

MARTIN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COURT



MENTAL HEALTH

AWARENESS MONTH

— MAY —



Florida Facts



- 12th in prevalence of mental illness in the general population
- 50th in funding for mental health services
- Approximately 176,000 of FL's citizens are in custody today
 - 3rd in the nation for the highest prison population
 - 1 in 4 of those are mentally ill
 - It costs approximately **\$140 per day** to house a mentally ill individual in jail

Why Mental Health Court?

- Law Enforcement contact with someone unstable typically leads to an arrest or a baker act.
- If arrested, the case is placed in the traditional criminal justice system.
 - Based on finding of guilt and punishment of offenders.
 - Not equipped or designed for helping the mentally ill offender receive treatment.
- If a person is found to be incompetent to proceed or insane at the time of the offense due to their mental illness, the statutes don't provide for any court supervision.

Mental Health Court History



St. Lucie established their MHC court in 2006.

Martin County established their MHC court in 2008.

Indian River County established their MHC court in 2015.

Okeechobee County established their MHC court in 2018.

What is Mental Health Court?

- Defendants are placed on a specialized docket and removed from the criminal docket.
- They are monitored closely through weekly court appearances.
- The court ensures the participants are getting treatment, case management, medications, regularly drug tested, and have a safe living environment.

Martin County MHC Enhancements

- MHC case manager
- MHC peer
- Psychiatrist appointments
- Therapy
- Substance Use Disorder treatment
- MHC specific transitional housing
- Drug testing

In Court...

1. Court Weekly
2. Assigned to a Case Manager
3. Receive counseling
 - Mental Health
 - Substance Use
4. Medication Management
5. Transitional Housing

Receive **Incentives** for positive behaviors

- Going first in court
- “A Team”
- Less frequent court appearances
- Applause
- Graduate upon completion

Receive **Sanctions** for negative behaviors

- Jail time
- Community Service hours
- Stern lectures, essays, etc.

Keys to success

- Identify issues and needs of Defendants
- Therapeutic, not punitive setting
- Frequent status conferences to prevent problems
- Linkage between judicial, mental health, and correctional systems
- Financial support received from local, state, and federal funds

Why it works

- Emphasize treatment
- Participants given a voice, respect, dignity and validation
- Moved from jail to mental health systems expeditiously
- Centralizes and improves linkage to community services
- Court oversight ensures compliance
- Accountability

Does it work?

Rate of recidivism for offenders from Florida Department of Corrections – 58%

- Those with Mental Illness are 51% more likely to recidivate.
- Persons with serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder have even higher recidivism rates.

MC MHC: total participants – 520 total graduates – 265

Latest recidivism for MC MHC graduates = **12%**

Cost aversion for the Martin County in jail bed days from 2019 to 2021 = **\$181,160**

Criminal Recidivism in Inmates with Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders

Kristen M. Zgoba, Rusty Reeves, Anthony Tamburello, Lisa DeBilio

Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law Online Feb 2020.

Florida Department of Corrections Quarterly Recidivism Report, for July 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022

Florida Prison Recidivism Report: Releases from 2008 to 2020, July 2022, Florida Department of Corrections

19th Judicial Circuit Statistics

- All together, the MHCs have had 3,111 clients referred to MHC since its circuit-wide inception in 2006 (and 4,244 cases).
- 1579 total graduates of the Circuit's MHCs
- Breakdown of current cases:
 - 446 active clients (150 misdemeanors – 33.63%, 296 felonies – 66.37%)
 - 106 clients as condition of probation
 - 92 ITP/NGI conditional releases
 - 25 clients currently in the state hospital
- The main diagnosis in the 19th Circuit is schizoaffective disorder, followed by bipolar disorder and paranoid schizophrenia.
- Other diagnoses include dementia, PTSD, traumatic brain injury, major depressive disorder, intellectual disabilities, autism, and more.
- Most clients are 18-34 or over the age of 55.
- The vast majority of participants are males.
- Over 75-80% of participants have a co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder.

A group of four people, two women and two men, are standing together and smiling. They are all wearing face masks. The woman on the far left has her arm around the man next to her. The man on the far right is wearing glasses. They are standing in front of a wall that features an American flag on the right and a large seal on the left. The text "THANK YOU!" is overlaid in the center of the image.

THANK YOU!

