

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **MADISON COUNTY DRUG COURT AND MENTAL HEALTH COURT EARN CERTIFICATION**

The Third Judicial Circuit Court is pleased to announce that two of its problem-solving courts have been approved for Certification by the Illinois Supreme Court for the next three years. Both the Madison County Drug Court and the Madison County Mental Health Court were reviewed as part of the Illinois Supreme Court's certification program.

"We are proud that our courts have achieved this recognition. Certification was a rigorous process and it is gratifying that those who evaluated our programs recognize the efforts of our outstanding personnel who make these courts a success," noted Circuit Judge Kyle Napp who presides over both programs.

"As the first Drug Court in the state of Illinois, we have long recognized how vital it is to hold drug offenders accountable but also to provide them with the opportunity for treatment. Drug Courts offer help to those who want it and help keep our communities safe," Judge Napp added.

In December 2015, the Illinois Supreme Court announced the creation of uniform standards and a certification and application process for problem-solving courts across the state. The standards and certification and application process were developed by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) and the Special Supreme Court Advisory Committee for Justice and Mental Health Planning and approved by the Supreme Court. Madison County Chief Judge David Hylla serves on the Supreme Court's Advisory Committee for these courts.

The Madison County Assessment & Treatment Court (MC-ATAC) program, also known as “Drug Court” promotes public safety and reduces recidivism by providing intensive treatment, supervision and judicial oversight for drug dependent individuals, who commit non-violent crimes as a result of their drug addictions. It helps to allow sober, law-abiding citizens return as contributing members of the community.

The Madison County Mental Health Court assists individuals with mental illness to become and remain law-abiding citizens by helping them access mental health treatment and other support services designed to help clients maintain mental health stability within the community.

The Drug Court and Mental Health Court are comprised of specially trained professionals including the supervising judge, attorneys from the state’s attorney and public defender offices, probation officers, treatment providers from Chestnut Health Systems and Centerstone and assistance from Dr. Jeremy Jewell with SIUE. The Madison County Mental Health Board, a.k.a 708 Board also provides support for the problem-solving courts.

The Supreme Court Advisory Committee for Justice and Mental Health Planning reviewed the participant handbooks, applications, supporting materials and the policies and procedures used in Madison County. Staff from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts made site visits to the Mental Health Court and to the Drug Court that included observing and interviewing staff and watching court proceedings.

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts notified Chief Judge David Hylla that the two courts had earned Certification and that the staff members of the problem-solving courts in Madison County were to be congratulated on their achievement. For more information on these problem-solving courts, go to [www.madisoncountycircuitcourt.org](http://www.madisoncountycircuitcourt.org).