



NORTH CAROLINA RECOVERY COURTS

The General Assembly enacted the North Carolina Drug Treatment Act in 1995. North Carolina General Statute Chapter 7A, Subchapter XIV, Article 62, established the North Carolina Drug Treatment Court Program in the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), and provided guidance on the implementation and operation of local Drug Treatment Courts (DTC). North Carolina Drug Treatment Courts have since been renamed North Carolina Recovery Courts as they have expanded to work with participants classified as veterans, those with a mental health diagnosis, and those convicted of driving while impaired.

Recovery Courts provide an intensive, judicially supervised intervention designed to support individuals involved in the criminal and juvenile court systems who are navigating substance use, mental health challenges, or co-occurring disorders. This initiative focuses on high-risk and high-need adult participants, juveniles adjudicated in delinquency court, veterans, and parents involved in abuse/neglect/dependency cases. A Recovery Court consists of a team of court and community professionals who manage cases closely, helping participants become healthy, law-abiding, and productive members of their families and communities.

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2025 NC RECOVERY COURT DATA

Data reported from 13 family, 32 adult, 2 youth, 6 DWI, 10 mental health, and 14 veteran treatment courts.

2026 Report on Judicially Managed Accountability and Recovery Courts

Newly Admitted	969	
Total active	4,555	
Completed the program	442	53% Successful
Exited without completing the program	362	
Neutral discharge (related to significant illness, death, relocation, or completion of case)	28	
Substance-free babies born	20	
Participants with a felony charge	661	
Participants with a misdemeanor charge	636	
Participants with an active dependency charge	189	
Participants with mental health disorders	801	
Participants identified as veterans	294	
Children Impacted by Parental Participation	561	

THE GOALS OF RECOVERY COURTS ARE:

REDUCE
alcohol and other drug dependencies among participants.

REDUCE
criminal recidivism and the long-term impact of drug-related offenses on both communities and courts.

INCREASE
personal, familial, and societal accountability of individuals with a substance use, mental health, or co-occurring disorder.

PROMOTE
effective collaboration and utilization of resources among criminal justice, treatment, and community agencies.

RECOVERY COURT TYPES:

ADULT TREATMENT COURT: Adult treatment courts aim to promote recovery and reduce recidivism in high-risk, high-need individuals with repeat infractions related to substance use, mental health, and co-occurring disorders.

DWI TREATMENT COURT: DWI treatment courts aim to promote recovery and reduce recidivism in high-risk, high-need individuals with repeat DWI violations.

FAMILY TREATMENT COURT: Family treatment courts work with parents and guardians who are in danger of termination of parental rights due to the abuse or neglect of their children resulting from substance misuse.

JUVENILE (YOUTH) TREATMENT COURT: Youth treatment courts work with community-based, high-risk, high-need juvenile participants whose drug and/or alcohol use is negatively impacting their lives at home, in school, and in their community.

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT COURT: Mental health treatment courts aim to promote recovery and reduce recidivism in high-risk, high-need individuals with repeat infractions related to their serious mental health or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT: Veterans treatment courts aim to promote recovery and reduce recidivism in high-risk, high-need military veterans with repeat infractions related to substance use, mental health, and co-occurring disorders.

NATIONAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

Treatment courts produce benefits of $6,208 per participant, returning up to $27 for every $1 invested. (All Rise National Treatment Court Month Toolkit, 2023)

Families that participate in a family treatment court are approximately twice as likely to be reunified without risk of a subsequent maltreatment report (Impacts of family treatment court on child welfare outcomes: A meta-analysis., 2019)

The most successful drug courts reduce recidivism by 35-40%. (Drug Courts Explained, March 2019, American University)

Treatment courts refer more people to treatment than any other intervention, and those people are more successful in recovery because they remain in treatment long enough to be successful.

THE AVERAGE NATIONAL COMPLETION RATE FOR TREATMENT COURTS IS NEARLY

60% approximately two-thirds higher than probation and more than twice the rate of probationers with substance use disorders. (Allrise.org/capitol-hill)

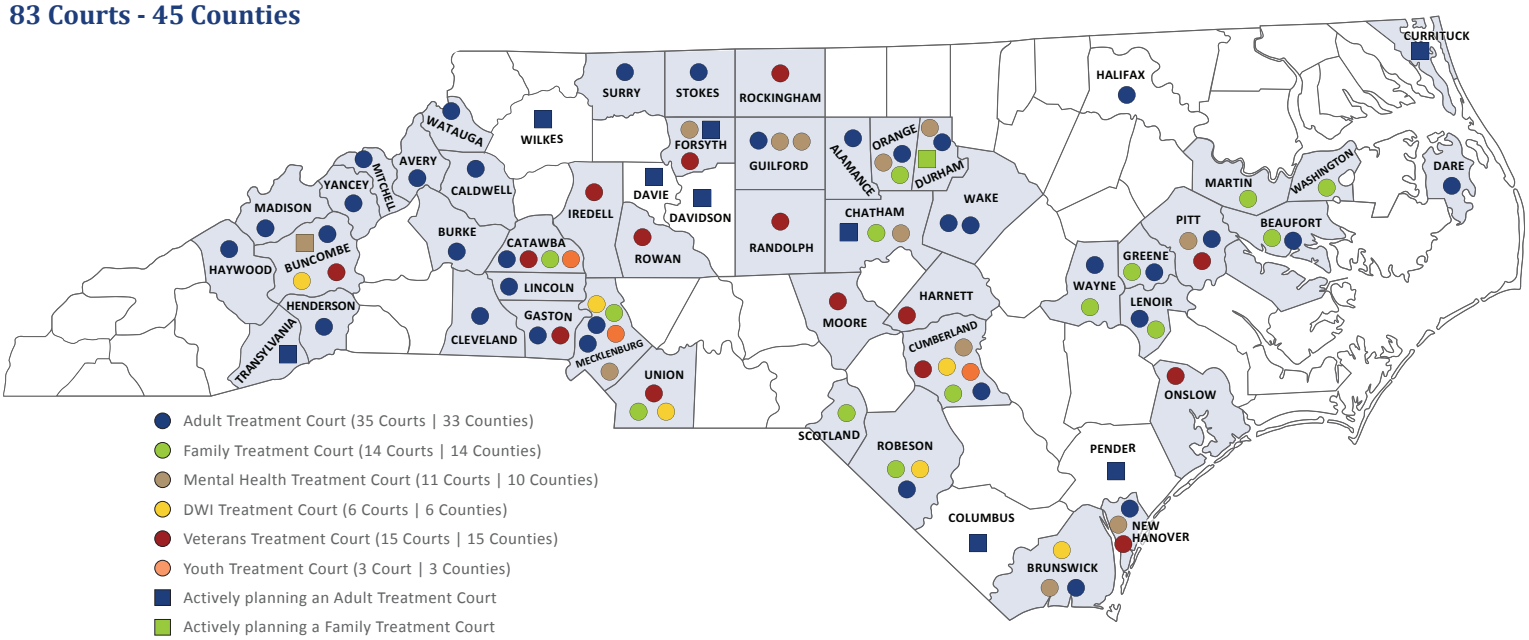
Every $1 invested in drug courts yields between $2 to $4 in direct taxpayer savings, with broader social benefits sometimes reaching $27 per dollar spent. (Estrellado, N. 2024, August 7. National Drug Court Statistics: Trends, Outcomes, & Challenges - Addiction Group. Addiction Group)

Drug court participants are 6 to 26 percentage points less likely to be re-arrested than those in traditional court settings, with graduates showing even lower re-offense rates over time. (Estrellado, N. 2024, August 7. National Drug Court Statistics: Trends, Outcomes, & Challenges - Addiction Group. Addiction Group)

AOC Recovery Court staff provide technical assistance and training to promote adoption of best practices and to facilitate the development, implementation, and monitoring of local recovery courts.

RECOVERY COURTS AVAILABLE IN NORTH CAROLINA (Effective as of February 2026)

83 Courts - 45 Counties



"Recovery Courts change lives, restore hope, reunite families, reduce crime, and make communities safer. These Courts make miracles happen!"
~Recovery Court Judge

"I graduated from Drug Court two years ago. I honestly believe it saved my life."
~Recovery Court Participant

Learn more at NCcourts.gov

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