



GEORGIA

DUI COURT

STANDARDS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR GEORGIA DUI COURTS

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #1 TARGET THE POPULATION

Targeting is the process of identifying a subset of the DUI offender population for inclusion in the DUI court program. This is a complex task given that DUI courts, in comparison the traditional drug court programs, generally accept only one type of offender: the person who drives while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The DUI court target population, therefore, must be clearly defined, with eligibility criteria clearly documented.

The target population for Georgia DUI courts is multiple DUI offenders, with a minimum of two (2) DUI's in five (5) years, or three (3) in a lifetime. Courts may grant a case by case exception when an offender has a first DUI charge and other alcohol related offenses and a clinical assessment shows addiction.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #2 PERFORM A CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

A clinically competent objective assessment of the impaired-driving offender must address a number of bio-psychosocial domains including alcohol use severity and drug involvement, the level of needed care, medical and mental health status, extent of social support systems, and individual motivation to change. Without clearly identifying a client's needs, strengths, and resources along each of these important bio-psychosocial domains, the clinician will have considerable difficulty in developing a clinically sound development plan.

Georgia DUI Courts will use a standardized/validated screening instrument which will be used as part of the clinical assessment process and to gather evaluation data.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #3 DEVELOP THE TREATMENT PLAN

Substance dependence is a chronic, relapsing condition that can be effectively treated with the right type and length of treatment regimen. In addition to having a substance abuse problem, a significant proportion of the DUI population also suffers from a variety of co-occurring mental health disorders. Therefore, DUI courts must carefully select and implement treatment practices demonstrated through research to be effective with the hard-core impaired driver to ensure long-term success.

Georgia DUI Courts will use treatment providers that are on the Department of Human Resources registry for the State Multiple Offender Program so that both re-licensing requirements and court requirements are met.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #4
SUPERVISE THE OFFENDER

Driving under the influence presents a significant danger to the public. Increased supervision and monitoring by the court, probation department, and treatment provider must occur as part of a coordinated strategy to intervene with repeat and high risk DUI offenders to protect against future impaired driving.

Georgia DUI courts will have supervision components that include home visits, random observed drug screens, and may include curfews and use of alcohol and other drug monitoring equipment and recognized techniques as appropriate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #5
FORGE AGENCY, ORGANIZATION, COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are an essential component of the DUI court model as they enhance credibility, bolster support, and broaden available resources. Because the DUI court model is built on and dependent upon strong team approach, both within the court and beyond, the court should solicit the cooperation of their legislative delegation, local officials, and other agencies, as well as community support to form a partnership in support of the goals of the DUI court program. The drug court coordinator should make community organizations aware of legislation which allows for sponsorship of such programs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #6
TAKE A JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP ROLE

Judges are a vital part of the DUI court team. As leader of this team, the judge's role is paramount to the success of the DUI court program. The judge must also possess recognizable leadership skills as well as the capability to motivate team members and elicit buy-in from various stakeholders. The selection of the judge to lead the DUI court team, therefore, is of utmost importance.

Georgia DUI courts will be conducted by full-time judges.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #7
DEVELOP CASE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Case management, the series of inter-related functions that provides for a coordinated team strategy and seamless collaboration across the treatment and justice systems, is essential for an integrated and effective DUI court program.

Georgia DUI courts will have at a minimum the following team members: Judge, DUI court coordinator, prosecutor, defense attorney, treatment provider, and probation officer.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #8

ADDRESS TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Though nearly every state revokes or suspends a person's driving license upon conviction for a DUI offense, the loss of driving privileges poses a significant issue for those individuals involved in the DUI/Drug court program. In many cases, participants solve the transportation problem created by the loss of their driver's licenses by driving anyway and taking a chance that he or she will not be caught. With this knowledge, the court must caution the participant against taking such chances in the future and to alter their attitude about driving without a license. Additionally, the court should consider local transportation system rider ship for program participant's during the license suspension period.

Georgia DUI courts will incorporate the completion of State administrative re-licensing requirements into the program.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #9

EVALUATE THE PROGRAM

To convince "stakeholders" about the success of a DUI court, program designers must design a court evaluation model capable of documenting behavioral change and linking that change to the program's existence. A credible evaluation is the only mechanism for mapping the road to program success or failure. To prove whether a program is efficient and effective requires the assistance of a competent evaluator, an understanding of and control over all relevant variables that can systematically contribute to behavioral change, and a commitment from the DUI court team to rigorously abide by the rules of the evaluation design. A reliable evaluation model is critical to the sustainability of a DUI program.

Georgia DUI courts will participate in the statewide evaluation overseen by the Administrative Office of the Courts and submit evaluation data to a web-based, centralized database.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #10

CREATE A SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM

The foundation for sustainability is laid, to a considerable degree, by careful and strategic planning. Such planning includes considerations of structure and scale, organization and participation and, of course, funding. Becoming an integral and proven approach to solving the DUI problem in the community is the ultimate key to sustainability.