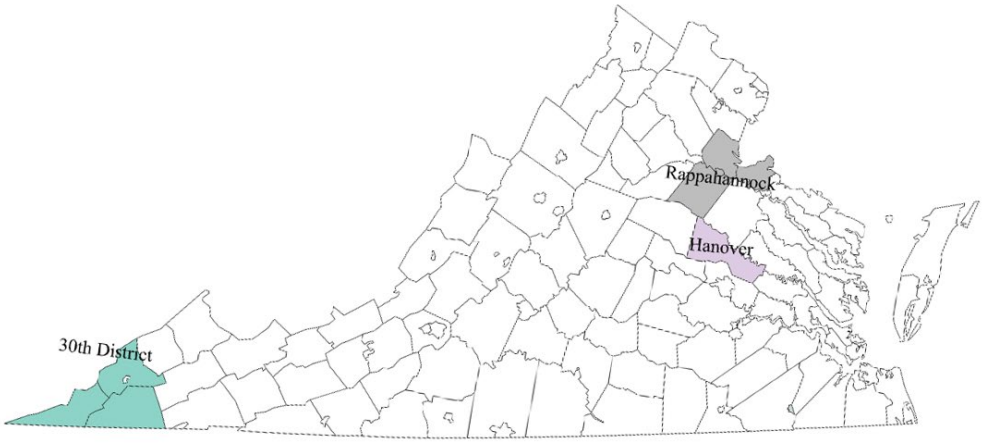


Table 9: Juvenile Recovery Courts in Virginia, FY 2025

Hanover County
Rappahannock Regional (Fredericksburg, Stafford, King George & Spotsylvania Counties)
Thirtieth Circuit (Lee, Scott & Wise Counties)

Note: Localities served are in parenthesis.

Family Recovery Courts

A family recovery court is a specialized civil docket designed for parents and guardians involved in dependency proceedings who are facing allegations of child abuse or neglect caused or influenced by a moderate-to-severe SUD. The purpose of these courts is to protect the safety and welfare of children while providing parents and guardians with the tools and supports necessary to become sober, responsible caregivers.

Family recovery courts focus on achieving the best interests of the child by ensuring a safe and stable environment, while simultaneously offering intensive intervention and treatment for the parent's or guardian's SUD and any co-occurring conditions. To accomplish this, family recovery courts assemble an interdisciplinary team that works collaboratively to assess the family's circumstances and develop a comprehensive case plan addressing the needs of both the child or children and the parent or guardian.

Through this coordinated approach, the family recovery court team promotes quick access to permanency for children and provides parents and guardians with a meaningful opportunity to achieve sustained recovery, establish a safe and nurturing home, and preserve family unity whenever possible.

Family recovery courts typically serve parents and guardians with a diagnosed SUD who come to the court's attention in the following situations:

1. Founded cases of child neglect or abuse
2. Child in need of services cases
3. Custody or temporary entrustment cases
4. Delinquency cases

Parents and guardians may enter the family recovery court pre-adjudication (such as at day-one or child planning conferences) or post-adjudication. In all cases, at the time of referral and admission, there must be an existing case plan for family reunification. Before admission into a family recovery court, parents and guardians undergo screening, during which substance use must be identified as a factor contributing to the substantiated findings of neglect, abuse, or dependency.

The primary incentive for parents and guardians to comply with the rigorous family recovery court program is the potential return of their children to their care. Unlike adult recovery courts where probation officers provide supervision, social services professionals deliver case management, supervision, and other key functions within family recovery courts.

Family recovery courts are civil dockets, and this model emphasizes immediate access to substance use treatment combined with intensive judicial monitoring to support reunification for families affected by SUDs. The focus, structure, purpose, and scope of family recovery courts differ significantly from the adult criminal and juvenile delinquency recovery court models.

These courts incorporate best practices from both the recovery court model and traditional dependency court practice, enabling them to effectively manage cases under the mandates of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.[15] This approach ensures the best interests of children remain at

[15]An Act to promote the adoption of children in foster care. 111 Stat. 211.5. 1997.

the center of discussion while providing coordinated substance use treatment and family-centered services to achieve safe and timely permanency.

Virginia family recovery courts provide:

1. Timely identification of defendants in need of substance use treatment;
2. The opportunity to participate in the family recovery court for quicker permanency placements for their children;
3. Judicial supervision of structured community-based treatment;
4. Regular status hearings before the judge to monitor treatment progress and program compliance;
5. Increased parent/guardian accountability through a series of graduated sanctions and rewards or increased parenting skills and monitoring;
6. Mandatory periodic drug testing; and
7. Assistance with employment, housing, and other necessary skills to enable parents to be better equipped at parenting.

All family recovery court participants must submit to frequent and random drug testing, intensive group and individual outpatient therapy two to three times per week, and regular attendance at recovery meetings. Participants are required to pay child support and, in some cases, their treatment fees. Child visitation is also monitored as needed. Additionally, participants must be employed or in school fulltime, if capable. Failure to participate or to produce these outcomes results in immediate sanctions, including termination from the docket.

The Family Recovery Court Standards adopted in 2008 reflect the existing common characteristics outlined in *Family Dependency Treatment Courts: Addressing Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Using the Drug Court Model*[16] modified for use within Virginia.

There are and will continue to be differences among individual family recovery courts based on the unique needs and operational environments of the local court jurisdictions and the populations served. However, there is also a need for overall uniformity of basic program components and operational procedures and principles. Therefore, the Family Recovery Court Standards are an attempt to outline those fundamental standards and practices to which all family recovery courts in the Commonwealth of Virginia should aspire.

[16] Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Bureau of Justice Assistance & National Drug Court Institute. *Family Dependency Treatment Courts: Addressing Child Abuse and Neglect Cases using the Drug Court Model*. 2004. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Figure 14: Approved Family Recovery Courts in Virginia, FY 2025

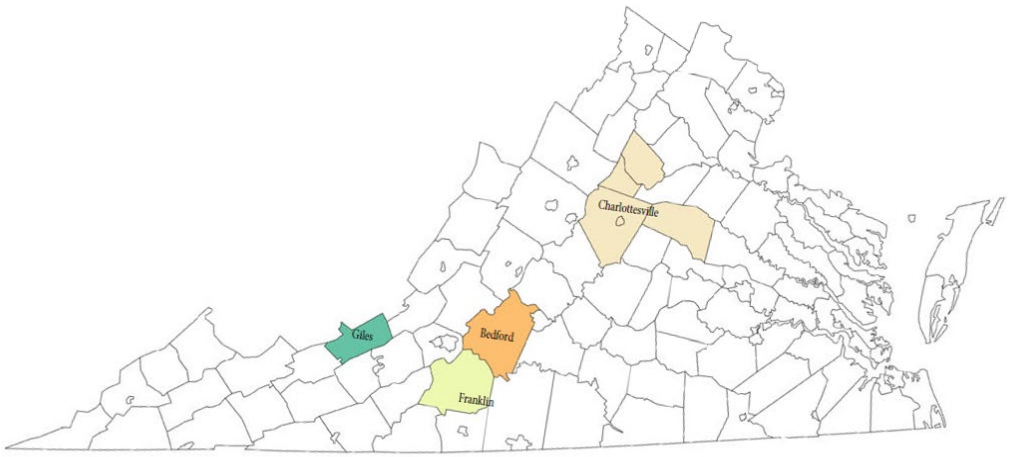


Table 10: Operational Family Recovery Courts in Virginia, FY 2025

Bedford County
Charlottesville/Albemarle County
Franklin County
Giles County

Summary of Family Recovery Court Activity

As shown in Figure 15, the number of active family recovery court participants has varied. In FY 2025, docket programs reported 62 participants, a 10.7% increase from the 56 reported in FY 2024. See Tables 11 and 12 for socio-demographic specific information.

Figure 15: Number of Family Recovery Court Participants, FY 2018–2025

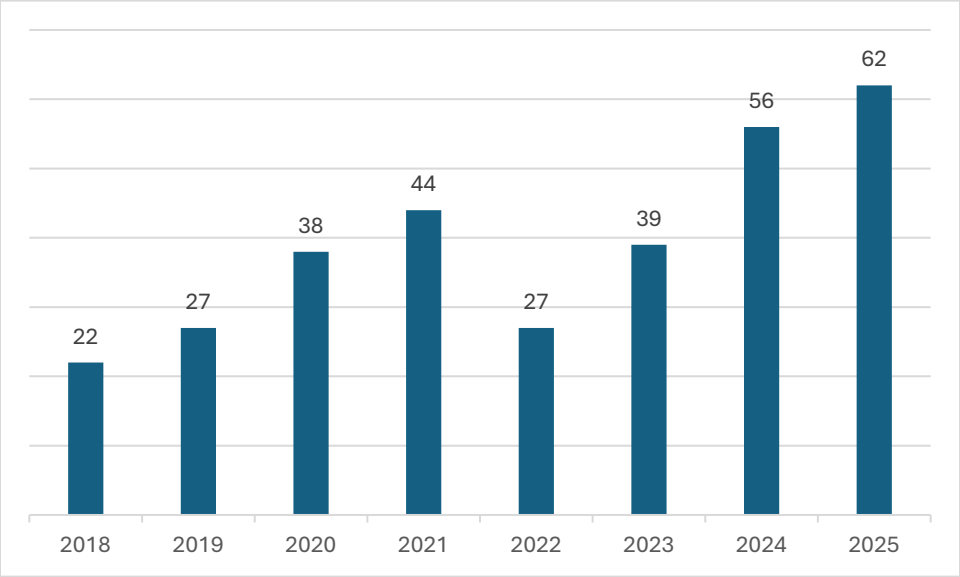


Table 11: Demographics of Family Recovery Court Participants, FY 2025

Gender	**#**	**%**
Male	14	22.6%
Female	48	77.4%
Race		
White	50	80.6%
Black/African American	10	16.2%
Other	2	3.2%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	3	4.8%
Non-Hispanic	59	95.2%
Age at Start of Program		
25 years and under	6	9.7%
25–34 years old	24	38.7%
35–49 years old	29	46.8%
50–59 years and older	3	4.8%
Total	**62**	**100.0**

Table 12: Reported Social Characteristics of Family Recovery Court Participants, FY 2025

Marital Status	#	%
Single	18	42.8%
Married	7	16.7%
Divorced	1	2.4%
Separated	3	7.1%
Cohabitating	12	28.6%
Widowed	1	2.4%
Total	**42**	**100.0**

Employment		
Unemployed	20	47.6%
35+ hours/week	7	16.7%
Less than 35 hours/week	10	23.8%
Disabled	2	4.8%
Not in labor force	3	7.1%
Total	**42**	**100.0**

Education		
High school/GED	23	45.1%
High school not completed	14	27.5%
Trade or technical school completed	9	17.6%
2-year college degree	5	9.8%
Total	**51**	**100.0**

Note: Excludes participants with no information reported by the local court.

Drug Screens

In FY 2025, 2,178 drug screens were administered to family recovery court participants for whom data are available, a 33.5% increase from the 1,601 screens administered in FY 2024. In the table below, "allowed substances" are positive drug test results for participants who have a legitimate prescription for this substance. "Administrative positives" are cases where participants failed to appear for drug testing, which is recorded as a positive result in the absence of a sample. Of the 2,178 screens administered, 15.4% were positive (see Table 13).

Table 13: Family Recovery Court Drug Screens, FY 2025

Result	#	%
Negative	1092	50.1%
Positive	335	15.4%
Positive: allowed substances	701	32.2%
Administrative positive	50	2.3%
Total Screens	2178	100.0%

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Appendices

Appendix A: Va. § 18.2-254.1. Recovery Court Act

A. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Recovery Court Act."

B. The General Assembly recognizes that there is a critical need in the Commonwealth for effective treatment programs that reduce the incidence of drug use, drug addiction, family separation due to parental substance abuse, and drug-related crimes. It is the intent of the General Assembly by this section to enhance public safety by facilitating the creation of recovery courts as means by which to accomplish this purpose.

C. The goals of recovery courts include: (i) reducing drug addiction and drug dependency among offenders; (ii) reducing recidivism; (iii) reducing drug-related court workloads; (iv) increasing personal, familial and societal accountability among offenders; and (v) promoting effective planning and use of resources among the criminal justice system and community agencies.

D. Recovery courts are specialized court dockets within the existing structure of Virginia's court system offering judicial monitoring of intensive treatment and strict supervision of addicts in drug and drug-related cases. Local officials must complete a recognized planning process before establishing a recovery court program.

E. Administrative oversight for implementation of the Recovery Court Act shall be conducted by the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Supreme Court of Virginia shall be responsible for (i)providing oversight for the distribution of funds for recovery courts; (ii) providing technical assistance to recovery courts;(iii) providing training for judges who preside over recovery courts; (iv) providing training to the providers of administrative, case management, and treatment services to recovery courts; and (v) monitoring the completion of evaluations of the effectiveness and efficiency of recovery courts in the Commonwealth.

F. The state Recovery Court Advisory Committee shall be established to (i) evaluate and recommend standards for the planning and implementation of recovery courts; (ii) assist in the evaluation of their effectiveness and efficiency; and (iii) encourage and enhance cooperation among agencies that participate in their planning and implementation. The committee shall be chaired by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia or his designee and shall include a member of the Judicial Conference of Virginia who presides over a recovery court; a district court judge; the Executive Secretary or his designee; the directors of the following executive branch agencies: Department of Corrections, Department of Criminal Justice Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Department of Social Services; a representative of the following entities: a local community-based probation and pretrial services agency, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Association, the Virginia Indigent Defense Commission, the Circuit Court Clerk's Association, the Virginia Sheriff's Association, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Commission on VASAP, and two representatives designated by the Virginia Drug Court Association.

G. Each jurisdiction or combination of jurisdictions that intend to establish a recovery court or continue the operation of an existing one shall establish a local recovery court advisory committee. Jurisdictions that establish separate adult and juvenile recovery courts may establish an advisory committee for each such court. Each advisory committee shall ensure quality, efficiency, and fairness in the planning, implementation, and operation of the recovery court or courts that serve the jurisdiction or combination of jurisdictions. Advisory committee

membership shall include, but shall not be limited to the following people or their designees: (i) the recovery court judge; (ii) the attorney for the Commonwealth, or, where applicable, the city or county attorney who has responsibility for the prosecution of misdemeanor offenses; (iii) the public defender or a member of the local criminal defense bar in jurisdictions in which there is no public defender: (iv) the clerk of the court in which the recovery court is located; (v) a representative of the Virginia Department of Corrections, or the Department of Juvenile Justice, or both, from the local office which serves the jurisdiction or combination of jurisdictions; (vi) a representative of a local community-based probation and pretrial services agency; (vii) a local law-enforcement officer; (viii) a representative of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services or a representative of local drug treatment providers; (ix) the recovery court administrator; (x) a representative of the Department of Social Services; (xi) county administrator or city manager; and (xii) any other people selected by the recovery court advisory committee.

H. Each local recovery court advisory committee shall establish criteria for the eligibility and participation of offenders who have been determined to be addicted to or dependent upon drugs. Subject to the provisions of this section, neither the establishment of a recovery court nor anything herein shall be construed as limiting the discretion of the attorney for the Commonwealth to prosecute any criminal case arising therein which he deems advisable to prosecute, except to the extent the participating attorney for the Commonwealth agrees to do so. An adult offender shall not be eligible for participation in any recovery court established or continued in operation pursuant to this section if any of the following conditions apply:

1. The offender is presently charged with a felony offense or is convicted of a felony offense while participating in any recovery court where:

a) The offender carried, possessed, or used a firearm or any dangerous weapon specified in § 18.2-308 during such offense;
b) The death or serious bodily injury of any person occurred during such offense; or
c) The use of force against any other person besides the offender occurred during such offense; or

2. The offender was previously convicted as an adult of any felony offense that involved the use of force or attempted use of force against any person with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury.

I. Each recovery court advisory committee shall establish policies and procedures for the operation of the court to attain the following goals: (i) effective integration of drug and alcohol treatment services with criminal justice system case processing; (ii) enhanced public safety through intensive offender supervision and drug treatment; (iii) prompt identification and placement of eligible participants; (iv) efficient access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and related treatment and rehabilitation services; (v) verified participant abstinence through frequent alcohol and other drug testing; (vi) prompt response to requirements through a coordinated strategy; (vii) ongoing judicial interaction with each recovery court participant; (viii) ongoing monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness and efficiency; (ix) ongoing interdisciplinary education and training in support of program effectiveness and efficiency; and (x) ongoing collaboration among recovery courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency.

J. Participation by an offender in a recovery court shall be voluntary and made pursuant only to a written agreement entered into by and between the offender and the Commonwealth with the concurrence of the court.

K. Nothing in this section shall preclude the establishment of substance abuse treatment programs and services pursuant to the deferred judgment provisions of § 18.2-251.

L. Each offender shall contribute to the cost of the substance abuse treatment he receives while participating in a recovery court pursuant to guidelines developed by the recovery court advisory committee.

M. Nothing contained in this section shall confer a right or an expectation of a right to treatment for an offender or be construed as requiring a local recovery court advisory committee to accept for participation every offender.

N. The Office of the Executive Secretary shall, with the assistance of the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, develop a statewide evaluation model and conduct ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness and efficiency of all local recovery courts. A report of these evaluations shall be submitted to the General Assembly by December 1 of each year. Each local recovery court advisory committee shall submit evaluative reports to the Office of the Executive Secretary as requested.

O. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, no recovery court shall be established subsequent to March 1, 2004, unless the jurisdiction or jurisdictions intending or proposing to establish such court have been specifically granted permission under the Code of Virginia to establish such court. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any recovery court established on or before March 1, 2004, and operational as of July 1, 2004.

P. Subject to the requirements and conditions established by the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, there shall be established a recovery court in the following jurisdictions: the City of Chesapeake and the City of Newport News.

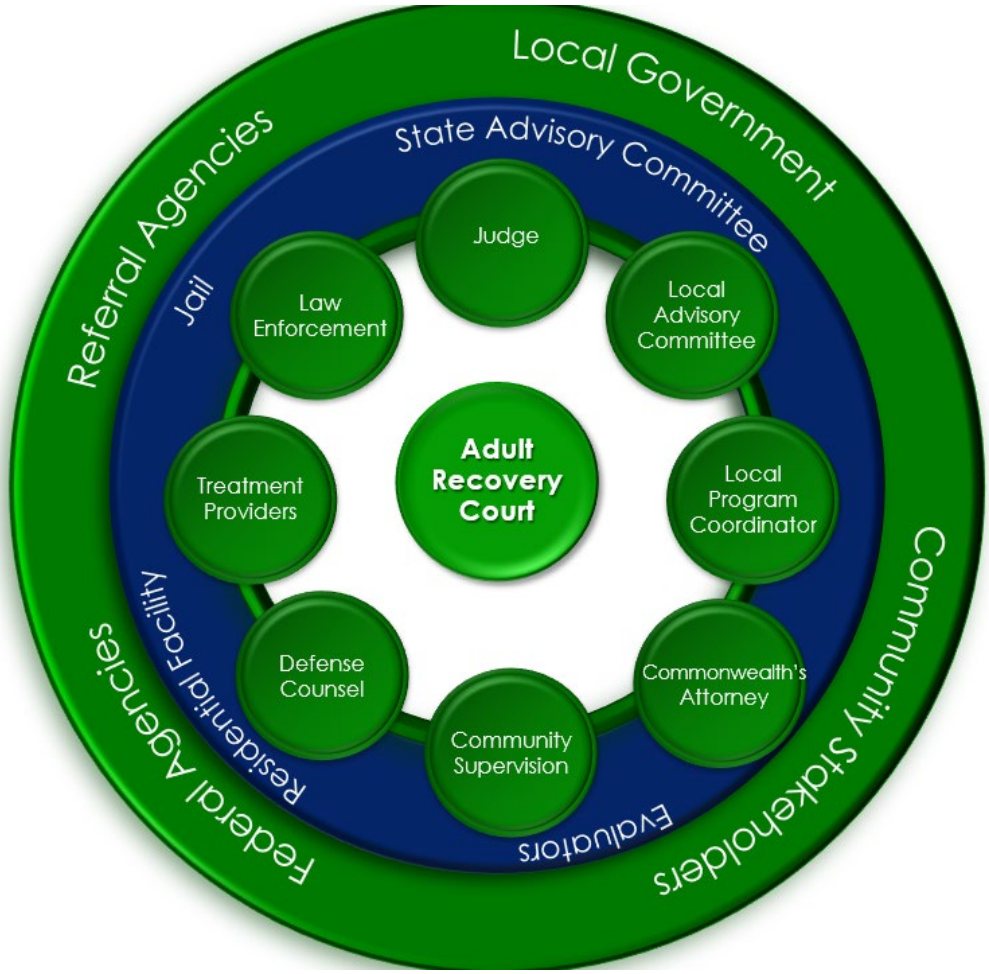
Q. Subject to the requirements and conditions established by the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, there shall be established a recovery court in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court for the County of Franklin, provided that such court is funded solely through local sources.

R. Subject to the requirements and conditions established by the state Recovery Court Advisory Committee, there shall be established a recovery court in the City of Bristol and the County of Tazewell, provided that the court is funded within existing state and local appropriations.

2004, c. 1004; 2005, cc. 519, 602; 2006, cc. 175, 341; 2007, c. 133; 2009, cc. 205, 281, 294, 813, 840; 2010, c. 258; 2024, cc. 25, 130, 260.

The chapters of the acts of assembly referenced in the historical citation at the end of this section(s) may not constitute a comprehensive list of such chapters and may exclude chapters whose provisions have expired.

Appendix B: Diagram of Virginia Adult Recovery Court Stakeholders



Appendix C: Approved Virginia Recovery Courts, FY 2025

Name	Localities	Court Type	Docket Type	Approved Date
Alexandria	Alexandria	Circuit	Adult	October, 2018
Alleghany	Alleghany County, Covington	Circuit	Adult	April, 2021
Arlington	Arlington	Circuit	Adult	October, 2012
Bedford Family	Bedford	J&DR	Family	May, 2018
Botetourt and Craig	Botetourt County, Craig County	Circuit	Adult	May, 2021
Bristol	Bristol	Circuit	Adult	March, 2010
Buchanan	Buchanan County	Circuit	Adult	July, 2012
Central Virginia	Buckingham County, Prince Edward County, Cumberland County	Circuit	Adult	June, 2024
Charlottesville Family	Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Greene County, Louisa County, Madison County	J&DR	Family	July, 2002
Charlottesville-Albemarle	Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Greene County, Louisa County	Circuit	Adult	July, 1997
Chesapeake	Chesapeake	Circuit	Adult	August, 2005
Chesterfield	Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights	Circuit	Adult	September, 2000
Culpeper	Culpeper	Circuit	Adult	October, 2019
Danville	Danville	Circuit	Adult	October, 2021
Dickenson	Dickenson County	Circuit	Adult	July, 2012
Fairfax	Fairfax County, Fairfax City	Circuit	Adult	October, 2017
Fifth Circuit	Suffolk, Franklin City, Isle of Wight, Southampton County	Circuit	Adult	April, 2021
Floyd	Floyd	Circuit	Adult	October, 2015
Fluvanna	Fluvanna County	Circuit	Adult	October, 2019
Franklin Co. Family	Franklin County	J&DR	Family	May, 2024
Giles	Giles County	Circuit	Adult	October, 2015
Giles Family	Giles County	J&DR	Family	October, 2018
Halifax	Halifax	Circuit	Adult	April, 2015

Name	Localities	Court Type	Docket Type	Approved Date
Hanover	Hanover County	Circuit	Adult	May, 2003
Hanover Juvenile	Hanover County	J & DR	Juvenile	May, 2003
Harrisonburg-Rockingham	Harrisonburg, Rockingham County	Circuit	Adult	April, 2017
Henrico	Henrico County	Circuit	Adult	January, 2003
Hopewell	Hopewell, Prince George County, Surry	Circuit	Adult	September, 2002
Loudoun	Loudoun County	Circuit	Adult	October, 2018
Lynchburg	Lynchburg	Circuit	Adult	October, 2016
Maury River	Buena Vista City, Lexington City, Rockbridge County	Circuit	Adult	May 2025
Montgomery	Montgomery County	Circuit	Adult	April, 2021
Nelson	Nelson County	Circuit	Adult	May, 2024
Newport News	Newport News	Circuit	Adult	November, 1998
Norfolk	Norfolk	Circuit	Adult	November, 1998
Northern Neck/Essex	Essex, Lancaster County, Northumberland County, Richmond County, Westmoreland County	Circuit	Adult	October,2017
Northwest Regional	Clarke County Frederick County, Winchester	Circuit	Adult	April, 2016
Orange & Madison	Orange County, Madison County	Circuit	Adult	October, 2021
Page	Page County	Circuit	Adult	November, 2021
Piedmont	Henry County, Martinsville, Patrick County	Circuit	Adult	May, 2021
Portsmouth	Portsmouth	Circuit	Adult	January, 2021
Prince William	Prince William County, Manassas, Manassas Park	Circuit	Adult	May, 2024
Pulaski	Pulaski County	Circuit	Adult	October, 2014
Radford	Radford	Circuit	Adult	October, 2017

Name	Localities	Court Type	Docket Type	Approved Date
Rappahannock Regional Juvenile	Fredericksburg, King George County, Stafford County, Spotsylvania County	J&DR	Juvenile	October, 1998
Rappahannock Regional Adult	Fredericksburg, King George County, Stafford County, Spotsylvania County	Circuit	Adult	October, 1998
Richmond	Richmond City	Circuit	Adult	March, 1998
Twenty-third Judicial Circuit	Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Salem	Circuit	Adult	September, 1995
Russell	Russell County	Circuit	Adult	July, 2012
Shenandoah	Shenandoah County	Circuit	Adult	June, 2024
Smyth Co. Recovery Court	Smyth County	Circuit	Adult	April, 2016
Staunton	Staunton, Augusta County, Waynesboro	Circuit	Adult	July, 2002
Tazewell	Tazewell County	Circuit	Adult	March, 2009
Thirtieth District Juvenile	Lee County, Scott County, Wise County	J&DR	Juvenile	September, 2002
Thirtieth Judicial Circuit	Lee County, Scott County, Wise County	Circuit	Adult	July, 2012
Twin Counties Recovery Court	Grayson County, Carroll County, Galax	Circuit	Adult	October, 2017
Virginia Beach	Virginia Beach	Circuit	Adult	April, 2016
Washington	Washington County	Circuit	Adult	July, 2012
Waynesboro DUI	Waynesboro, Augusta County, Staunton	General District	DUI	June, 2011
Warren	Warren County	Circuit	Adult	June,2024
Wythe	Wythe County	Circuit	Adult	April, 2021

Appendix D: Rule 1:25 Specialty Dockets

Rule 1:25. Specialty Dockets.

(a) Definition of and Criteria for Specialty Dockets. —

(1) When used in this Rule, the term "specialty dockets" refers to specialized court dockets within the existing structure of Virginia's circuit and district court system offering judicial monitoring of intensive treatment, supervision, and remediation integral to case disposition.

(2) Types of court proceedings appropriate for grouping in a "specialty docket" are those which (i) require more than simply the adjudication of discrete legal issues, (ii) present a common dynamic underlying the legally cognizable behavior, (iii) require the coordination of services and treatment to address that underlying dynamic, and (iv) focus primarily on the remediation of the defendant in these dockets. The treatment, the services, and the disposition options are those which are otherwise available under law.

(3) Dockets which group cases together based simply on the area of the law at issue, e.g., a docket of unlawful detainer cases or child support cases, are not considered "specialty dockets."

(b) Types of Specialty Dockets. — The Supreme Court of Virginia currently recognizes only the following three types of specialty dockets: (i) recovery court dockets as provided for in the Recovery Court Act, § 18.2-254.1, (ii) veterans dockets, and (iii) behavioral health dockets as provided for in the Behavioral Health Docket Act, § 18.2-254.3. Recovery court dockets offer judicial monitoring of intensive treatment and strict supervision in drug and drug-related cases. Veterans dockets offer eligible defendants who are veterans of the armed services with substance dependency or mental illness a specialized criminal specialty docket that is coordinated with specialized services for veterans. Behavioral health dockets offer defendants with diagnosed behavioral or mental health disorders judicially supervised, community-based treatment plans, which a team of court staff and mental health professionals design and implement.

(c) Authorization Process. — A circuit or district court which intends to establish one or more types of these recognized specialty dockets must petition the Supreme Court of Virginia for authorization before beginning operation of a specialty docket or, in the instance of an existing specialty docket, continuing its operation. A petitioning court must demonstrate sufficient local support for the establishment of this specialty docket, as well as adequate planning for its establishment and continuation.

(d) Expansion of Types of Specialty Dockets. — A circuit or district court seeking to establish a type of specialty docket not yet recognized under this rule must first demonstrate to the Supreme Court that a new specialty docket of the proposed type meets the criteria set forth in subsection (a) of this Rule. If this additional type of specialty docket receives recognition from the Supreme Court of Virginia, any local specialty docket of this type must then be authorized as established in subsection (c) of this Rule.

(e) Oversight Structure. — By order, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may establish a Specialty Docket Advisory Committee and appoint its members. The Chief Justice may also establish separate committees for each of the approved types of specialty dockets. The

members of the Veterans Docket Advisory Committee, the Behavioral Health Docket Advisory Committee, and the committee for any other type of specialty docket recognized in the future by the Supreme Court will be chosen by the Chief Justice. The Recovery Court Advisory Committee established under Code § 18.2-254.1 constitutes the Recovery Court Docket Advisory Committee.

(f) Operating Standards. — The Specialty Docket Advisory Committee, in consultation with the committees created under subsection (e), will establish the training and operating standards for local specialty dockets.

(g) Financing Specialty Dockets. — Any funds necessary for the operation of a specialty docket will be the responsibility of the locality and the local court but may be provided via state appropriations and federal grants.

(h) Evaluation. — Any local court establishing a specialty docket must provide to the Specialty Docket Advisory Committee the information necessary for the continuing evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of all local specialty dockets.

Last amended by Order date June 21, 2024; effective August 20, 2024

Appendix E: DOC Incarceration and Recovery Court Comparison: 3-year reconviction rates

National usage standards, the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC), and the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) use "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 DOC and OES report reconviction data after exit (exit from incarceration, for the DOC, or exit from recovery court, for OES). The table details the percentage of people reconvicted within three years of their exit. This longer-duration metric is important in evaluating sustained recovery and rehabilitation.

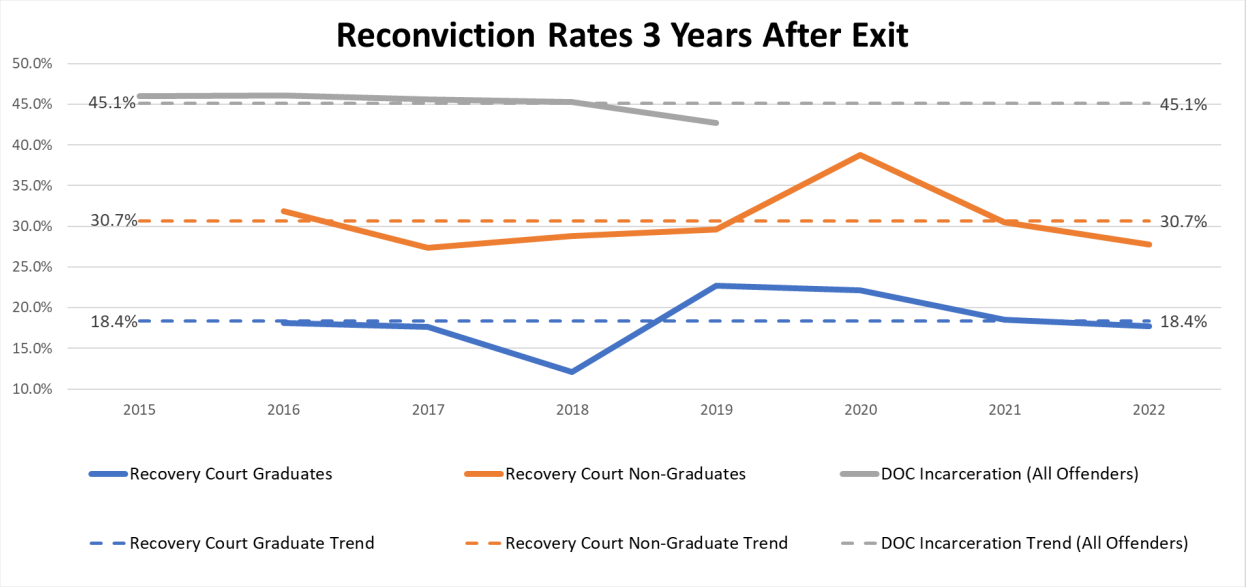
While the data from both DOC and OES identify reconviction over a three-year period, the populations are not directly comparable. OES annual reports[17] are exclusively for offenders with drug- and drug-motivated offenses by those (primarily) with a SUD, while the report published by DOC in May 2025[18] gives data for all formerly incarcerated individuals, including an unknown portion of non-similar offenses/population. However, DOC published a study in which 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."[19]

DOC reports noted above indicate inmates with a SUD are driving up recidivism metrics by a "substantial" amount. It can be extrapolated that if the DOC report did pull out data for only those participants with a SUD, the reconviction number would be higher than their reported overall reconviction numbers, shown in the graph below.

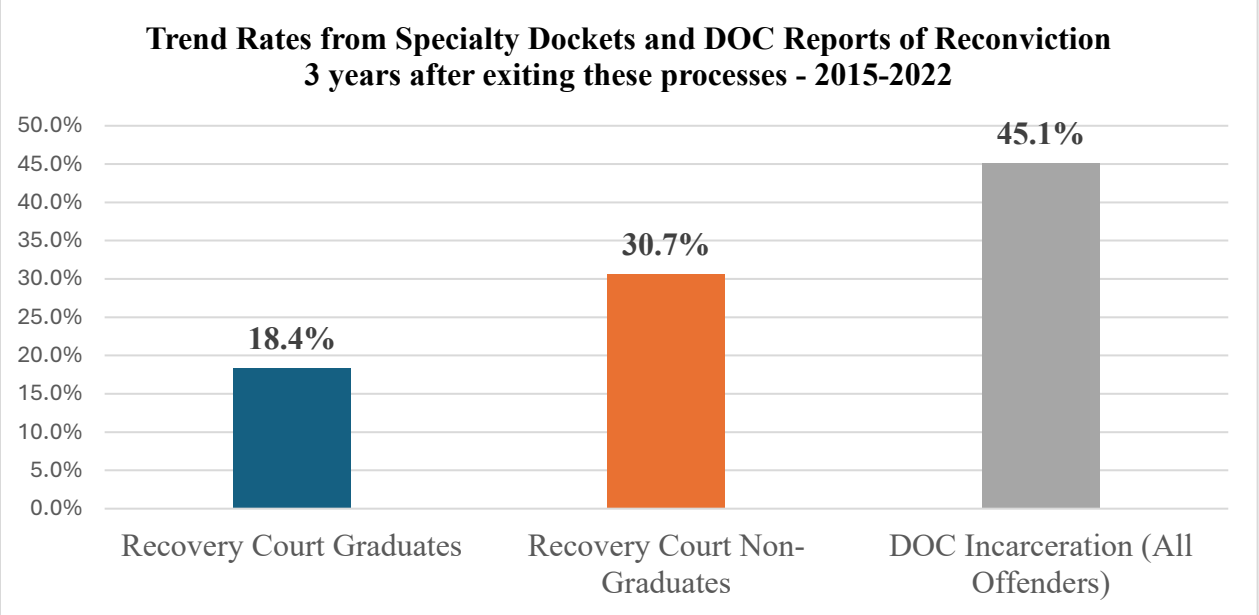
[17] Office of the Executive Secretary, Supreme Court of Virginia. https://www.vacourts.gov/courtadmin/aoc/djs/programs/sds/programs/rc/home#:~:text=Courts%20Advisory%20Committee-,Evaluation%20Reports,-General%20Information.

[18] Virginia Department of Corrections. Recidivism At a Glance: Releases from State Responsible (SR) Incarceration. May 2025. https://vadoc.virginia.gov/media/2216/recidivismataglance_fy2017tofy2022_final.pdf.

[19] Virginia Department of Corrections. Virginia's Recidivism Rate Remains Among the Lowest in the Country. May 28, 2021. https://vadoc.virginia.gov/news-press-releases/2021/virginia-s-recidivism-rate-remains-among-the-lowest-in-the-country/.



The trend lines (dashed lines) indicate the average reconviction rates, calculated as the average of the annual data reported, not compiled data. Recovery court reports show an average graduate reconviction rate of 18.4% and an average non-graduate reconviction rate of 30.7%. DOC reports show an average former-inmate reconviction rate of 45.1%.



Appendix F: State Recovery Court Advisory Committee Membership Roster

Chair:
The Honorable S. Bernard Goodwyn
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of Virginia

Vice Chair:
*The Honorable Robert Turk,
Judge
Montgomery Circuit Court
Montgomery Recovery Court

Members:
Karl Hade
Executive Secretary
Office of the Executive Secretary

Hon. Colette McEachin
Commonwealth's Attorney
City of Richmond
Commonwealth Attorneys Association

Jennifer MacArthur
Adult Justice Program Manager
Department of Criminal Justice Services

*Hon. Louise DiMatteo
Judge Arlington Circuit Court
Arlington Recovery Court

Tim Coyne, Esq.
Deputy Executive Director
Virginia Indigent Defense Commission

*Hon. Jack S. Hurley
Judge Tazewell Circuit Court
Tazewell Adult Recovery Court

William H. Anspach Chief
Colonial Heights Police Department
Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police

Hon. Karl Leonard
Sheriff Chesterfield County
Virginia Sheriff's Association

Terrelle Stewart
Executive Director
District 19 CSB
Virginia Association of Community Services Boards

*Hon. Joseph Vance, IV
Judge
Fredericksburg Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Rappahannock Juvenile Recovery Court

Chadwick Dotson
Director
Virginia Department of Corrections

Megan Roane
Director
Blue Ridge Court Services
Virginia Community Criminal Justice Association

Dr. Candance Roney
Director Substance Use Services
Department of Behavioral Health and
Developmental Services

Hon. Carson Beard
Clerk Culpeper Circuit Court
Circuit Court Clerks Association

VACANT
Department of Social Services

*Hon. Charles S. Sharp
Judge, Retired
Stafford Circuit Court At Large Member

James Towey
Manager
Legislative and Regulatory Affairs
Department of Juvenile Justice

Angela Coleman
Executive Director
Commission on Virginia Alcohol Safety
Action Program

Hon. David Carson
Judge
Twenty-Third Judicial Circuit
At Large Member

Hon. Eric Olsen
Commonwealth Attorney
Stafford County
At Large Member

Cheryl Robinette
Coordinator
Tazewell Adult Recovery Court
At Large Member

* Indicates Executive Committee member

Staff:
Paul DeLosh
Director
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Anna Powers
Specialty Dockets Coordinator
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Heather Borland
Specialty Dockets
Administrative Assistant
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Danny Livengood
Specialty Dockets Training Coordinator
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Liane Hanna
Specialty Dockets Best Practices Specialist
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Monica DiGiandomenico
Specialty Dockets Best Practices Specialist
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Renee Rosales
Specialty Dockets Budget Analyst
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Auriel Diggs
Specialty Dockets Grants Analyst
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary

Celin Job
Specialty Dockets Database Analyst
Department of Judicial Services
Office of the Executive Secretary