

Regional Municipalities Veterans Treatment Court

A person in a dark military uniform with a white cap is seen from behind, saluting with their right hand. They are standing in front of a large American flag. The stars of the flag are on the left, and the stripes are on the right.

“If society is judged by how it treats its less fortunate among them,
how will we be judged by the way we treat our returning Veterans?”



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RMVTC Informational Presentation



A Collaborative Approach to Aiding Returning Veterans

There is much documented evidence that a significant number of the Veterans who returned from the Vietnam conflict experienced rather severe problems adjusting to civilian life.

Many Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans were contributing members of society prior to deployment.

[Humvee Traffic Driving in Baghdad](#)

[2 Afghanistan convoy contact](#)

Secretary Shinseki of the Veterans Administration has pledged: “We are going to take (the) 131,000 homeless Veterans off the streets over the next five years”



Statistics

23,440,000 Veterans in the U. S

1,700,000 Veterans from
Iraq/Afghanistan

1 in 5 report symptoms of mental
health issues

Local jails- 72,600

State Prison - 136,800

Federal Prison - 19,300

Total Justice Involved- 703,000



Statistics

Of the 1,640,000 individuals who have been deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq as of 2008, approximately 300,000 currently suffer from PTSD.

Approximately 320,000 Veterans report having a TBI incident during deployment.

Statistics from a 2008 Rand Institute Study



RMVTC Program Philosophy

The program gives Veterans the opportunity to avoid jail and to move towards a healthy lifestyle. It does this by clearing up new and old legal matters. Veterans can then seek employment and return to the streets without fear of being rejected or arrested.



RMVTC Program

Participation Overview

Who: Veterans arrested and/or facing incarceration who are willing to participate in substance abuse or mental health treatment and remain alcohol and drug free.

How: Clear up pending and outstanding criminal/misdemeanor cases. Judge reviews their misdemeanor cases and renders sentences largely in the form of “community service” based on treatment programs or the charges are dismissed upon completion of treatment.



RMVTC Program Goal

**Assist Veterans restoring self esteem
and moving towards self-sufficiency
by permanently enhancing their
ability to lead an independent, law-
abiding and employed lifestyle**

A vertical collage of four images on the left side of the slide. From top to bottom: a fountain with water spraying upwards; a saguaro cactus against a sunset sky; a sunset over a landscape; and a large, ornate building with a dome, likely a state capitol building.

Key Points

No incarceration at the time of arrest if accepted into RMVTC.

“Old Cases” also resolved based on participation in the program

Not a coercive program—entry is for those who are willing to take substantial steps towards resolving their legal problems

Held in Courtroom but in a less sterile manner

Still a courtroom but more informal and accessible

Allows for a sense of accomplishment and responsibility



Key Points

Better understanding/access to legal/court system-
removing the perception of fear

Engenders trust by the interaction with law student
attorneys and Veteran mentors

Geared towards misdemeanor offenses. These types
of offenses could hamper long-term success

Veterans are no longer in the lifestyle that created
these types of charges

All Veterans with mental health and/or substance
abuse problems must be actively involved and
compliant with their treatment plan and case manager



Program Guidelines/Eligibility Criteria

Persons who have served in the military and are willing to take advantage of the benefits that they have earned by serving their country.

New charges while enrolled in program will result in being dropped from the program and possibly jailed.

Currently, City of Tucson, City of South Tucson, and Towns of Marana, Sahuarita and Oro Valley misdemeanor charges are eligible.



Program Guidelines/Eligibility Criteria

NO Felony Warrants/Offenses are eligible

Criminal History - Prior violent felonies &/or sexual offenses may make applicant ineligible

Outstanding warrants must be eligible misdemeanor offense(s).

You may not know all of the offenses that are outstanding for the Veteran. When you make the referral, court staff will review and determine eligibility



Eligible Offenses

Primarily “Survival/Quality of Life”
type of offenses

An Eligible Offenses list has been
compiled to include 55 offenses



Eligible Offenses: Domestic Violence

Prosecutorial review is needed to determine RMVTC eligibility

Veteran DV cases are reviewed on a case by case basis

Through partnering providers Veterans can receive a reduced fee for DV treatment



Eligible Offenses:

DUI

DUI cases will only be eligible for RMVTC post adjudication

Veteran would request a transfer to RMVTC after plea has been entered and accepted

Through partnering providers Veterans can receive a reduced fee for DUI treatment



Provider Guidelines

General Criteria

Veteran must be willing to comply with VA, Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) and RMVTC program requirements

Veteran must be willing to comply with treatment plan

Referral from VA/OPCS case manager



Participant Benefits

Ability to clear up old issues

Remove fear/paranoia of arrest & financial concerns

Separate the past from the present/future

Eliminate barriers/interruptions to successful transition

Increase work & housing opportunities through CWT

Increase the Veterans self esteem and sense of hope by interaction with mentors who are also Veterans

Increased opportunity to regain driver's license



Service Provider Benefits

Eliminate road blocks that warrants/incarceration can cause in traditional recovery models- RMVTC will reduce “back-sliding”

Efficient use of limited resources by eliminating barriers to housing and outside employment

Integral part of Veterans Administration effort to address mental health issues and help reduce recidivism

Monthly court review can be used as an incentive to help Veterans stay engaged and focused in their treatment/case plan



Jail Benefits

Less jail costs

Space for serious offenders

Less medical costs



Protocols/Administrative Flow

1. VA, OPCS, or Rally Point, La Frontera staff, arresting police officer or pretrial services identifies potential candidates.
2. All related information is emailed to Tucson City Court Staff.
3. Candidates will be reviewed by court staff, prosecutor and judge.



Protocols/Administrative Flow

4. Warrant and criminal history check will be completed.

5. If disqualifying previous criminal activity or current charges are not eligible for program, Defendant and initial referral source will be notified that the Veteran is not eligible for participation in the program. Veteran will be referred to the appropriate department for further processing.



Protocols/Administrative Flow

6. If Veteran is found eligible for RMVTC, referring source will be notified by RMVTC staff
7. The Veteran will be scheduled for an orientation on their initial RMVTC appearance.



What to Expect At Court

Court conducted every other Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Tucson City Court.

Informal, but it is still a courtroom

During orientation Judge will discuss the conditions of the program including treatment compliance and remaining clean and sober.

Veterans will not be taken into custody for the cases being heard there. If they decline the program, they will be referred back into the regular court process



Court/VA/James E. Rogers College Of Law Unique Collaboration

The backbone of the program are the law students who are either present or former service members and have eagerly come forward to work in the program. Through their work and affinity for service members they are invaluable to the program. Their participation has resulted in expansion to include the Veterans Advocacy Clinic program for all students at the university.

Contacts

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“Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world, but the Marines don’t have that problem.” - President Ronald Reagan



Questions

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Thank you