



SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY

COUNTIES OF
ATLANTIC AND CAPE MAY
VICINAGE I

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Atlantic/Cape May Drug Courts Hold 10th Graduation Ceremonies

The Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage will hold drug court graduation ceremonies on Tuesday, Nov. 27 and on Wednesday, Nov. 28.

The Atlantic County ceremony will be held on Nov. 27 at 1 p.m. in the jury assembly room on the first floor of the Atlantic County Courthouse, 4997 Unami Blvd., Mays Landing. Five participants will graduate from the 5-year program and six participants will commence to the final phase of the program.

The Cape May ceremony will be held on Nov. 28 at 11 a.m. in courtroom D of the Cape May County Courthouse, 9 North Main St., Cape May Courthouse. Eight will graduate from the program and six will commence into the final phase.

Superior Court Judge Michael R. Connor, on recall, will preside over the events. Nicole Clark, a certified alcohol and drug counselor (CADC) will be the keynote speaker for both ceremonies. Assignment Judge Julio L. Mendez and Trial Court Administrator Howard H. Berchtold Jr. will participate in both ceremonies. There will be a special musical selection by Kenneth S., a drug court participant.

The drug court program is a highly specialized team process within the existing Superior Court structure that addresses non-violent drug-related cases. Drug courts are unique in the criminal justice environment because they build a close collaborative relationship between criminal justice and the drug treatment professionals. Drug courts programs are rigorous, requiring completion of four phases during five years of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and testing. Participants follow a tightly structured regimen of treatment and recovery. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process, but also allows supervisors to react swiftly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants do not comply with the program.

For additional information regarding drug court or the graduation ceremonies, contact program coordinator Celeste Goodson at 609-909-8113.

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