

NEWS RELEASE

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SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT RECEIVES JUDICIAL COUNCIL COURT INNOVATIONS GRANT FOR VETERANS JUSTICE COURT

SAN FRANCISCO -- The San Francisco Superior Court is the recipient of a \$318,592 grant from the Judicial Council for its Veterans Justice Court (VJC), a program launched four years ago as a pilot project that has grown to serve more than 250 veterans citywide, Presiding Judge Teri L. Jackson announced today.

"I want to express my gratitude to the Judicial Council and the Judicial Branch Budget Committee for recognizing the merits of this vital, successful program that serves veterans in San Francisco," Judge Jackson said. "The VJC addresses the specific needs of veterans facing criminal charges by providing them with the social service, educational and vocational support they need to lead productive and independent lives. This grant will allow the Court and its justice partners to deliver more evidence-based services and treatment to our deserving veterans who have experienced trauma during their service to our country."

The San Francisco Superior Court is one of 29 trial courts in California to receive this 3-year grant through the Judicial Council Court Innovations Grant Program. The goal of the Court

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SFSC/INNOVATIONS GRANT
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Innovations Grant Program is to support innovations in court operations that promote efficient access to justice. Specifically, the VJC grant will be able to offer the following innovative, evidence-based and trauma-informed treatment:

- Seeking Safety - a group treatment strategy that focuses on trauma and substance abuse.
- Moral Reconciliation Therapy - a treatment strategy that seeks to decrease recidivism among criminal offenders by increasing moral reasoning.
- Interactive Journaling - a treatment model that aims to reduce substance abuse and substance abuse-related behaviors by guiding participants through a process of self-written reflection.

In addition to these innovative treatment strategies, the grant will fund a clinical case manager position that will provide direct care for the 35 percent of VJC participants not eligible for Veterans Administration services. Offering essential evidence-based therapies to address trauma, substance abuse, and other challenges faced by veterans, the funding will help reduce recidivism and help them address their specific challenges and needs.

Launched as a pilot program in April 2013 by Judge Cynthia Ming-mei Lee, the VJC expanded from serving veterans arrested in the Tenderloin and surrounding area to serving veterans citywide in December 2014. Judge Jeffrey S. Ross has presided over the citywide program since January 2015. Since its inception, more than 100 veterans have graduated from the program, which is the result of collaboration among criminal justice partners, the Department of Public Health and the Veterans Administration. The VJC is one of the San Francisco Superior Court's problem-solving courts that promotes public safety, reduces recidivism and helps participants lead productive, crime-free lives.

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