

Serving Justice Involved Veterans

Across the New Hampshire Court System

2018 Fact Sheet

What is a Veterans Track?

A Veterans Track is a “special docket” charged with hearing cases that involve veterans or service members, particularly those diagnosed with service-related illnesses. The first veterans’ treatment court was established in 2008 in Buffalo, New York. Today, there are close to 400 veterans’ courts, tracks or dockets across the Country. In NH, we have six.

The Impact

Wars and military service may take a toll on our men and women in uniform. While most return home strengthened by their service, the struggle to readjust to life outside the military is not uncommon. Mental health issues are frequently compounded by substance misuse, family strife, unemployment, and homelessness – and far too often lead to incarceration.

Statewide Leadership & Planning

In 2013, the NH Justice Involved Veterans (JIV) Task Force was created to serve justice involved veterans by promoting and supporting the development of veteran-centered programs throughout the State.

Veterans Tracks Across the State

In 2014, the 9th Circuit Court, Nashua District Division established NH’s first Veterans Track. Today, there are a total of six Veterans Tracks that have been established in Grafton, Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties. All Veterans Tracks emphasize veterans’ military values and strive to hold participants accountable for their behavior while also encouraging the individual to engage in behavioral health treatment.

"The people we ran into [in the justice involved court system] were so compassionate, so respectful. They were so good to us, it really was amazing. If you help people and give them the tools and resources, they can get better. If you help these veterans, they are less likely to end up in the criminal justice system. I also think it's the right thing to do. I got my husband back. My children got their father back. We were ridiculously lucky - it was a miracle".

Military Spouse of Graduate – Nashua Veterans Track

Education, Training & Outreach

In 2015, the NH JIV Task Force organized the State’s first Veterans Track Conference, funded by the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) engaging over 300 attendees in support of serving justice involved veterans.

Success Across the State

In the last four years, over 100 veterans have participated and/or are currently participating in the six Veterans Tracks across the State. As of December of 2017, over fifty (50) NH veterans have graduated.

NH’s 1st Film – Justice for All

In 2017, the NH JIV Task Force, in partnership with Vetflix and NH DHHS, created *Justice for All*, NH’s 1st film about how our courts work with military veterans to meet their unique circumstances and needs through a Veterans Track. *Justice for All* events are traveling across the State and have been presented in Concord, Nashua, Plymouth and Laconia.

Legislation & Moving Forward

The Governor and Legislature passed HB 652 in 2017, establishing a Veterans Track within the court system. This act went into effect on January 1, 2018 and includes the essential 10 components of a Veterans Track. These 10 components provide the foundation for the successful operation of a NH Veterans Track.

Veteran Tracks are Working in New Hampshire!

This document was created by the NH Justice Involved Veterans Task Force