

## Veterans Court Partners

### **State of Minnesota**

- Fourth Judicial District Court
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
  - Veterans Employment Services

### **Hennepin County**

- Board of Commissioners
- Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Attorney's Office
- Public Defender's Office
- Sheriff's Office
- Department of Human Services and Public Health
  - Veterans' Service
  - Corporate Compliance and Quality Assurance

### **City of Minneapolis**

- Attorney's Office
- Police Department

### **United States Government**

- Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Minneapolis VA Medical Center
  - Veterans Benefits Administration

### **Community**

- Suburban Hennepin County Prosecutors Association
- National Alliance on Mental Illness - MN
- Battered Women's Justice Project
- Domestic Abuse Project
- Council on Crime and Justice

## Contact Information

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# Hennepin County Veterans Court

**A court-supervised treatment program for defendants who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.**



**Hennepin County Government Center  
300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN**

<http://www.mncourts.gov/district/4/?page=4010>

## What is Veterans Court?

Hennepin County Veterans Court is a problem solving court that serves veterans charged with a criminal offense, who are struggling with addiction, serious mental illness and/or co-occurring disorders. It is a 12-18 month coordinated program that promotes sobriety, recovery, and stability involving cooperation and collaboration with the traditional problem solving court partners, with the addition of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care, the Veterans Benefits Administration, County Veterans' Services, and volunteer veteran mentors. The program couples judicial reviews with intensive probation supervision including input from a multi-disciplinary team of professionals led by the judge.

## Who is Eligible?

Eligibility is evaluated by the Veterans Court Team on a case-by-case basis. General requirements include:

- Service in the U.S. Armed Forces
- Charged in Hennepin County with a non-violent felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor offense
- Residence in Hennepin County, or in close proximity to the Court (metro area)
- Diagnosed with a treatable behavioral, mental health, or chemical health issue

## Cost

There is no participant fee. However, participants may be required to pay a fine and/or restitution. In addition, participants who are placed on probation are required to pay a Correctional Service Fee.

## Entry & Referral Process

1. The case is referred to Veterans Court upon agreement of the parties. The court is a universal consent court - all parties must agree to the referral.
2. The Court Screener completes an assessment, which includes interviewing the defendant, speaking with family members and/or case managers, and reviewing relevant information systems to determine if the defendant is receiving or has in the past received services from Hennepin County and/or has a prior criminal record.
3. The Court Screener then advises the judge and attorneys as to whether the defendant meets Veterans Court criteria and makes a recommendation to the Court as to whether or not the defendant should be accepted.
4. An accepted defendant is placed on conditional release or probation by the judge and is assigned to a supervising probation officer. The Veterans Service Officer is notified of the need for VA eligibility determination and possible referral to the VA Medical Center.
5. The defendant then appears for periodic judicial reviews to monitor compliance. For cases not already adjudicated, there will be a disposition. The disposition of a case depends on the nature of the case and the performance of the defendant.

## Veterans Court Goals

- Reduce criminal recidivism
- Facilitate participant sobriety
- Increase compliance with treatment and other court ordered conditions
- Improve access to VA benefits and services
- Improve family relationships and social support connections
- Treat and stabilize mental health conditions
- Improve life stability

## Veterans Court Services

- One-on-one judicial reviews
- Ready access to County Veterans' Service Office and qualifying VA services
- Intensive probation supervision
- Substance abuse, mental health, family and other counseling
- Random drug and alcohol testing
- Medication monitoring
- Employment and housing assistance
- Peer mentoring

## Graduation

Upon completion of the Veterans Court program, participants are given a graduation coin and a certificate of completion. Probationers may be placed on administrative probation and subject to minimal requirements.

## Location

Hennepin County Veterans Court is held every Monday at 10:00 a.m. in Courtroom 857 at the Hennepin County Government Center.