



Press Release

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25 Years of Treatment Courts in Alaska! **Celebrating National Treatment Court Month in Alaska!**

Anchorage, Alaska, May 17, 2024 The Alaska Court System is proud to celebrate 25 years of therapeutic courts in Alaska offering a path to recovery and reintegration for Alaskans struggling with substance abuse and mental health challenges.

In recognition of 25 years of therapeutic courts in Alaska and National Treatment Court Month and Mental Health Awareness Month this May, the **Alaska Court System will host a special celebration on Thursday, May 30, 2024, at 3:30 pm in the Alaska Supreme Court Courtroom located at 303 K Street, Boney Courthouse, Anchorage, Alaska.**

A reception will follow the celebration, and media are invited to attend. The celebration will include honoring retired Judge Stephanie Rhoades for her role in establishing the first therapeutic court in Alaska. We will also honor the countless individuals who have benefitted from therapeutic courts, as well as the dedicated judges, treatment providers, and court staff who make these programs possible.

The therapeutic model is an alternative justice model in which a collaborative team oversees and closely monitors participants who choose the treatment program in lieu of incarceration. Therapeutic court participants work hard over a lengthy multi-month process to address the underlying problems that led to involvement with the criminal justice system.

[Alaska's therapeutic courts](#) have demonstrably improved lives and communities. The successful completion of these programs leads to reduced recidivism rates, lower crime rates, stronger families and communities, and cost savings across the justice system.

“Presiding over a therapeutic court has been a great experience in that the therapeutic court model is so different from the traditional court proceeding,” says Anchorage Superior Court Judge Adolf Zeman. “I’m part of a group of professionals who work as a collaborative team in order to help our participants identify the root causes of their actions that brought them into court in the first place. It has been incredibly rewarding to see our participants work their way through the program towards graduation and even more gratifying when those participants never interact with the criminal justice system again.”

Alaska’s therapeutic courts include [Drug and DUI Courts](#) in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Palmer; [Family Courts](#) in Anchorage and Palmer; [Mental Health Courts](#) in Anchorage, Juneau and Palmer; [Veterans Courts](#) in Anchorage and Fairbanks; and [State/Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts](#) in Kenai and Sitka.

About the Alaska Court System: The mission of the [Alaska Court System](#) is to provide an accessible and impartial forum for the just resolution of all cases that come before it, and to decide such cases in accordance with the law, expeditiously and with integrity.