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Driving Under the Influence Collaborative Court Grant Expanded and Extended

On October 1, 2020, and September 24, 2021, the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), awarded the Court two, one-year grants to implement and expand, respectively, a comprehensive misdemeanor court program that addresses repeat offenders with second and third DUI offenses. On October 1, 2022, the Fresno Superior Court was awarded a third, one-year grant by the OTS, allowing for the continuation of the program through September of 2023.

The \$600,000 grant from the OTS focuses on continuing services to high-risk, high-need individuals with second- and third-time driving-under-the-influence (DUI) convictions by offering a comprehensive monitoring program that provides the guidance and help needed to reduce repeat DUI offenses. Of the many benefits of this program, increased public safety is at the forefront. The completion of substance abuse treatment reduces DUI reoffenses significantly, which thereby reduces impaired driving and traffic injuries and fatalities.

Judge David Gottlieb has this to say about the DUI Court program: "It is my firm belief that in the relatively short time this program has been running in Fresno County, it has proven to be extraordinarily successful in preventing recidivism, changing ingrained behaviors, and impacting our community by reducing the number of drunk drivers on the road. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Court, Fresno County Probation, and the Fresno Department of Behavioral Health, as well as our justice partners, this collaborative court is a 'game changer' for Fresno County."

The Court’s program continues to partner with healthcare providers, social services, and other community-based organizations, all of whom work together to administer effective courses of treatment for participants through a combination of judicial supervision and other supportive services. All participants are ordered to abstain from the use of alcohol and drugs and are monitored on a daily basis by one of several alcohol monitoring companies. They are also screened on a regular basis by treatment facilities. All findings are reported to the collaborative justice team, who addresses any issues with the participants and works to get them back on track.

“Intervention programs are foundational to recovery,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “Utilizing community-based services to facilitate long-term sobriety is a positive step forward in advancing public safety and reducing the number of alcohol-related crashes.”

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and will run through September of 2023.



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