

DRUG COURTS

A Smart Approach to Criminal Justice

Drug courts – special courts that promote collaboration among the judiciary, community corrections agencies, drug treatment providers, and other community support groups – have been in existence for more than 20 years, and their effectiveness is unquestioned. In times of serious budget cuts for State and local governments, drug courts are a smart, cost-effective investment because they help offenders on the road to recovery and reduce recidivism. They meet the public health and public safety needs of both the community and the drug-involved offender.

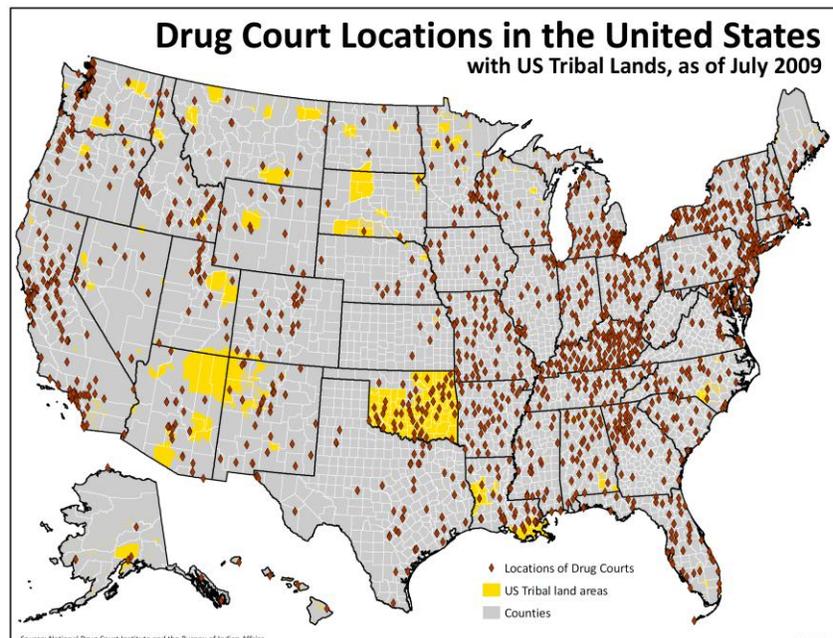
President Obama’s FY 2011 Budget requests approximately \$114 million for drug courts and other problem-solving courts, demonstrating the Administration’s support for increasing and enhancing access to substance use treatment. Drug courts, which combine escalating sanctions, mandatory and random drug testing, and aftercare, are a proven solution that reduces substance use, helps prevent crime, and maximizes limited financial resources. With more than 2,400 drug courts in operation today, approximately 120,000 Americans annually receive the help they need to break the cycle of addiction.

Overview

- ◆ Drug courts are specialized, locally based courts that divert non-violent, low-level offenders with substance abuse problems from incarceration and into a supervised program with treatment and rigorous standards of accountability.

- ◆ The courts bring the judicial, law enforcement, and treatment communities together with other social and public services through rigorous case management to address participants’ needs in areas such as education, housing, job training, and mental health referrals.

- ◆ Drug courts help participants recover from addiction and prevent future criminal activity while also reducing the burden of repeatedly processing low-level, non-violent offenders through the Nation’s courts, jails, and prisons.



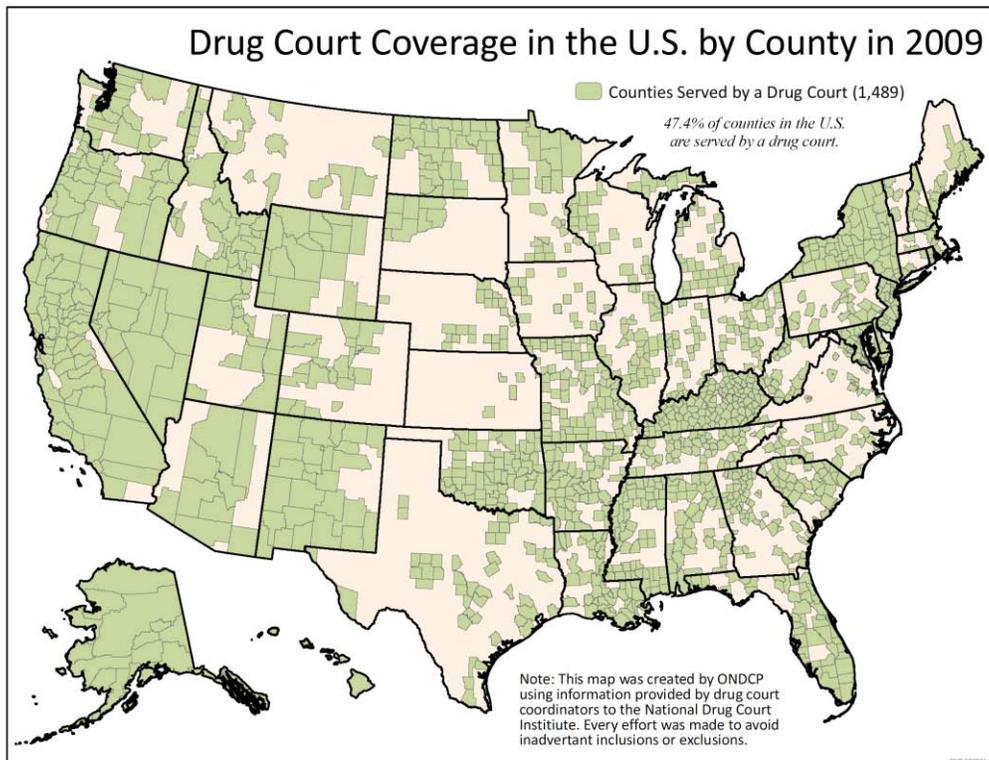
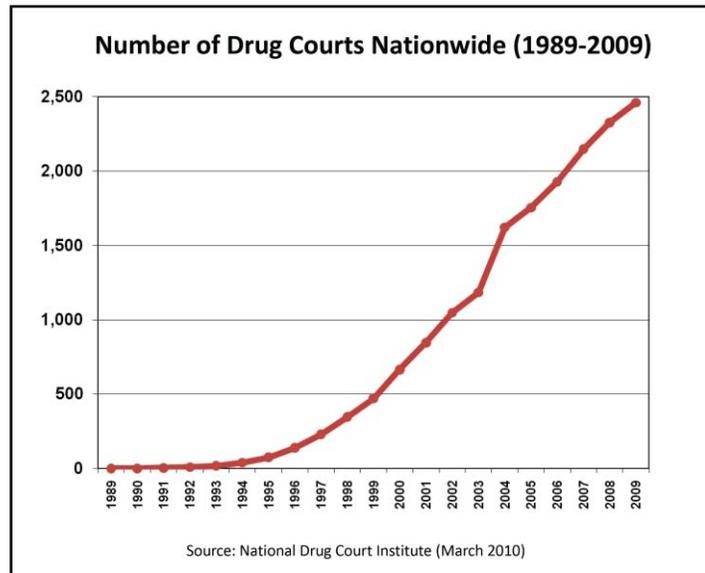
ONDCP seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation’s effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

Drug Courts Save Lives

Drug court programs have a tangible effect on criminal recidivism. A National Institute of Justice study compared re-arrest rates for drug court graduates with rates for individuals who were imprisoned for drug offenses and found significant differences. Nationally, 84 percent of drug court graduates remain arrest-free in the first year after graduation, and 72.5 percent have no arrests at the two-year mark.

By the Numbers

- ◆ The drug court movement continues to grow rapidly. Since 1989, drug courts have been implemented or are being planned in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and nearly 90 Tribal locations (see map, page 1.)
- ◆ As of December 2009, there were 2,459 drug court programs distributed evenly across the United States.
- ◆ Approximately 47 percent of counties in the United States are served by drug courts (see map, below).
- ◆ The President's FY 2011 Budget requests approximately \$114 million for drug courts and other problem-solving courts.
- ◆ The success of drug courts has led to development of other specialty courts, including Tribal, Veterans, Child Support, Mental Health, Community, and Family courts.



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