

Tarrant County Veterans Treatment Court Program & Public Safety Employees Treatment Court Program



**Charles L. Vanover
Presiding Judge
May 23, 2023**

PTSD911 Documentary



Afghanistan Helmet Cam Combat Video Captures US Soldiers In Intense Close Taliban Ambush



Toledo-Police-Release-Footage-Of-Mass-Shooting-At-July-4-Block-Party



Many firefighters silently suffer from



"He just lost it": Addressing the epidemic of firefighter suicide



Police bodycam video shows knife-wielding man charge and attack officer after being shot (11ALIVE, 2019).

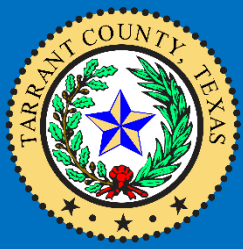


Police Officer PTSD & Trauma Recovery | First Responder Mental Health



Firefighter Opens Up About Overwhelming Stress As A Firefighter | Megyn Kelly TODAY

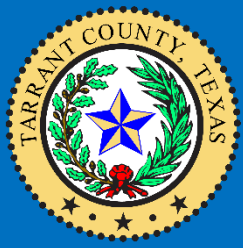




CHARLES “CHUCK” VANOVER COUNTY CRIMINAL COURT JUDGE

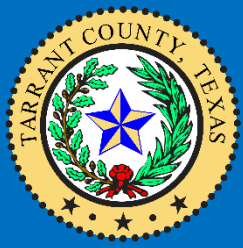


- County Criminal Court Judge since 2015.
- Tarrant County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) and Public Safety Employees Treatment Court (PSETC).
- Prior career in Public Safety for over 11 years. Started Public Safety career as a Police Officer, Fire Fighter EMT. Trained and served as a SWAT team member. Also served as a prosecutor with the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office for almost 12 years after law school.
- In addition to work as a Jurist, proudly serves our State and Nation as a Judge Advocate in the Texas Military Department as the Staff Judge Advocated for the Texas State Guard.



COURTNEY YOUNG PROGRAM MANAGER

- Licensed Master Social Worker.
- Tarrant County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) and Public Safety Employees Treatment Court (PSETC).
- Employed by the Tarrant County Criminal Courts since February 2010 and help establishment the VTC and PSETC.
- Employed with Dallas County Criminal Courts as the Competency Program Manager in 2007.
- Extensive history working with individuals who suffer from mental health and substance use disorders.
- Experience working with the mental health population from both inside and outside the criminal justice system.

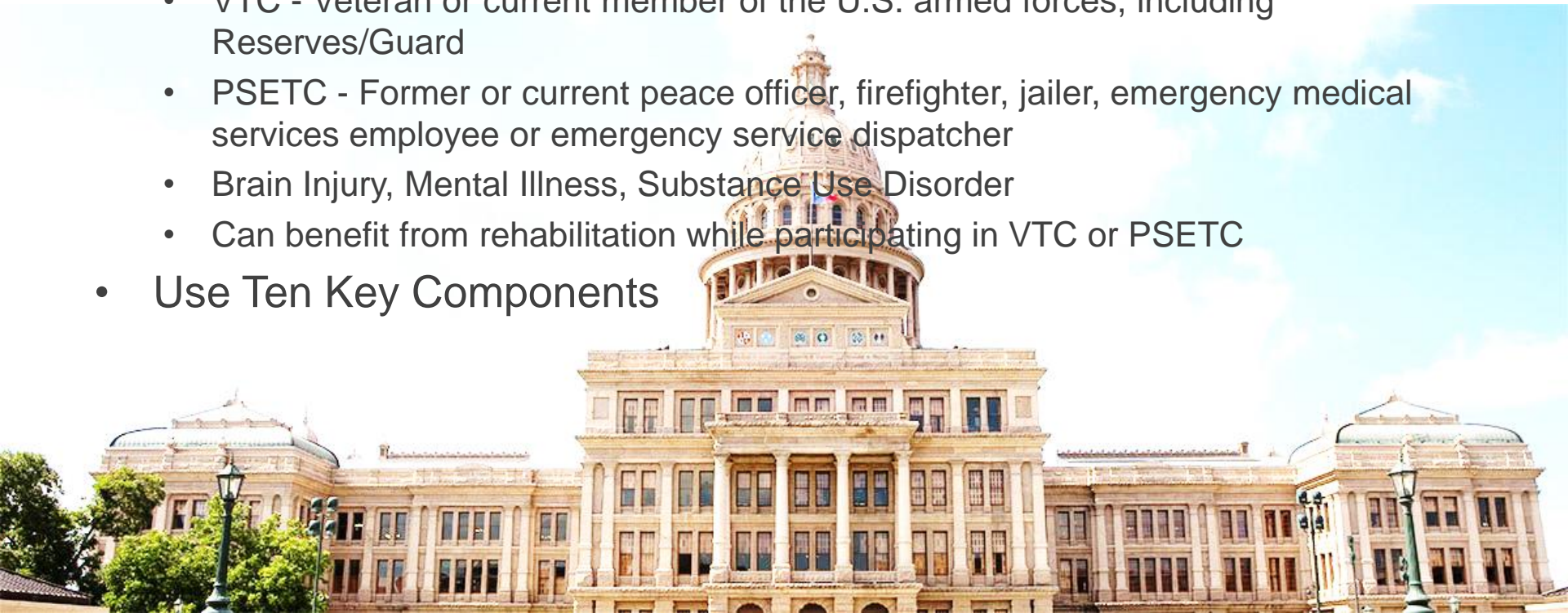


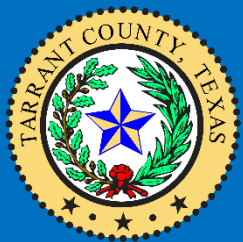
BACKGROUND

Veterans Treatment Court: Senate Bill 1474 Chapter 124

Public Safety Employees Treatment Court: Chapter 129, Subtitle K, Title 2, Government Code

- Misdemeanor and Felony cases
- Admission Criteria
 - VTC - Veteran or current member of the U.S. armed forces, including Reserves/Guard
 - PSETC - Former or current peace officer, firefighter, jailer, emergency medical services employee or emergency service dispatcher
 - Brain Injury, Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorder
 - Can benefit from rehabilitation while participating in VTC or PSETC
- Use Ten Key Components

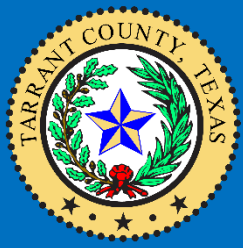




REQUEST OF COMMISSIONERS COURT

*Request to establish the Treatment Court Program as a specialty court program under
Texas Government Code*



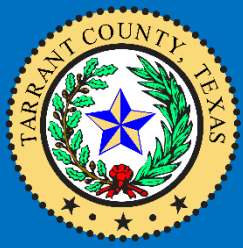


ELIGIBILITY

CONTINUED...

Courtesy Supervision:

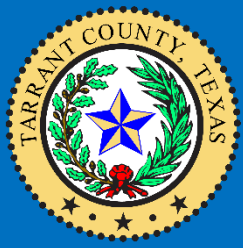
- Same criteria discussed on previous slide
- Additionally
 - Must reside or work in Tarrant County
 - Transferring county's CDA's Office must agree



COST COMPARISON

- Confinement costs
 - Tarrant County daily base cost per inmate: \$82.00 (Whitley, 2017)
 - Yearly per inmate cost: \$29,930
 - Daily cost of inmate with serious mental illness is often double-to-triple the cost of a non-mentally ill defendant
- Public Safety Employees Treatment Court costs
 - Tarrant County daily base cost per participant: \$21.26 per person
 - Yearly per participant cost: \$5,172.77 per person
- Veterans Treatment Court costs
 - Tarrant County daily base cost per participant: \$6.65 per person
 - Yearly per participant cost: \$2,427 per person

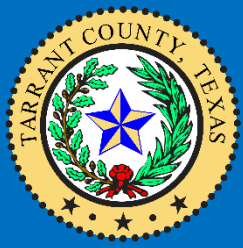




VTC MISSION AND GOALS

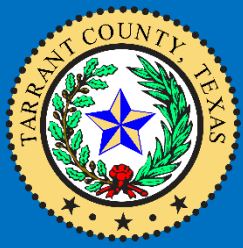
Our mission is to successfully habilitate the JIV by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system and providing them with the tools they need to lead a productive and law-abiding lifestyle while improving mental health recovery and successful re-entry into the community.

Our program's goals are to find JIV, assess their needs, offer assistance, manage their care, and provide them with successful treatment options ultimately leading to community reintegration, and resolution of their criminal case(s).



PSETC MISSION AND GOALS

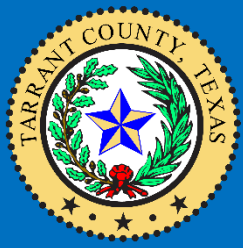
- Our mission is to ensure public safety through successful rehabilitation of the defendant by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system and provide them with the tools they need to lead a productive and law-abiding lifestyle while improving mental health recovery and successful re-entry into the community.
- The goals of the PSETC are to assess the needs of public safety employee, offer assistance, manage their care and provide them with successful treatment options, and resolution of their criminal case(s).



DUTIES OF VTC/PSETC

- (1) ensure that a defendant eligible for participation in the program is provided legal counsel before volunteering to proceed through the program and while participating in the program;
- (2) allow a participant to withdraw from the program at any time before a trial on the merits has been initiated;
- (3) provide a participant with a court-ordered individualized treatment plan indicating the services that will be provided to the participant; and
- (4) ensure that the jurisdiction of the public safety employees treatment court continues for a period of not less than six months but does not continue beyond the period of community supervision for the offense charged.

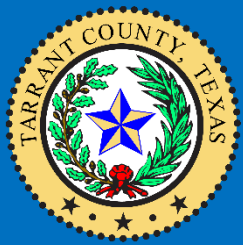
Retrieved from: <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.129.htm>



FUNDING

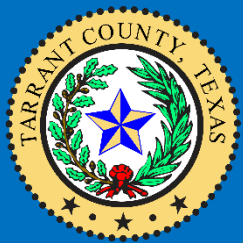
- Tarrant County
- Governor's Office
- Budget Items
- Consider
 - Staff
 - Supplies
 - Office Space
 - Treatment
 - Alcohol/Drug Monitoring



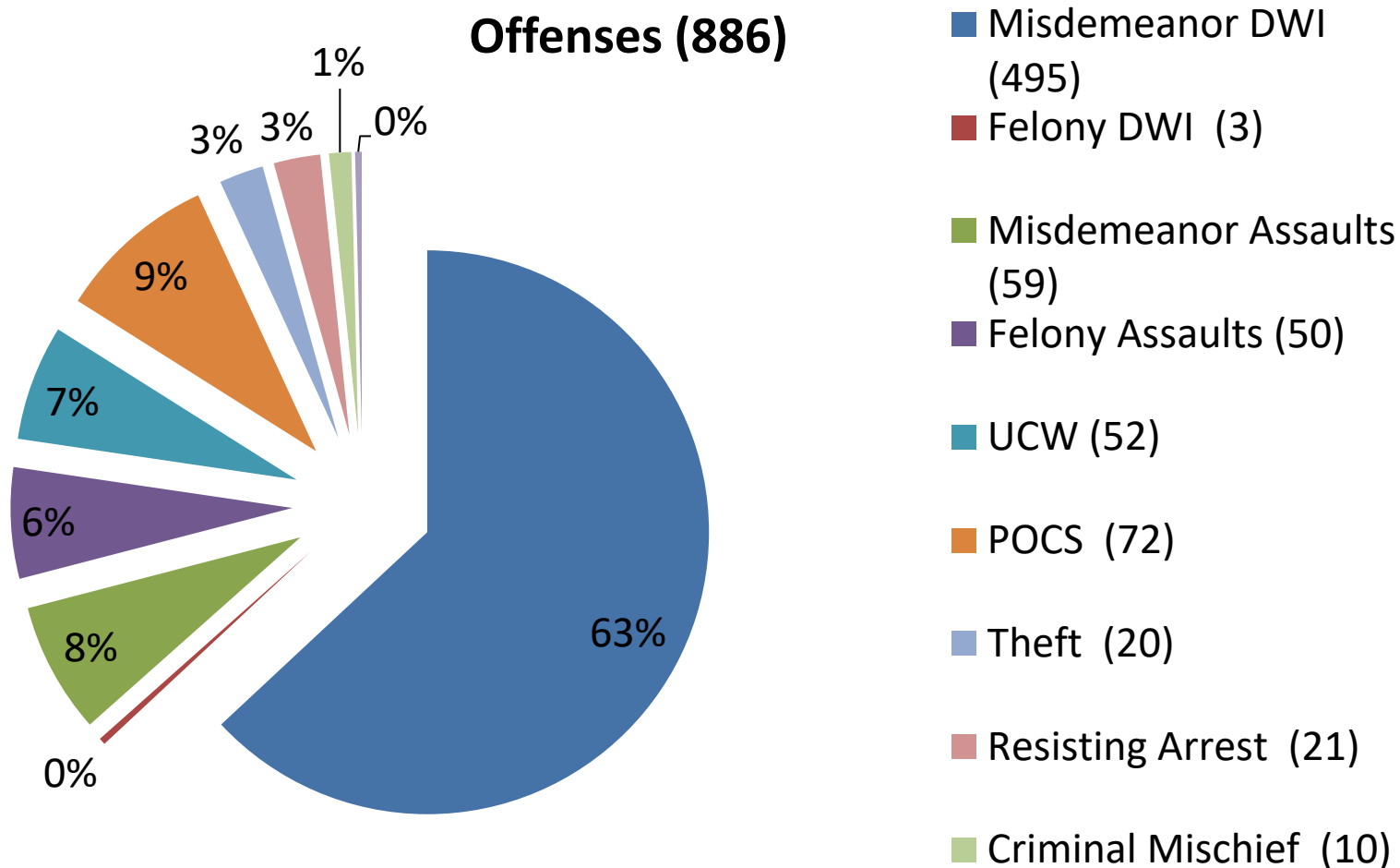


VTC PARTICIPANTS

| Overall VTC Statistics | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Admissions | 715 |
| Graduates | 604 |
| Terminated | 55 |
| Active | 56 |
| Total Rearrested | 38 |
| Successful Completion Rate | 92% |
| Recidivism Rate | 6% |



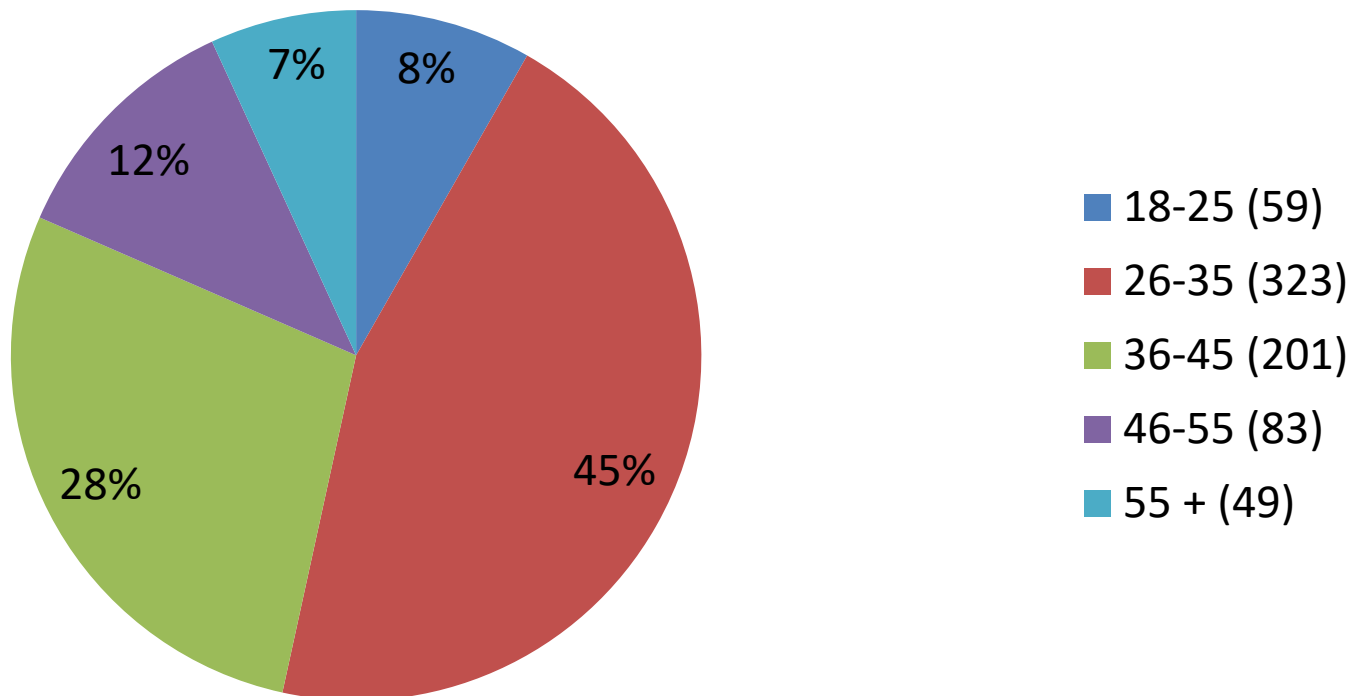
VTC PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED...

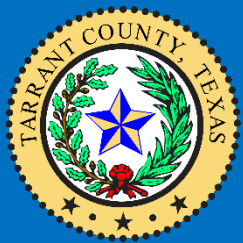




VTC PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED...

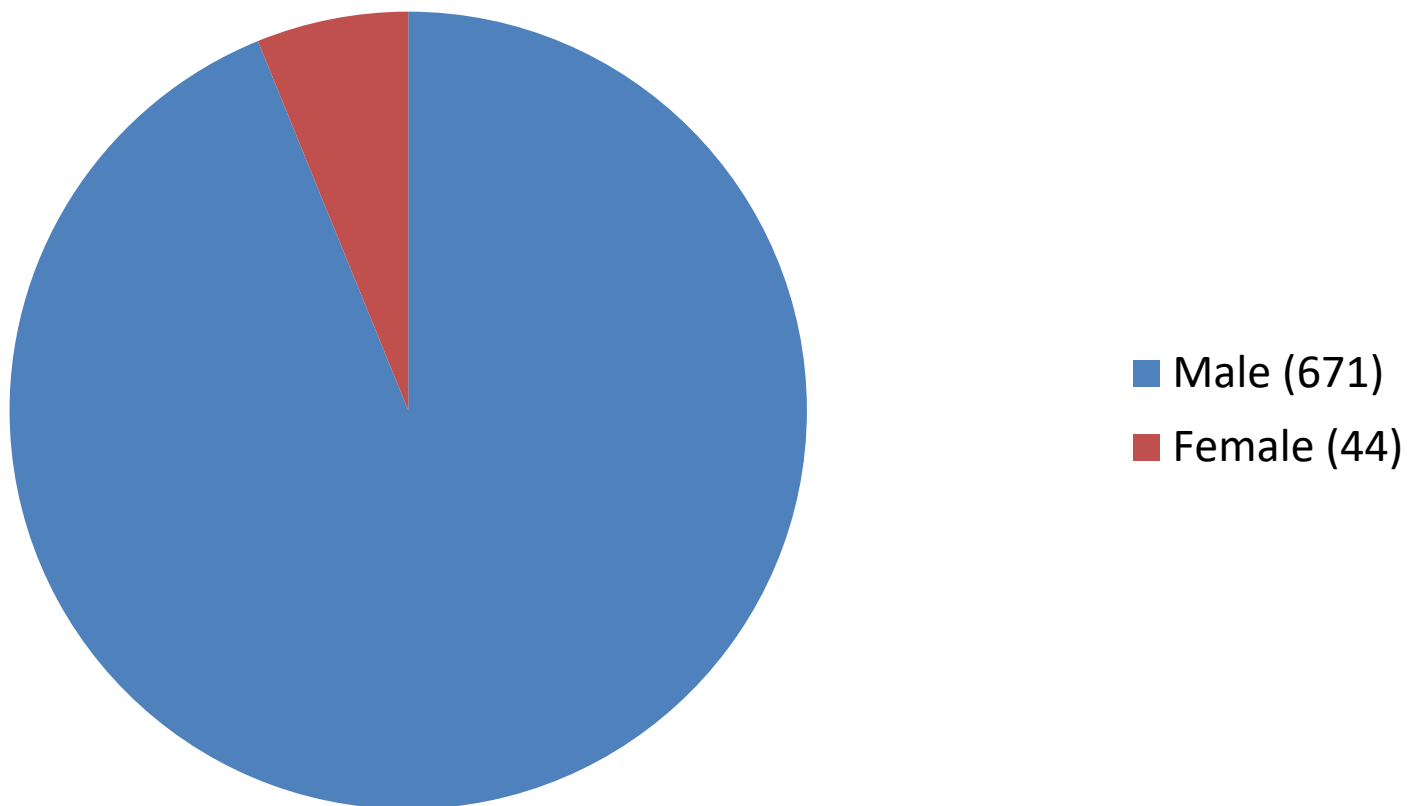
Age (Total 715)





VTC PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED...

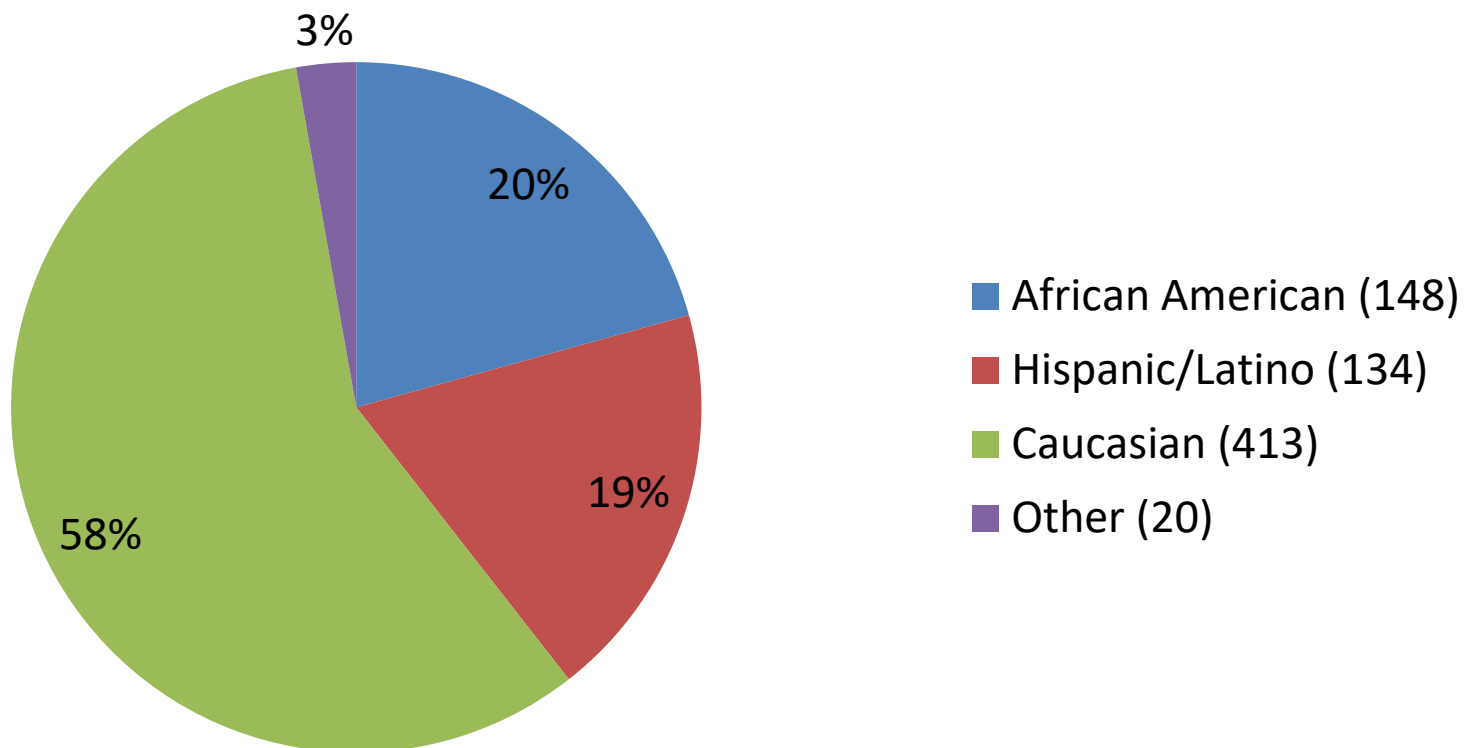
Gender (Total 715)

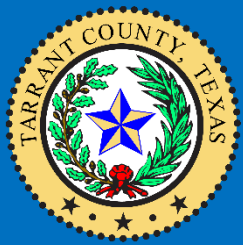




VTC PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED...

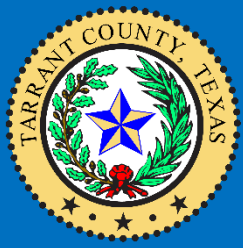
Ethnicity (Total 715)





PSETC PARTICIPANTS

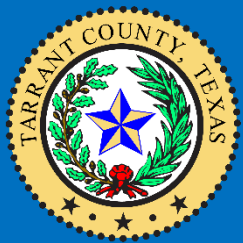
| Overall PSETC Statistics | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Admissions | 51 |
| Graduates | 37 |
| Terminated | 0 |
| Active | 14 |
| Total Rearrested | 3 |
| Successful Completion Rate | 100% |
| Recidivism Rate | 8% |



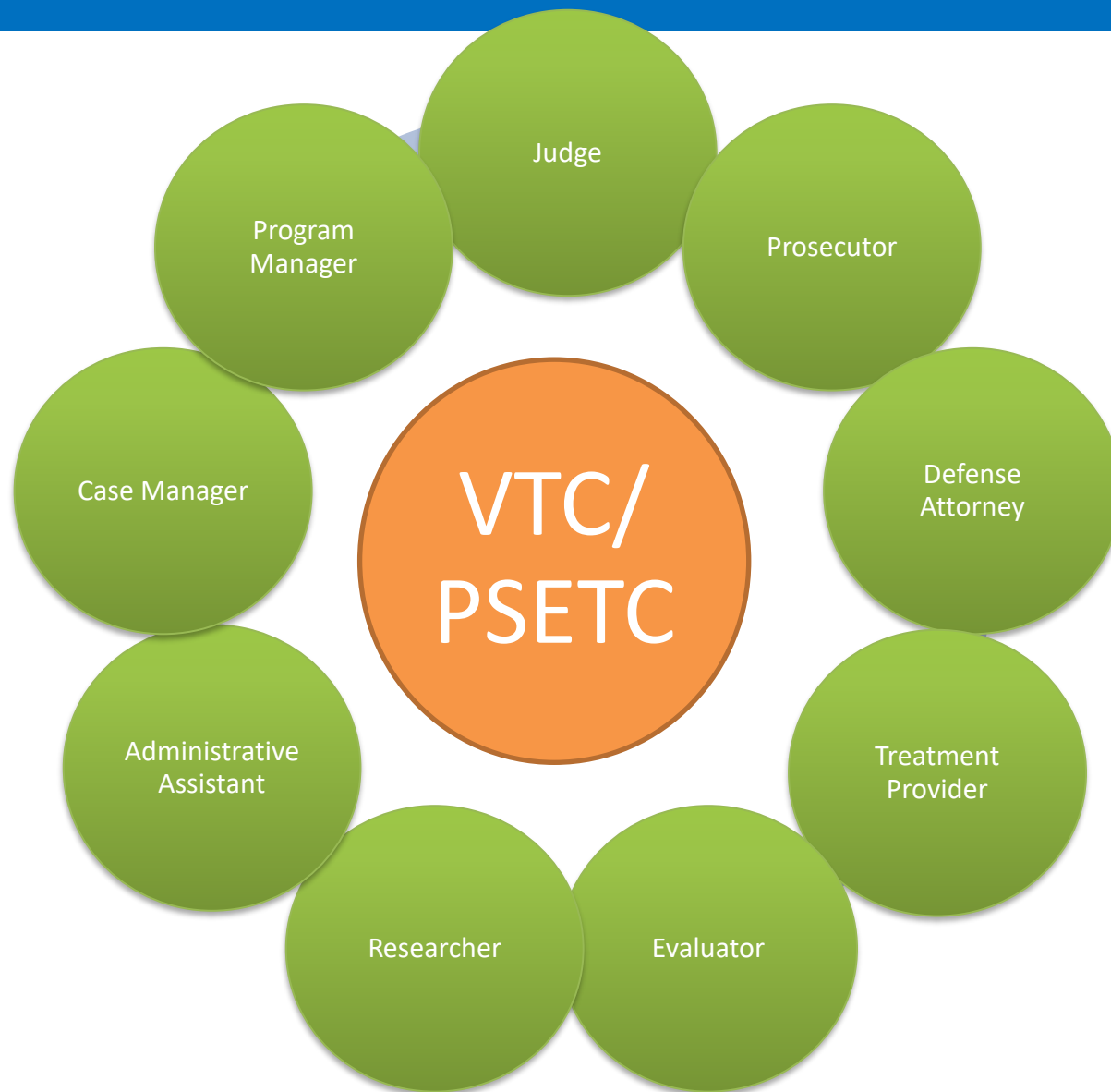
PSETC PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED...

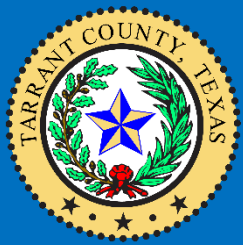
- Gender
 - Females (10)
 - Males (41)
- Race
 - African American (4)
 - White (37)
 - Hispanic (9)
- Age Range
 - 18 – 25 (3)
 - 26 – 35 (22)
 - 36 – 45 (10)
 - 46 - 55 (12)
 - Over 55 (4)
- Employment Type
 - Police Officer (16)
 - Firefighter (16)
 - EMT (13)
 - Jailer (6)
- Offenses
 - **Driving While Intoxicated (49)**
 - **DWI Felony (1)**
 - Unlawfully Carrying Weapon (4)
 - Official Oppression (1)
 - POSS CS (1)



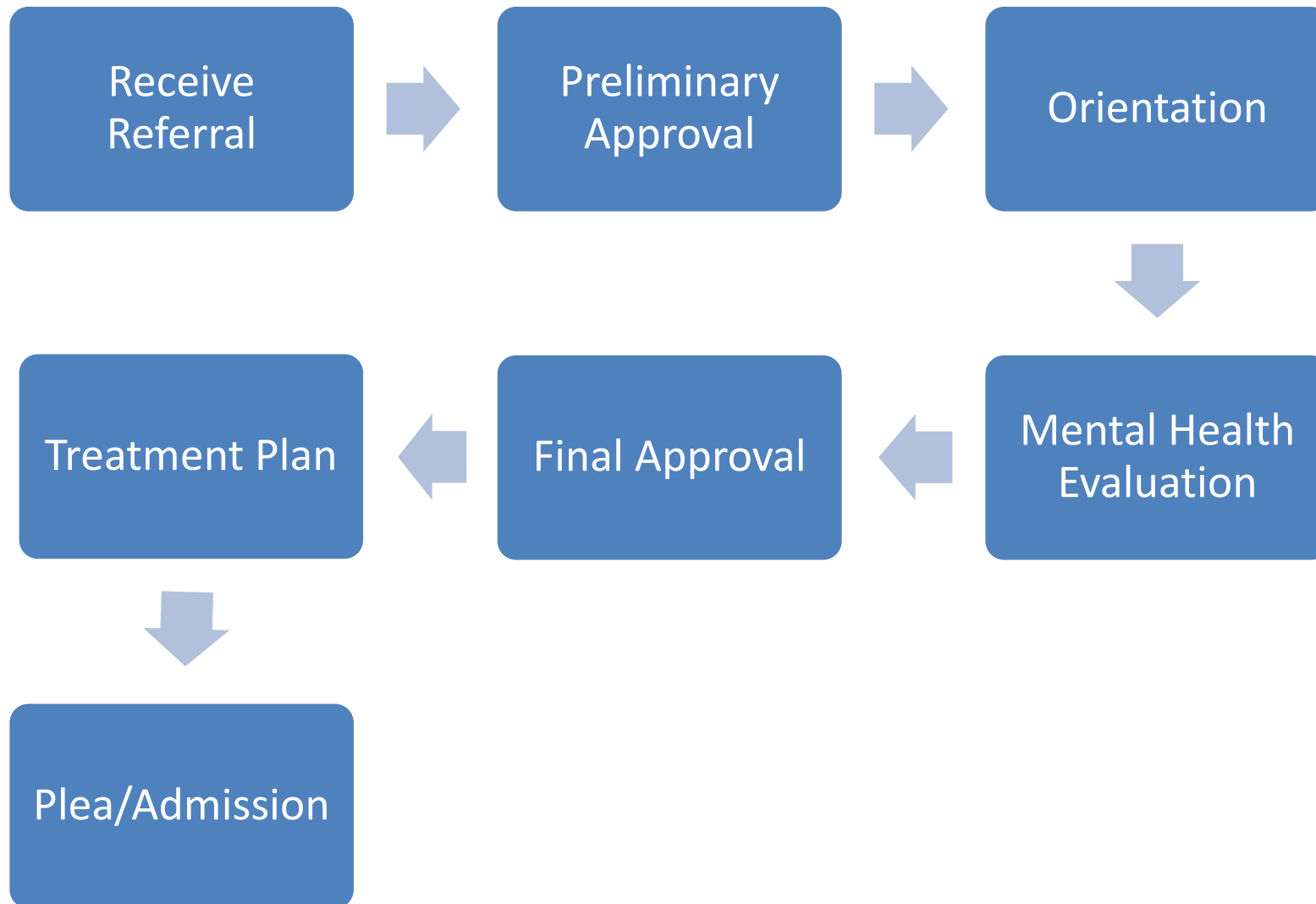


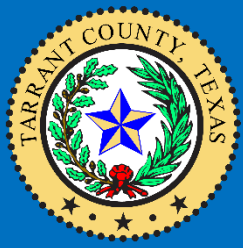
TEAM MEMBERS





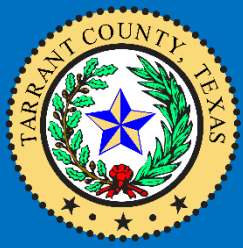
APPLICATION PROCESS





MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION

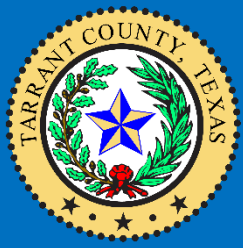
- Completed by a licensed professional
- Not an employee of the Tarrant County Criminal Courts
- Paid by defendant
- Complete at the jail
- Attends trainings recommended by Program Manager
- Treatment sharing
- BDI-II (Beck Depression Inventory)
- PCL-C (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptom Checklist)
- SASSI-4 (Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory-4)
- Professional Quality of Life Scale (PRQOL)
- DSM-5 Self Rated Level 1 Cross-Cutting Symptom Measure- Adult
- Recommendation



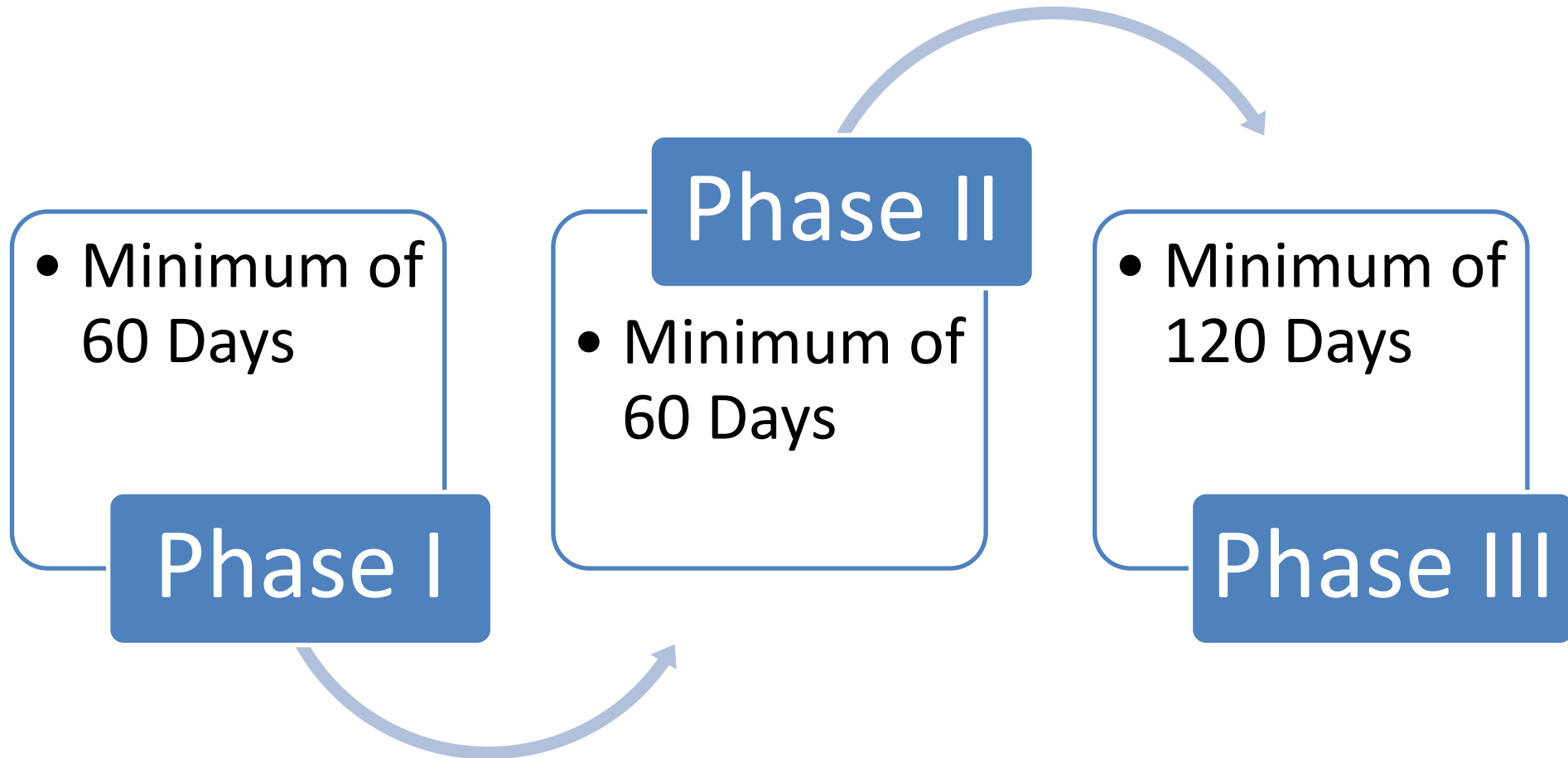
REIMBURSEMENT FEE

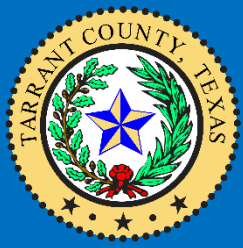
- \$500 (May charge up to \$1000)
- Due at time of admission
- Nonrefundable
- Condition of Probation





PHASE SYSTEM

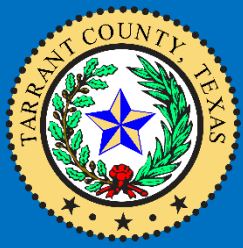




JUDICIAL INTERACTION

- Pre-dockets and dockets are held 1st Thursday of each month
- Team updates
- Admissions/Promotions/Graduations/Terminations
- Community Partners
- Host other counties
- Judge Vanover available for special dockets

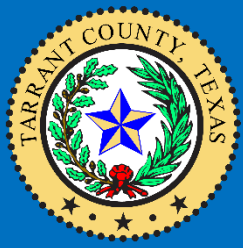




CASE MANAGEMENT

- Meet with participants a minimum of 2 times a month
- Track participant progress in Corrections Software Solutions (CSS)
- Monitor compliance (Drug and Alcohol Testing, Treatment, Classes, etc.)
- Verify compliance by communicating with treatment providers
- Prepare dockets
- Recommend Sanctions and Incentives
- Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS)





ALCOHOL TESTING

- Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor (SCRAM)

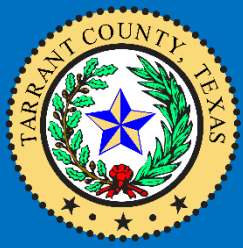


- SCRAM Remote Breathe / Portable Alcohol Monitor / Micro Electro Mechanical Systems (MEMS)



- Ignition Interlock Device (IID)

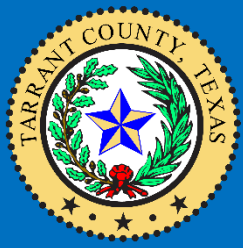




DRUG TESTING

- 100% Random Selection via Interactive voice response (IVR)
- 7 Panel Urinalysis + Ethyl glucuronide (EtG)
- Must be observed
- Drug Patches, Saliva, Hair, Nail and Blood
- Dilutes, Stalls and Tamperers are all violations
- Participants may test at other labs with permission
- **Currently no testing on weekends**





RESPONSES TO VIOLATIONS

Examples of Judicial Responses

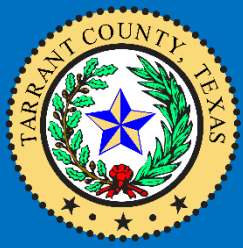
1. Increased contact with the Judge
2. Court admonishment
3. Probated Jail Time

Examples of Supervision Responses

1. Zero tolerance
2. Verbal Reprimand
3. Community service hours
4. Increased contact with Case Manager
5. Hair Test

Examples of Therapeutic Responses

1. Essay assignment
2. Address Judge/Peers in court
3. Increased community sober support meetings
4. Extension of time in phase
5. Treatment Plan adjustment

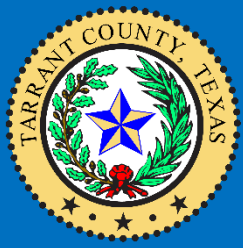


INCENTIVES

Incentives are given to participants who are deserving of special recognition for achievements and/or progress while in the VTC or PSETC. Any member of the VTC or PSETC team will make recommendations for incentives.

Examples of Incentives

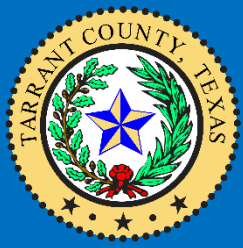
1. Judicial recognition
2. Reduced court appearances
3. Reduced reporting to PSETC Case Manager or Treatment Provider
4. Praise/Applause
5. Excused from court early
6. Framed graduation certificates



EDUCATION CLASSES

Examples of typical classes

- Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) Education Class
- Victim Impact Panel (VIP)
- Anger Control Counseling
- Batterers Intervention Program (BIP)
- Handgun Safety Class
- Community Sober Support Meetings (AA/NA)
- PTSD Support Group

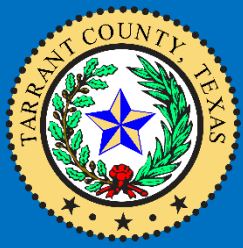


EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES

Interventions are implemented based on the offender's risk level, criminogenic needs, motivation and treatment needs.

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)
- Eye Movement Rapid Desensitization (EMDR)
- Biofeedback
- Person-Centered Therapy
- Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy
- Supportive/Intensive Outpatient Programs (SOP/IOP)
- Medication-assisted therapy (MAT)

All participants are required to engage in pro-social activities such as work, school or volunteering.



GRADUATION

- Dismissals
- Expunctions (Immediate and no costs for VTC)
- Completion Certificate



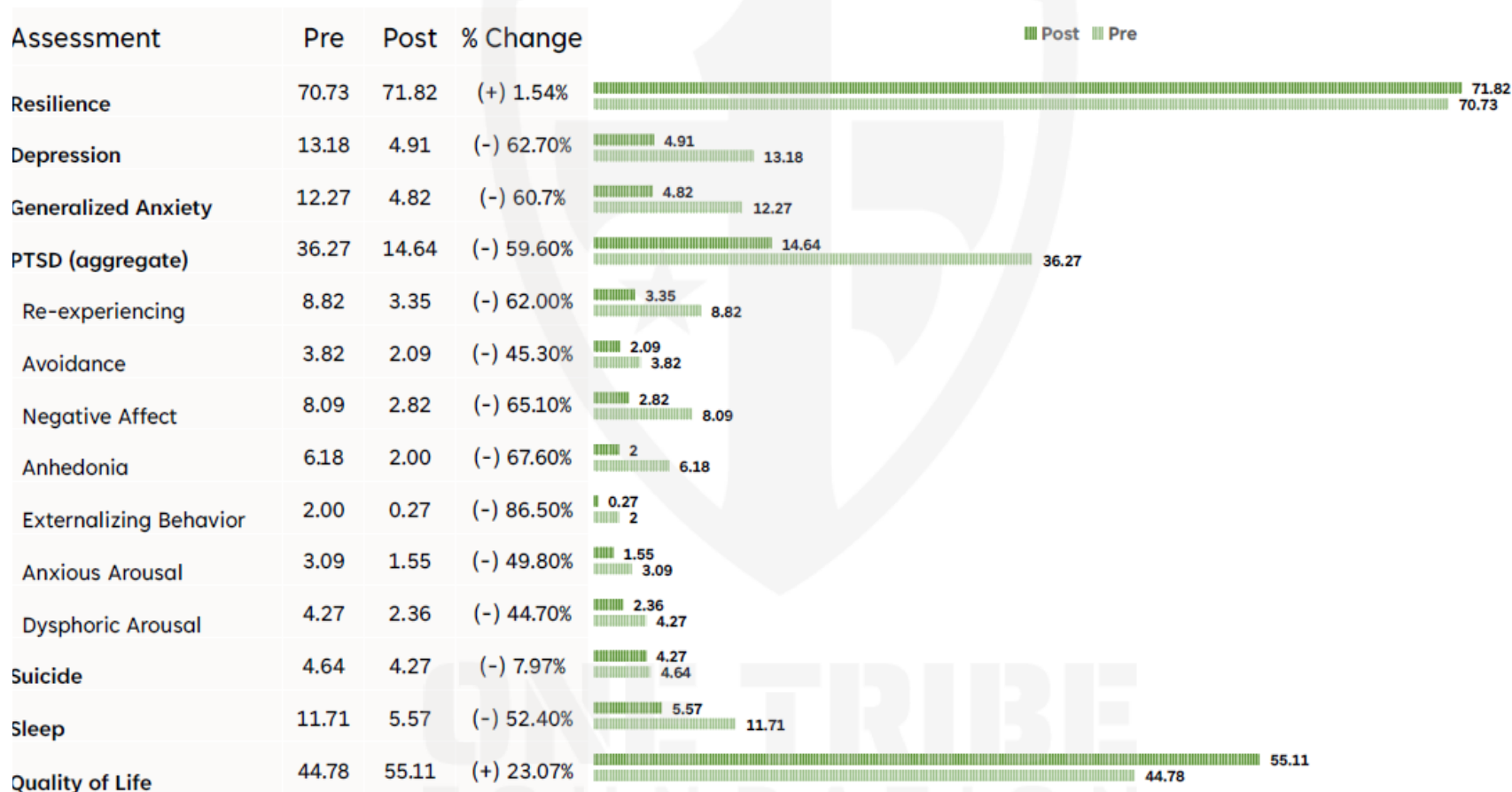
RESEARCH ON PSETC

- **Purpose of Research:** Prevent first responders from missing early warning signs.
- **Researcher:** Dr. Warren Ponder
 - BA in psychology from Texas Tech in 2003
 - U.S. Army Infantryman and was deployed in support of OIF 2006-07
 - Earned a MSW in 2009 and PhD in social work in 2014 at the UTA
 - Employed at the Department of VA for almost nine years, treating combat veterans
 - Joined One Tribe Foundation as the Director of Outcomes and Evaluation
- **One Tribe Foundation (OTF):** A non-profit agency that specializes in treating trauma exposed veterans, first responders, medical frontline workers, and their families through traditional and non-traditional therapies.
- **Funding:** One Tribe Foundation has allowed Dr. Ponder to use company time to aid and assist in the evaluation of the PSETC.
- **Research Start Date:** January 2020 to present
- **Methodology:** Mixed methods which are quantitative self-report mental health assessments at the beginning and completion of the PSETC. The qualitative interviews are conducted at graduation.
- **Implications:** These findings will be share with first responder agencies to consider mandatory participation in traditional and non-traditional therapies.

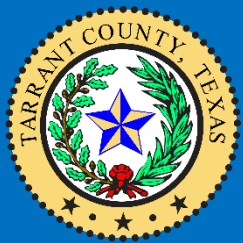


Research Results for PSETC

OUTCOMES

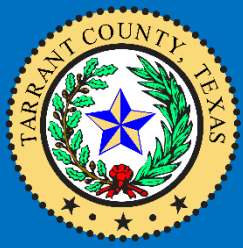


Resilience = Response to Stressful Experiences Scale-22; Depression = Patient Health Questionnaire-9; Generalized Anxiety = Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7; PTSD = PTSD Checklist-5; Suicide = Suicidal Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised; Sleep = Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (a decrease is good); Quality of Life = Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire-Short Form (an increase is good)



QUESTIONS





THANK YOU

**Tarrant County
Public Safety Employees
Treatment Court**

Honorable Charles L. Vanover
Presiding Judge

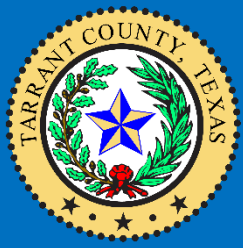
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www.tarrantcounty.com



REFERENCES

11ALIVE (July 2, 2019). Police bodycam video shows knife-wielding man charge and attack officer after being shot (Video File). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KT0KcenH_eQ

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