

Mesa Municipal Court

New Initiatives 2014 - 2015



PUBLIC SAFETY ASSESSMENT COURT PILOT PROJECT

- The Mesa Municipal Court has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Arizona Supreme Court and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation.
- Implement and evaluate a Public Safety Assessment-Court which is a pretrial risk assessment which assists the judge in assessing a defendant's behavioral risks during the pretrial phase for the following new criminal activity, new violent criminal activity, and failure to appear.
- Mesa will use this tool on defendants who are being seen in the In-Custody Courtroom on weekends (Friday through Sunday) and holidays.

PUBLIC SAFETY ASSESSMENT COURT PILOT PROJECT

- Mesa began using this tool for defendants being seen in the In-Custody Courtroom of 8/15/2014.
 - 3 Staff are currently working on overtime to complete these assessments
 - Mesa Municipal Court received a \$65,000 Case Processing Assistance Fund (CPAF) Grant to fund this project
- Staff have completed over 1400 Public Safety Assessments since August 2014 on defendants being seen in-custody

VETERANS COURT

- Started February 12, 2015
- One year to prepare
 - Training of Judges and staff
 - Assembling of resources:
 - Veterans Justice Outreach Representative
 - Mental Health Services
 - Judge ProTem
 - Prosecutor
 - Public Defender
 - Veterans “Navigator”
 - Other Support

VETERANS COURT PROCESS

1. Veterans are referred to veterans' court.
2. Eligibility determined by VJO
3. Voluntary on the part of the veteran
4. All veterans are considered
5. Evaluation conducted for all veterans' issues: PTSD, TBI, Homelessness, Transportation, Health, etc.
6. Veterans are expected to comply with requirements while receiving assistance
7. Court enforces requirements - if veteran completes requirements and progresses, possible consideration may be given in case penalties
8. Some serious cases may be pending long periods of rehabilitation

NEW MENTAL HEALTH CASE PROCEDURES

Cases in which the mental health or competency is in question

1. Pre-evaluation is now conducted at the court once a month
This has reduced the “no show” rate from 40% to 2 - 3%
2. By agreement of the Prosecutor and Public Defenders, typical motion practice is suspended, allowing immediate evaluations to be scheduled
This eliminates the delays associated with the exchange of motions and court ruling on the motions.
3. Court has contracted with two doctors, approved by Maricopa County Superior Court
4. Currently about 50% are referred to Superior Court for complete mental health evaluation for a ruling on mental competency (Rule 11)
5. The Mesa Municipal Court is seeking to allow Mesa Judges to conduct these rulings