



SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY

COUNTIES OF
ATLANTIC AND CAPE MAY
VICINAGE I

Howard H. Berchtold, Jr.
Trial Court Administrator

Kathleen E. Obringer
Ombudsman/Community Liaison

1201 Bacharach Boulevard
Atlantic City, NJ 08401-4510
(609) 594-3400
FAX: (609) 343-2232

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For additional information contact:

Kathy Boyle, Criminal Division Manager, at 609-909-8213

Criminal Court in Atlantic County Completes a Successful First Year Of the Accelerated Disposition Program

The criminal division of the Superior Court in Atlantic County recently marked the one year anniversary of a pre-indictment program known as the Accelerated Disposition Program (ADP). Cases in ADP are reviewed to determine if they meet the criteria for an accelerated disposition, bypassing the traditional course of prosecution of criminal cases. ADP cases are selected with input from the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office.

The program was established by Criminal Presiding Judge Michael Donio in close collaboration with the county prosecutor, the public defender and private defense attorneys.

Judge Donio said, "I am thrilled with the outcomes achieved in the first year of the program. I very much appreciate the cooperation from the county prosecutor and all the defense attorneys."

Of a total of 506 cases in the first year of the program's operation, 254 cases were disposed through pleas of guilty, 218 by enrollment in the Pre-Trial Intervention Program, 19 by admission to drug court, and 15 by outright dismissal. The median time from arrest to disposition of an ADP case was 58 days, whereas the median time from arrest to disposition of an ordinary criminal case is 160 days in Atlantic County. Fifty percent of the incarcerated persons who entered guilty pleas in the ADP Program were released on their own recognizance on the date of their plea.

Superior Court Judge Mark Sandson, the lead ADP judge said, "The program is a win-win situation for all involved. The defendants have their charges adjudicated quickly and the matters are not hanging over their heads for months, causing anxiety over an uncertain outcome."

ADP improves the criminal justice system in a number of ways. Incarcerated defendants spend less time awaiting the outcome of their court case, reducing jail populations and incarceration costs. The court's calendar moves faster and the prosecutor's post-indictment caseload is reduced, allowing the state and the defense to dedicate resources to their more serious cases.

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