

4th Judicial District – Veterans Treatment Court Peer Mentor Program Information Sheet



Mission Statement

The 4th Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court (VTC), through a collaborative problem solving approach, will reduce recidivism of individuals who served in the armed forces and are involved in the criminal justice system. Preference will be given to those individuals with PTSD and/or TBI, related to their service. The VTC will promote public safety, ensure participant accountability, support recovery, and improve quality of life for participants and their families.

Are you a U.S. military veteran interested in community service volunteerism? Do you miss the camaraderie found with fellow service members?

The VTC program is currently seeking U.S. military veterans who are willing to volunteer their time mentoring fellow veterans. The Veteran Peer Mentor program provides a unique and rewarding opportunity for volunteers – the opportunity to make a powerful difference in the lives of at-risk veterans *and* have a positive impact on our community!

Having veterans participate as Peer Mentors is an important part of the 4th Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court as there is a bond that occurs between veterans around the values that are shared and the sacrifices that have been made.

The Peer Mentor Program offers support and encouragement for veterans in the court system by spending one-on-one time with the veteran after they appear during the proceedings of the VTC. These mentoring sessions usually do not last longer than 10 minutes and give the veteran the opportunity to bring up concerns and get feedback and support from another veteran.

The 4th Judicial System VTC also offers support and supervision to all of the Mentors.

What are the Goals of the Peer Mentor Program?

The primary goals of the Peer program are to:

1. Participate in training to prepare for working with U.S. military vets and service members involved in the criminal justice system with trauma-related injuries and co-occurring disorders.
2. Maintain high standards of personal conduct, acting as a role model for those they serve.

For more information or an application, please contact the 4th Judicial District's Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator, Kisten Born, at (719) 452-5039 or by e-mail: kisten.born@judicial.state.co.us

3. Respect the rights and dignity of those they serve, providing support and empathy during the recovery process.
4. Assist the veteran in accessing community resources, advocating for them when necessary and supporting participation in treatment.
5. Keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to recovery, openly share this knowledge with colleagues, and participate in training and team meetings.
6. Advocate for the full integration of individuals into our community and promote the inherent value of these individuals to those communities.

Q: What qualities do you need to be a Peer Mentor?

A: The best Mentor qualities include:

- Mindful Listener
- Empathetic
- Nurturing
- Trustworthy
- Observant
- Respectful

Who We Help & Issues We Address:

The VTC is a state and grant funded program that provides an alternative to incarceration for U.S. military veterans with trauma spectrum disorders who have proven to be high risk and high need. With the collaboration of individuals from the 4th Judicial District's Attorney's Office, Public Defenders offices, El Paso and Teller County Sheriff's Departments, Probation Department, Veterans Administration, and alternate treatment providers, eligible veterans are moved from the traditional courtroom environment into the VTC under the supervision of Judge David Shakes, a former JAG Judge with the U.S. Army.

Program participants agree to actively engage in treatment and counseling, make regular court appearances, and are intensively supervised. Program staff assists participating veterans in accessing mental health and/or substance abuse treatment, and can connect them to educational, housing, and employment resources. Peer support is also available.

How do I get involved?

Please contact the VTC Lead Peer Mentor, Laurie Clemons at (719) 452-5056 or by e-mail at laura.clemons@judicial.state.co.us

Or contact the VTC Coordinator, Kisten Born at (719) 452-5039 or by e-mail at kisten.born@judicial.state.co.us