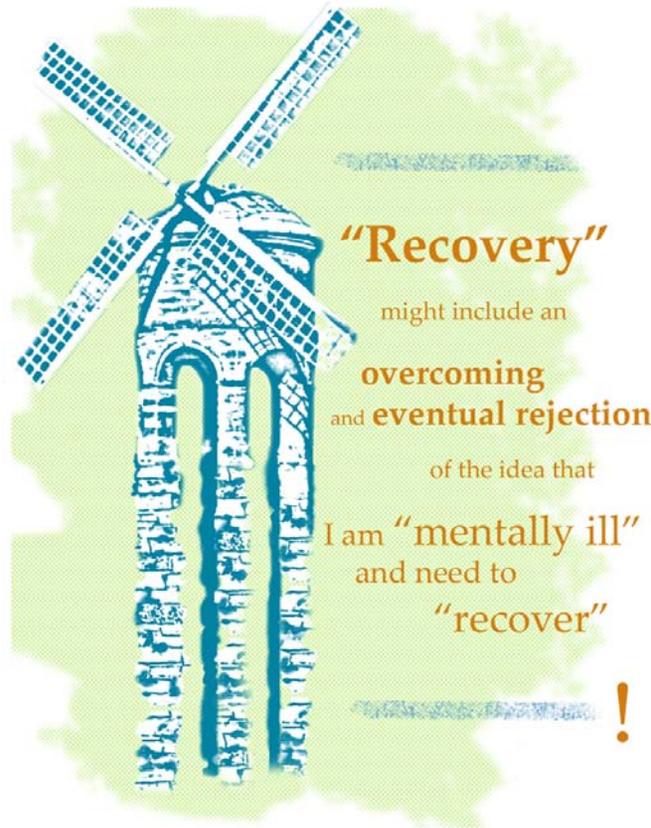


The Mental Health Bell rings out hope for improving mental health and achieving victory over mental illnesses.

In the early 1950s, Mental Health America melted down the inhumane bindings of shackles and recast them into a sign of hope: the Mental Health Bell.

Now the symbol of Mental Health America, the 300-pound Bell serves as a powerful reminder that the invisible chains of misunderstanding and discrimination continue to bind people with mental illnesses.

Our Mental Health Court Program is designed to quickly identify those individuals in our justice system that may suffer from an underlying mental illness, are found competent to make informed choices, and offer a comprehensive treatment team approach to handle the supervision of the case.



MENTAL HEALTH COURT

For More Information Contact:

Shane Wolf
Therapeutic Specialty Courts Coordinator

(360) 397-2431
Fax (360) 759-6582
E-mail: shane.wolf@clark.wa.gov



MENTAL HEALTH COURT

**A CLARK COUNTY
DISTRICT COURT
PROGRAM**



WEDNESDAY AT 2:00 PM

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH COURT?



Mental Health Court (MHC) is a partnership of people interested in assisting defendants willing to make changes in their life. These changes will enable the defendant to

live productively and peacefully within the community.

The MHC is a minimum of a 16 month program that is offered to offenders with a primary diagnosis of a serious mental illness, such as Schizophrenia or Psychotic Disorder, Bipolar Illness, Major Depressive Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety Disorder and/or Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

To participate, defendants plead guilty but as an alternative to jail time, fines or community service, they agree to enter a treatment program to help stabilize their lives.

The one-time program fee is \$100 to those who qualify and will receive treatment services at no additional cost and will not be charged additional probation fees.

Participants appear in court frequently based on compliance and progress through the 4-Phase system. While participating in the MHC, they will receive case management assistance that can help refer to other community services such as housing assistance, inpatient and/or outpatient treatment services, medication management, help applying for benefits, or job training assistance.



Eligibility Criteria for Mental Health Court

The participant must:

1. Be a Clark County legal resident age 18 or older
2. Have a primary diagnosis of a major mental disorder and/or co-occurring substance abuse problem and voluntarily want this treatment option.
3. The defendant has the mental capacity and ability to appreciate the consequences of the legal proceedings and fully understand the expectations and conditions of the Mental Health Court program and contract.
4. Plead guilty to the charge/violation

The participant must NOT have:

1. Any serious violent offenses in criminal history
2. Any other pending charges/ outstanding warrants in any other jurisdiction
3. Used a firearm in the commission of any crime

Mental Health Court Benefits

To the Community:

- Reduced costs to the community resulting from court and jail overcrowding
- Reduced criminal activity within the community
- Increased contribution to the community from program participants

To the Participant:

- Ongoing support in achieving goals
- Increases stability
- Avoid recidivism
- Achieve a sense of dignity and self-worth
- Empowerment to strive for future goal attainment

Life's problems wouldn't be
called "hurdles" if there wasn't
a way to get over them.

~Author Unknown