

Superior Court of California, County of Alameda

Office of Collaborative Court Services

Post Release Community Supervision (PRCS) Reentry Court

PRCS Reentry Court is a collaborative-justice court, also known as a problem-solving or treatment court. It combines judicial supervision with treatment services that are consistently monitored to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for the participants.

The PRCS Reentry court is staffed by a team trained in collaborative court practices, and an understanding of substance use disorders as health conditions that often co-occur with mental health issues that require treatment. The team includes a Judge, Deputy District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation Officer, Mental Health Specialist, and a Case Manager. Implementing a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.

PRCS Reentry Court is highly structured. The focus is on compassion, positive reinforcement, addiction and mental health treatment as well as removing barriers to reentry including a lack of employment, education, and housing.

PRCS Reentry Court serves men and women that have violated, or are at risk of violating, the terms of their supervision. Participants are referred by probation officers, and/ or the Revocation Court. People that have been in prison who are at high risk to recidivate under normal supervision and have a high need for treatment services are eligible. As a member of the PRCS Reentry Court team once remarked, "these are some of the most traumatized and vulnerable people in our community."

Budget Allocations and Expenditures

	Year 1 Budget	Year 1 Expenditures
Contract Positions Funded		
Substance Abuse Treatment Specialist II	\$ 106,106.00	\$ 75,775.15
Mental Health Specialist	\$ 41,600.00	\$ 42,879.26
Evaluator	\$ 15,960.00	\$ 1,549.60
Travel		
To NADCP	\$ 1,728.00	\$ -
Supplies		
Phone/Laptop/Office Supplies	\$ 2,065.00	\$ 1,579.39
Treatment Services		
Residential	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 21,259.70
Outpatient	\$ 32,000.00	\$ -
Recovery Residences	\$ 47,520.00	\$ 5,299.00
Transportation	\$ 28,800.00	\$ -
Other Costs		
UA Testing	\$ 37,800.00	\$ 1,253.50
Phone Services	\$ 960.00	\$ -

Conference Registration	\$ 745.00	\$ -
Transportation Vouchers	\$ 69,660.00	\$ -
Phase-Based Gift Cards	\$ 10,200.00	\$ -
High Level Incentives	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 1,002.00
Total	\$ 449,144.00	\$ 150,597.60

That year one expenditures for FY 2020-21 amount to about a third of the budget allocation reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on referrals to Post Release Community Supervision Court. There were 22 PRCS participants last year.

PRCS Reentry Court Outcomes

The COVID-19 pandemic had a huge effect on court operations. While the PRCS Reentry Court continued to meet virtually, the courts that referred participants were not meeting. Also, probation was unable to conduct drug testing that would identify people that needed treatment services. These factors led to the reduction in participants mentioned earlier. We saw the PRCS population struggling with intensified addiction and mental health issues. The virtual platform (for both court and treatment) was not always enough to truly connect with people in need. The court's budget was impacted and some support staff for the program were furloughed or laid-off. All administrative functions were affected, as was general morale.

Despite these conditions, all participants in the PRCS Reentry Court program experienced quality of life improvements. Most participants did not re-offend during and after the program. Re-arrested individuals had less serious charges than before program entry. Graduates ended their PRCS commitment on-time or early. Participants were released from custody to enter treatment. Many people avoided custody altogether by choosing to participate in the program. Alternatives to incarceration were especially important during the pandemic when the jail sought to reduce the number of prisoners to control the spread of COVID-19. Most participants improved their housing and employment situations. The court forgave legal and traffic fees for successful program participants. Gift cards, transportation vouchers, and other incentives were distributed. All participants were required to complete an intensive treatment program. Almost every participant stabilized their mental health conditions and were linked to ongoing services. Many participants reported reconnecting with family, experiencing integrity, self-esteem, hope for the future, and a positive experience with the justice-system.

PRCS Reentry Court participants were 36.4% African American, 31.8% Latino/Hispanic, and 18.2% White.

PRCS Reentry Court Success Story

This story illustrates the fact that addiction is a chronic disease, and that recovery can be punctuated by periods of relapse. It also reflects a case manager's dedication and the collective strength of a collaborative court team.

Mr. C.P spent 38 of his 60 years of life in prison. He was initially referred to Reentry Court in 2019. He entered the program dealing with polysubstance use, post-traumatic stress, and a history of grief and loss. Gun violence had claimed the lives of two of his children and he nearly took his own life.

At the time, he worked closely with the reentry court case manager and entered a residential treatment center. Initially he struggled, but he began to thrive once he started doing the recovery work. Reentry Court became a second family for Mr. P and became a volunteer counselor at his treatment program. Mr. P's biggest trigger was tragedy and loss. His sponsor and dear friend ended his life after which Mr. P left the program and relapsed on methamphetamine.

Despite several attempts by his case manager to reconnect, Mr. P continued using and returned to life on the street for a year. Mr. P eventually met with his case manager again, this time while in custody. He was tired of suffering and ready to return to Reentry Court; a place that he regarded as much more than a court, but a safe haven and strong support system. His case manager helped facilitate his release from custody and entry to a treatment program suitable for his current needs.

Mr. P again flourished in treatment, becoming a leader and example to those who surrounded him. Because of his dedication and hard work, he graduated early and transitioned to a Sober Living community. There, he again became a house leader, supporting those in need, regularly attending outpatient groups, additional recovery meetings, checking in with his case manager, and always showing up to Reentry Court hearings.

His success did not come without obstacles, however. During his time there, Mr. P once again suffered a tragic loss, the same trigger that had derailed his recovery in the past. While in sober living, Mr. P found his dear friend and longtime recovery teammate unconscious after suffering a fluke heart attack. After two months at his bedside, Mr. P lost his beloved friend.

This time, in the wake of tragedy, Mr. P threw himself into his program, checked in with his Reentry team daily, shared his obstacles in court, increased his outpatient treatment, and stayed as close to the team as possible. Mr. P's story isn't over, but his recovery continues and he remains determined to stay on course regardless of what life throws his way. Mr. P just graduated the PRCS Reentry Court in December and continues to stay in touch with the team. Mr. P has a very promising future and we believe he's going to help a lot of people.