



# news

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## **18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District opens Veterans Treatment Court** *New problem-solving court designed to serve military veterans*

CASTLE ROCK, Colo. – The 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District has opened a new Veterans Treatment Court, the second such problem-solving court in Colorado designed to help meet the unique needs of military veterans who suffer from certain mental health disorders and are involved in the criminal justice system.

The new court, similar to the three-year-old Veteran Trauma Court in Colorado Springs, is designed to serve high-risk, high-need adult clients who suffer from diagnoses including post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury related to their military service, with preference given to felony cases. Participants, who enter the program voluntarily, may reside anywhere in the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert and Lincoln counties).

Two clients have been accepted so far, but several more are preparing applications for consideration by a screening team that includes representatives of the offices of the District Attorney and Public Defender and the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Probation Department. Other partners in the program include the U.S. Veterans Administration, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, and Addictions Research Treatment Service. Peer mentors will soon be available.

“We are proud to be able to offer this specialty court and associated treatment and other services to men and women who’ve served our country in the military,” said Magistrate Beth

Elliott-Dumler, who presides over the Veterans Treatment Court docket. “Our purpose really is to help eligible veterans safely stay in the community, get needed treatment and avoid further involvement in the criminal justice system.”

Most clients accepted to the Veterans Treatment Court are expected to successfully complete the program in 18 to 24 months. Clients will appear in court frequently for reviews of their progress, have frequent contact with their probation officers, and submit to random drug tests. Peer mentors are available to encourage the clients to meet their requirements, adhere to treatment and interact with their probation officers. Court appearances and other activities become less frequent as clients successfully complete stages of the program.

For more information, contact Danielle Hamilton, the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator, at [danielle.hamilton@judicial.state.co.us](mailto:danielle.hamilton@judicial.state.co.us).