

OVERVIEW

The Mental Health Diversion Program is a pre-trial post-booking diversion program for mentally impaired offenders. The program offers offenders a treatment option that is judicially supervised. It is designed to divert mentally impaired offenders out of the traditional criminal justice process and into appropriate rehabilitative alternatives. Once the offender has been screened, assessed and approved for participation in the program, he/she will promptly begin a treatment regimen that is specific to his/her needs.

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

Mental Health Criteria – significant mental impairment documented by a qualified health professional.

Criminal History – current offense(s) must be related to the mental impairment. Misdemeanors and low-level non-violent felony offenses are considered. Cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

ACCESS TO THE PROGRAM

District Attorney Approval – All cases are reviewed by the District Attorney's office for final approval.

Referrals – Accepted from a variety of sources including law enforcement, jail staff, judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, mental health professionals, family or friends.

Intake Process - It is the policy of the program that the intake process be timely, clinically sound and as seamless as possible.

- Once a referral is received, the District Attorney's office reviews it to insure the minimum criteria are met.
- Following DA review, the defendant is given a date and time to complete screening forms at the MHDP office.
- The defendant is scheduled for a face-to-face interview with the Program Manager.

- A formal comprehensive assessment is completed by the Program Manager and submitted to the DA's office for final approval/denial.
- The defendant's attorney and court of origin are notified of status at screening and at final disposition.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Participants will develop an individualized treatment plan

A phase system is utilized to measure participant progress

Services for education, counseling and other assistance are provided by outside agencies.

Participants are referred to these agencies throughout the program as needed.

Supervision Monitoring – A case manager will monitor each participant placed in the program. The case manager will work closely with the program manager and service providers.

Compliance Hearing – All participants are required to attend monthly compliance hearings. During the hearing, the progress of each participant is reviewed in open court. Both incentives and sanctions are used as methods of motivation.

Disposition of Court Case – The diversion period is typically nine to twelve months in duration but could continue up to two years. The period directly relates to a participant's *need* and/or *compliance*. Upon successful completion of the program, the case(s) are dismissed. In the event, the agreement is terminated; the case(s) are remanded to the court of origin where a new proceeding can move forward.



Mission

The mission of the Mental Health Diversion Program is to identify mentally impaired offenders, to expedite them through the criminal justice system and to help them achieve mental stability and non-criminal behavior.

Goals

Divert mentally impaired offenders from the criminal justice system.

Assist mentally impaired offenders achieve stability and reduce recidivism.

Reduce cost by using existing government agencies and treatment providers.

**For further information contact:
Tarrant County MHDP**

Office: (817) 884-1774

Fax: (817) 884-1748



Mental Health Diversion Program

Honorable Brent A. Carr,
Presiding Judge



300 W. Belknap 4th Floor

Fort Worth, Texas 76196