

News Release



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For immediate release:
Nov. 30, 2020

Essex Vicinage to Hold Drug Court Graduation

The Essex Vicinage will hold its drug court graduation and commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3, Assignment Judge Sallyanne Floria announced.

This event, the program's second fully virtual ceremony, will honor 60 men and women who have maintained recovery from drugs and alcohol. Graduates consist of 25 early graduates who have successfully completed the program sooner than the prescribed time, seven graduates, and 28 other participants who are moving to the final phase of the drug court program.

Superior Court Judge John I. Gizzo, the vicinage's drug court judge, will preside over the event. Graduates will share their experiences of strength and hope. James Manieri, a graduate of the vicinage's drug court program, will give the keynote address.

The day not only acknowledges the graduates' accomplishments but also recognizes the beginning of their journey. Families, friends, and loved ones will be able to support their graduate virtually.

The Judiciary's drug court program operates within the Superior Court to address nonviolent drug-addicted offenders. The program requires completion of four phases of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and recovery. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process but also allows the drug court team to react quickly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants do not comply.

The vicinage's drug court program has more than 385 participants. Drug court participants are expected to comply with all treatment recommendations, attend AA/NA meetings, gain employment, obtain a GED if not already attained, and demonstrate payment of fines.

The public can view the ceremony at <https://www.njcourts.gov/public/channels.html>.

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