

\$3M Dependency Drug Court Funding

Definition and Purpose of Dependency Drug Courts

Dependency drug courts focus on cases involving parental rights in which an adult is the party litigant, which includes a substance abuse charge against a parent. Dependency drug courts address substance abuse issues of the parent. The offense may have a direct impact on custody and visitation disputes, abuse neglect, and dependency matters. Charges could result in termination or limitation of parental rights and placing the child(ren) in foster care services. Federal law prohibits children from remaining in foster care for more than 18 months, thus resulting in the increasing number of parents losing their children permanently, before they are able to successfully complete their treatment program.

The goal of dependency drug courts is to provide the parent(s) with the necessary parenting skills and treatment program that will allow the children to remain safely in their parents' care while seeking help with their substance abuse. Dependency drug courts help to decrease the number of children placed in foster care, keeping families unified, while holding parents accountable for their substance abuse rehabilitation.

Funding History

The Governor's Budget Act of 2004-05 appropriated \$1.8 million to support dependency drug courts. There were 22 counties that submitted an application requesting up to \$300,000. Nine (9) counties were granted awards ranging from \$79,400 to \$285,368. The nine (9) counties selected had the highest scores ranked separately by the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Administrative Office of the Courts. The awarded counties ranged from large, medium, and small size counties, representing a combination of counties starting new dependency drug court(s), enhancing services for established dependency drug courts, and/or significantly increasing the number of participants served. These plans also invoked the Ten Key Components (Attachment G), had dedicated dependency drug courts, committed to having a dependency drug court team, required frequent interaction between judicial, treatment provider and the participant. The awarded counties were El Dorado, Merced, Modoc, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz.

Because of the success of dependency drug courts in reunifying families and the drastic reduction in the costs for foster care services, an additional \$3 million is being made available for the remaining 49 counties interested in applying for these funds. The nine counties previously awarded the \$1.8 million are not eligible to apply for the \$3 million.

Eligibility requirements for \$3.0 Million Augmentation for Dependency Drug Courts

The 49 counties eligible to apply for these funds through a competitive bid must demonstrate their ability to provide the following:

- a detailed plan to reduce the number of children in foster care.
- a dedicated dependency drug court.
- the ability to spend funds by June 30, 2007.
- use funds to:
 - start up new dependency drug court(s).
 - significantly increase the number of participants served.
 - significantly enhance services provided.
- a dependency drug court team that includes representation from judicial, treatment, and probation.
- a treatment plan that requires frequent face-to-face interaction between the judge and participant.
- invoke best practices of the Ten Key Components, see Attachment G.
- provide timely quarterly data evaluations reports, and
- significantly reduce the number of children in foster care.

Process to Apply and Receive Funding

To apply for these funds a County needs to:

1. Submit "Letter of Intent" (Attachment E) for Dependency Drug Court Funds. The Letter of Intent can be emailed or faxed and the hardcopy mailed to:
Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
Office of Criminal Justice Collaboration
Attn: CDCI/DDC Coordinator
1700 K Street, Fifth Floor
Sacramento, California 95814
Fax: (916) 327-9285
2. Once all Letters of Intent are received, Request for Applications (RFA) will be released to all interested counties. RFA's will be due six (6) weeks from date of release.
3. Applications will be scored by teams from the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).
4. The amount of each county award will be determined by the number of counties awarded, the total amount requested by awarded applicants, and justification of the services, positions, and administration costs proposed.
5. Counties awarded will be sent a Multi-Agency Plan (MAP). The MAP describes how the county will implement cost-effective local drug court systems for adults, juveniles, and parents of children who are detained by, or are dependents of, the juvenile court.

Counties must agree not to use state funds to supplant any existing resources now used by that county for a dependency drug court. The county alcohol and drug program administrator and the presiding judge in the county are required to submit a comprehensive MAP for implementing dependency drug court programs. Funds distributed to counties shall be used for programs that are identified in the plan. Acceptable uses may include drug court coordinators, case management, training, drug testing, treatment, transportation, and other related costs.

Additional Information

If you have questions, contact your ADP Drug Court County Liaison for DCP & CDCI (Attachment F).