

Court Diversion and Pretrial Services

Court Diversion

- In this restorative justice program, **participants meet with those directly harmed and community members** to decide how to repair the harm caused to victims and the larger community, and how to address factors that led to their breaking the law.
- **Statewide, prosecutors are referring over a third of misdemeanors to Diversion and Tamarack.**

In FY 19, referrals from Criminal Division **increased 25%** (from 2,337 to 3,002) from FY 18.

Tamarack

- This is a Diversion program for **adults with substance use or mental health treatment needs** regardless of their criminal record.

Pretrial Services

- This service is for adults with substance use or mental health treatment needs who are going through the court process and awaiting resolution of their case.
- **In FY 2019, judges issued over 700 Pretrial Services orders.**
- Coordinators quickly connect people to substance use, mental health, and other supportive community-based services.

Youth Substance Abuse Safety Program

- Youth aged 16 to 20 who violate Vermont's underage possession and consumption of alcohol and marijuana laws participate in this program as an **alternative to a fine and driver's license suspension.**
- Following a screening and brief educational intervention, over **90% successfully complete** the program.
- Youth who screen at higher risk are referred to a clinician for an assessment.

Driving with License Suspended Program

- **Over 1,200 individuals received help in FY 2019** navigating the Judicial Bureau and DMV to identify requirements for license reinstatement.

These services reduce the workload and costs of the Courts, State's Attorneys, and the Department of Corrections.

Funding

- **First-time Diversion participants recidivate at a lower rate (<1%) compared to people convicted through the Courts (8.9%),** according to a study done by Crime Research Group.
- **Diversion is much less expensive than standard criminal justice system:** e.g. an assault case costs \$216 when handled by Diversion and \$1,480 when adjudicated in Court. (Crime Research Group study)
- **14 county programs** are run by non-profit agencies or municipalities under grant agreements with the Attorney General's Office.
- All are members of the **Vermont Association of Court Diversion & Pretrial Services (VACDP).**
- The FY 2020 appropriation is \$2,715,486 of General Funds.