



# news

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## **Eighth Judicial District to launch DUI court in Larimer County** *First case docketed for July 2, 2010*

FORT COLLINS – The 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (Larimer and Jackson counties) today announced the launch of a problem-solving DUI court that will serve Larimer County. The court’s first case has been docketed for Friday, July 2, 2010, at 10 a.m. Magistrate Matthew Zehe will preside over the DUI court.

“It is an honor and privilege to be a part of this new, specialized court,” said Magistrate Zehe. “DUI and its tragic consequences present challenges for communities throughout Colorado and the nation, but it is my steadfast belief that this court will bring solutions to those challenges.”

The DUI court will hear cases of offenders with a history of repeat DUI related behaviors and offenses. The court developed its treatment model from the *Ten Guiding Principles of DWI Courts*, produced by the National Center for DWI Courts, which places an emphasis on rehabilitating offenders through customized treatment programs, intensive supervision and regular, in-person court review hearings.

The court-adopted treatment model monitors participants in a variety of ways for program compliance. Participants must undergo treatment and counseling, submit to random and frequent drug and alcohol testing, and appear frequently before the judge. Sanctions, including jail time, are imposed for noncompliance, while positive incentives, such as public transportation vouchers, are awarded to successful participants as encouragement to continue advancing in the program.

The District Attorney’s Office will screen DUI offenders and make a determination regarding an individual’s eligibility to participate in the DUI court program. If the District

Attorney's Office presents an initial invitation to participate in the program, the DUI Court Team will then further review the candidate's DUI-related history and, assuming the team believes the offender has the potential to be successful in the program, formally adopt him or her into the treatment model.

"The main goal of this court is to enhance our community and ensure safety for our citizens by helping repeat DUI offenders integrate back into the community in a safe, sober and productive way," said Magistrate Zehe.

The Larimer County DUI court becomes the eighth DUI court to serve Colorado. Like the newly reorganized 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Drug Court, Larimer County and other jurisdictions have received training and have gone through an extensive planning process prior to launch. The first DUI Courts in Colorado were established in 2007 in Pagosa Springs and Cortez. In the last three years, DUI courts have been established in Aspen, Colorado Springs, Boulder/Longmont and Greeley.

"DUI courts are an important strategy bringing together multiple disciplines to reduce recidivism, prevent injuries, and save lives lost due to alcohol-impaired driving crashes," said Emily Thompkins, executive director of MADD Colorado. "MADD Colorado thanks the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District for working to make Northern Colorado a safer place to drive and live."

The Larimer County DUI court is a collaborative effort among local and state agencies including local substance abuse treatment providers and law enforcement agencies, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Alternative Sentencing Department, the Probation Department, the Larimer Center for Mental Health, and the Colorado Judicial Branch.

**Editor's Note:** On Friday, Magistrate Zehe will be joined by DUI Court Coordinator Sarah Keck, as well as other members of the DUI Court team, to further discuss the court's formation and mission. Cameras will be permitted in the courtroom. **For more information on the Larimer DUI court or Friday's proceedings contact Keck at 970-498-6127.**