

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY DUI/DRUG COURT POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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Revised March 2017

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Athens-Clarke County

DUI/Drug Court

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Athens-Clarke County DUI Court is to provide early intervention for repeat alcohol and drug offenders. This includes enhanced community and legal supervision, substance abuse treatment, and continuing community support. The goal is to instill hope and improve the quality of our participants' lives while increasing community and reducing DUI recidivism. Participants are provided with the tools to live free from substance abuse and repeat legal involvement.

DUI/Drug Court Description

The DUI/Drug Court is a post-conviction, abstinence based, substance treatment, and intensive supervision program for offenders with multiple convictions for driving under the influence of alcohol. The program has a capacity of 120 participants. The minimum program length for a participant is 14 months.

The Program was implemented in 2001 using a policy manual written collaboratively by founding members of the DUI/Drug Court Team. The DUI/Drug Court Team consists of a state court judge, a magistrate court judge, the Athens-Clarke County Solicitor-General and his chief assistant, a representative from the Athens-Clarke County Public Defender's Office, the DUI/Drug Court Coordinator, a probation officer, a police officer, a case manager, a clinical case manager, licensed counselors, a supervising treatment coordinator, a representative of the Diversion Center, and a drug and alcohol testing consultant.

Substance abuse treatment for the DUI/Drug Court is provided by licensed counselors from Family Counseling Services of Athens, Inc., a member of the Department of Human Services Registry for the State Multiple Offender Program. The Team is charged with providing a continuum of services including treatment,

coordination of ancillary services, and the referral of participants to enhanced treatment as needed.

Standards and Best Practices

The DUI/Drug Court follows all required State of Georgia and national standards and best practices including, but not limited to: O.C.G.A. § 15-1-15 *et seq.*; the Georgia Adult DUI/Drug Court Standards; the Georgia DUI/Drug Court Treatment Standards; the Ten Guiding Principles of DUI Courts; and the Adult Drug Court Best Practices Standards as released by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP).

Target Population and Eligibility

The DUI/Drug Court Program only accepts participants post-conviction. The DUI/Drug Court target population is offenders with: arrests for two (2) DUIs in five (5) years; arrests for three (3) or more DUIs in a lifetime; or a blood alcohol level (BAC) of 0.15 or higher at the time of arrest. The Court also considers individuals with an offense related to a history of a substance use disorder, substance abuse, or addiction on a case by case basis. The target population is offenders with moderate to severe substance dependence.

In order to be eligible for the program, an offender must:

- 1) meet the legal requirements to participate in the program after being screened by the Solicitor-General and the DUI/Drug Court Coordinator;
- 2) meet the clinical requirements to participate in the program after being screened by a treatment clinician;
- 3) agree to participate in the DUI/Drug Court and sign a written contract;
- 4) live within 20 miles of the Athens-Clarke County Courthouse; and
- 5) have no convictions for a violent felony or sexual offense;

No offender shall be excluded on the basis of sex, race, color, socioeconomic status, religion, creed, age, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation or identity, pregnancy, marital or parental status. Citizens who have historically experienced sustained discrimination or reduced social opportunities because of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, physical or mental disability, religion, or socioeconomic status shall receive the same opportunities to participate as other citizens.

Referral and Screening

It is the goal of the DUI/Drug Court for a participant to be able to enter the program as soon as possible after arrest. Research has shown early placement and intervention with a drug or alcohol offender leads to greater likelihood of success of a participant in the program. Multiple offender DUI cases are placed on a specialized arraignment calendar within 10-17 days of arrest in order to expedite consideration for the program. All of these cases are reviewed for eligibility for entry into the Program.

Referrals also may come from local police departments, The solicitor-general's office, magistrate judges, state court judges, probation departments, treatment providers, or defense counsel. All referrals are screened by the Solicitor-General's office and the DUI/Drug Court Coordinator based on the circumstances leading to arrest, an offender's criminal history, and other relevant factors. If a person wishes to be considered for the DUI/Drug Court, the person is screened by a licensed clinician using the M.A.S.T., C.A.G.E and the B.M.S.E. After all the screenings, if an offender is determined to meet program requirements and eligible for acceptance, the offender is given two plea offers: one offer requires DUI/Drug Court, and the other is a non-DUI/Drug Court offer.

The DUI/Drug Court Team may accept non-DUI offenders if their behavior is known to be the result of a drug or alcohol problem. The Court will comply with the requirements and provisions set forth in the Georgia Crime Victim's Bill of Rights.

Co-occurring Disorders

The team will strive to accept any person with a co-occurring disorder as long as: (1) the person's primary diagnosis is substance use disorder; (2) the co-occurring disorder will not prevent the person from meaningfully engaging in treatment; and (3) the co-occurring disorder will not prevent the person from being able to comply with the rules and requirements of the program.

Guilty Plea and Sentencing

The guilty plea is entered in front of a judge from the Athens-Clarke County State Court. Prior to the plea being entered, the DUI/Drug Court contract is signed by the offender, the defense attorney, the Solicitor-General, and the DUI/Drug Court Coordinator. The plea agreement and additional DUI/Drug Court requirements are read in open court and provided to the offender. The offender then acknowledges receipt and understanding of all portions of the sentence and DUI/Drug Court requirements by initialing all documents. After sentencing, the offender, who now is a participant in the program, is given an appointment card for program orientation and group placement. No DUI charge shall be dismissed as a condition of completing the program.

Orientation and Assessment

During Orientation for the program, the participant meets with the program coordinator to receive program instructions and the Participant Handbook, to be set up in the call-in system for drug screens, and to begin the LSI-R assessment. The participant will also meet with the probation officer to receive reporting instructions and give a base-line urine drug screen. After Orientation, the participant is given an appointment to meet with counseling to begin treatment orientation.

Treatment

Participants receive substance abuse treatment based on a standardized assessment of their particular treatment needs. Substance abuse treatment is not provided to reward desired behaviors, punish infractions, or serve other nonclinically indicated goals. Treatment providers are trained and supervised to deliver a continuum of evidence-based interventions that are documented in treatment manuals. Treatment shall include standardized, evidenced-based practices and other practices recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices and which comply with the Georgia DUI/Drug Court Treatment Standards. Currently, Treatment providers use The Seeking Safety model to structure group sessions along with interventions from Motivational Interviewing (MI), Motivational Inhancement Therapy (MIT), The Stages of Change, Prime Solutions, Cognitive Behavioral Interventions-Substance Abuse (CBI-SA), Seeking Safety, Mindfulness Based Therapies, and Strengths and Empowerment based therapies. Treatment providers seek yearly continuing education credits to ensure they are trained on the most recent Standardized and Evidence-based practices.

TREATMENT OVERVIEW

Functionality of
Phases

Minimum Requirements of Participant for each Phase

ENTRY→

Orientation	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
Intake, Orientation, Level of Care Screening	Extended Assessment	Active Treatment	Relapse Prevention	Sustained Recovery
or care serecining	Move from Contemplation to Preparation Stage	Move from Preparation to Action Stage	Move from Action to Maintenance Stage	Maintenance Stage
Sentencing	One 2-hr group per week	One 2-hr group per week	One 3-hr group per month	
Initial meeting with Probation Officer	One 12-step per week	One 12-step per week	One 12-step per week	One 12-step per week
Baseline Drug Screen	Status Conference weekly	Status Conference weekly	Status Conference weekly	1 st check-in and 2 nd Status Conference of each month
Substance Abuse Evaluation	Two individual counseling sessions	Three individual counseling sessions	Three individual counseling sessions	Two individual counseling sessions
LSI-R Risk/Assessment →	Minimum 8 weeks	Minimum 24 weeks	→ Minimum 16 weeks	→→→ Minimum 60 days
Time will vary				,

GRADUATE

Participant	Projects
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Participants
Demonstrated Skills and
Knowledge

	Ready to begin the	Phase 1 Review	3 Changes, Managing	Relapse Prevention Plan and Life	Revisit 3 Changes and
			Emotions & Genogram	Story	share Life Story with a
	process				group
٦	Understand the process;	Understand personal	Identify changes needed in	Identify supports/strategies	Sustain healthy lifestyle
	capable of participation	relationship w/substance use;	their personal relationship	needed to maintain change in their	skills around their personal
		Increase awareness of	w/substance use	personal relationship w/substance	relationship w/substance
		risk/problems of use		use	use

^{*}Individual treatment plans may determine a need for additional requirements/contact*

Phase Progression or Phase Regression

For any phase progression in DUI/Drug Court, participants must be clinically appropriate, as determined by their individual counselors, and by meeting all clinical obligations. Participants must also be financially current, or on an approved payment plan, or designated indigent status in order to advance to the next phase.

The participant's level of treatment shall be determined based upon the individualized level of need. Should a participant need increased treatment (halfway house or recovery residency, intensive outpatient or inpatient treatment facility, or detox center), a counselor and the rest of the DUI/Drug Court Team shall coordinate placement at such a facility. Seeking alternative treatment outside of the DUI/Drug Court is not allowed without prior approval.

At any time during the program, a participant may be moved back to a previous phase based upon the level of care/intervention needed. If a participant is not meeting the requirements for their current phase, they may be phased back.

Projects

Writing projects will be assigned during each phase of treatment. Participants are expected to apply themselves to the best of their ability and will meet with their counselor to review each project. The completed assignments will reflect a participant's progress and are an integral part of the treatment process. Counselors will evaluate projects, participation in group and individual counseling sessions, time in current phase, drug and alcohol test results, and other relevant information to determine a participant's readiness to move on to the next phase.

Ancillary Services

If the participant is in need of additional services, we will strive to provide, or make the necessary referrals for, ancillary services that are available. We currently collaborate with the following services:

- Athens Justice Coalition of Care for assistance with academic and employment training opportunities through the "Phoenix Project"
- Family Counseling Service of Athens offers anger management classes for family violence, as well as additional family counseling
- The Athens Mercy Clinic provides indigent medical care
- Project Safe for domestic violence interventions and support
- The Cottage for sexual assault interventions and support
- Athens Specialty Care Clinic for HIV/AIDS population
- Athens Nurses Clinic for Low Income/Indigent medical care
- The Food Bank for low income basic needs
- Advantage Behavioral Health Systems for higher "levels of care" treatment for mental illness and substance abuse detox
- The Palm House for sober living environment
- Acceptance Recovery Center (ARC) for long-term residential substance use treatment.

Graduation

In order to qualify for "Ready to Graduate" status in the program, a participant must meet all previous phase requirements, including completion of all treatment obligations. They also must be current with all DUI/Drug Court and probation fees, on payment plan, or in indigent status while attending all required appointments with their probation officer and appearing for all call-in drug screens. A minimum of 120 days of negative drug testing is required prior to a participant being deemed eligible for graduation from the program.

A major goal of the DUI/Drug Court Team is to support each participant's progress throughout the phases toward graduation from the DUI/Drug Court program. Graduation is an important milestone, providing the participant and the DUI/Drug Court Team an opportunity to reflect on the personal journey each

participant has experienced during the program. Participants are encouraged to maintain their relationship with the DUI/Drug Court after graduation as alumni or as a mentor to other participants.

Status Conferences / Staffing

Status Conferences occur every other week and at a minimum of two times a month. All members of the DUI/Drug Court Team are required to attend each Status Conference and the staffing meeting held prior to each Status Conference session.

During the staffing meetings, the treatment providers shall present written progress reports for each participant. The entire DUI/Drug Court Team shall review each participant's progress report and make comments or suggestions for changes in their supervision/treatment plan.

During Status Conference sessions, the judges will discuss each participant's progress in the program and address any problems or concerns that a participant may have. Important information about program schedules and phase progression shall be disseminated to participants during these sessions.

Transportation Assistance

Each member of the DUI/Drug Court Team discusses with the participant the consequences of driving while the participant's license is suspended. For participants without a license, the Team shall discuss creating a transportation plan to ensure that the participant has transportation to program requirements. Participants who do not have a valid driver's license are offered multiple forms of transportation assistance. The DUI/Drug Court Team has a partnership with "Bike Athens", providing access to bicycles for our participants. "The Bus" (Athens mass transit) provides a limited number of free passes for distribution to Program participants, and the program may receive grant funds to assist in transportation.

The Team shall take all reasonable steps to assist participants in completing all requirements for license reinstatement prior to graduation. The Team shall stay current on all applicable licensing laws in the state of Georgia and shall strictly enforce all driving restrictions.

Drug Testing Procedure

Effective drug testing must be random, frequent and observed. A call-in system is used to ensure random selection, and a minimum of two (2) urine screens a week are required during the first four (4) phases in the program. All urine collections are to be observed by a member of the Athens-Clarke County DUI/Drug Court Team.

Urine samples shall be tested by the Athens-Clarke County Drug Lab using full panels including EtG assays for alcohol detection. A chain of custody is established using evidence collection forms requiring signatures of all parties involved in the collection and transportation of the sample.

Results for samples shall be available within 48 hours of the sample's arrival in the lab. In the event that a single urine sample tests positive for more than one (1) prohibited substance, the results shall be considered as one (1) positive drug screen.

If a participant disputes the results provided by the DUI/Drug Court Lab, a confirmation can be requested by the participant. The sample will be packaged and shipped with chain of custody forms to a nationally certified lab paid for by the participant. If the sample comes back as "not confirmed," the cost of the confirmation test is credited to the participant's fees.

Dilutions of urine samples and failure to appear for a screen are treated as "positive" samples. Dilution is measured by tests for both Creatinine and Specific Gravity. Positive screens and verbal admissions of drug or alcohol use shall not be used as the basis for a new criminal prosecution.

Participant Supervision

Driving under the influence presents a significant danger to the public. Increased and intensive supervision and monitoring of participants by the court, probation department, law enforcement, and treatment provider must occur as part of a coordinated strategy to intervene with repeat and high-risk DUI offenders, to ensure accountability of participants, and to protect against future impaired driving.

The probation officer assigned to the DUI/Drug Court shall complete home and/or work visits and coordinate electronic monitoring of participants as needed. Each participant has a supervision plan based on his or her level of need and risk. The supervision plan will be modified as needed throughout the participant's time in the program. The plan could include the use of 24 Hour Alcohol electronic monitoring device, GPS electronic monitoring, curfews, or a participant being placed into the Athens-Clarke County Diversion Center.

The Athens-Clarke County Diversion Center, which is operated by the ACC Corrections Department, provides quality cost-effective management of non-violent offenders, whose confinement in traditional incarceration would limit them from more quickly integrating into society. The Diversion Center provides opportunities for individuals to maintain current employment, as well as assists in job placement if unemployed. Participants living in the Diversion Center are given the opportunity to attend DUI/Drug Court requirements, including Status Conferences, check-ins, and treatment group sessions.

Participant's Right to a Hearing and Due Process

DUI/Drug Court participants are expected to comply with all recommended aspects of treatment and supervision. Failure to comply will result in a summons to Court for a petition to revoke probation. The Solicitor-General and public defender representatives work to ensure that participants are provided sufficient notice of any alleged violation and afforded all due process rights during probation revocation proceedings, including the right to a hearing and legal representation if

requested. DUI/Drug Court petitions are heard during DUI/Drug Court specific hearing dates set each Tuesday and Thursday.

Sanctions for Noncompliance

Consequences for participants' behavior shall be predictable, fair, consistent, and administered with evidenced-based principles of effective behavior modification. Recommended sanctions shall gradually escalate and be applied in a consistent and appropriate manner to match a participant's level of compliance. There will be no indefinite time periods for sanctions, including those sanctions involving incarceration or detention. Participants are subject to progressive positive drug screen sanctions prior to being considered for termination, unless there are other acts of noncompliance affecting this decision.

Standard Sanction Recommendation Matrix

Sanctions for Minor Offenses:

1st offense- verbal reprimand;

2nd offense- 10 hours of community service;

3rd offense- 48 hours confinement;

4th offense- 8 days confinement (4 days confinement with good time credit);

5th offense- 12 days confinement (6 days with good time credit);

Sanctions for Positive Drug or Alcohol Screens:

1st offense- 48 hours confinement;

2nd offense- 96 hours confinement;

3rd offense- 3-5 days confinement;

4th offense- 10 days confinement (5 days with good time credit);

Increased treatment shall never be imposed as a sanction for any violation. However, notification of every alleged violation is forwarded to a participant's treatment clinician to determine if a revised treatment plan should be implemented for that participant based upon the violation. Implementation of a revised treatment plan recommended by a counselor may result from any alleged violation and shall not be considered a sanction. Honesty is a core component of the Athens-Clarke County DUI/Drug Court. The Court may favorably consider self-disclosure-of-use as a mitigating factor when sanctions are imposed.

Dismissal from the Athens DUI/Drug Court

The goal of the DUI/Drug Court is for every participant to successfully complete the program. Notwithstanding, a participant could jeopardize their ability to participate with significant or repeated violations of program rules including, but not limited to: new criminal offenses, technical probation or program violations, continued drug/alcohol use, attempts to circumvent drug testing procedures, dishonesty, or refusal to meaningfully engage in treatment. Every effort will be made to meet the treatment/program needs of each participant, thereby minimizing the potential for dismissal from the DUI/Drug Court.

Any participant facing a recommendation of dismissal from the program shall be provided written notice of the allegations and provided the right to a hearing with the opportunity to be represented by an attorney. The consequences of removal from a DUI/Drug Court shall be comparable to those sustained in other similar cases before the presiding judge. The sentence shall be reasonable and not excessively punitive based on the reasons for termination from the DUI/Drug Court.

Judicial Interaction

The DUI/Drug Court is conducted by an elected state court judge with a magistrate judge assigned to assist. The judges shall maintain a current knowledge of the law and research on best practices in accountability courts. The judges shall attend all pre-court staffing sessions. However, staffing sessions begin with a block of time in which the judges are not present, allowing the DUI/Drug Court Team to discuss petitions for revocation that have not appeared previously in front of the judge or any other matter that needs to be addressed outside of the presence of the judges. The judges shall interact frequently and respectfully with all participants. The judges shall give due consideration to input from all members of the Team.

Participant reviews during Status Conferences shall be conducted on each participant individually to optimize program effectiveness. The Judge shall strive to spend an average of three minutes with each participant during status review.

Program Management

The DUI/Drug Court Team shall maintain ongoing and timely communication with all Team members regarding the progress or issues facing participants. The treatment provider shall provide reports on the progress of each participant before each staffing session. The entire Team shall be present for the every other week staffing sessions and Status Conferences.

The DUI/Drug Court Team shall meet every six months at a minimum, to discuss potential modifications of program philosophy, requirements, and policies. All participating agencies shall devote effort to maintaining a flexible program with highly structured rehabilitative components.

DUI/Drug Court Team meetings are kept confidential. No information disclosed can be the basis for prosecution of new crimes, and no Team member shall be required to testify in regards to any information discussed or disclosed during a DUI/Drug Court Team meeting or Status Conference.

Program Monitoring, Data Collection, and Evaluation

Participant data is gathered using multiple computerized databases including FivePoint Solutions, JAG Probation Management, and Wintox Testing Management. Information from participant surveys, review of participant data, and findings from evaluations are used to make any necessary modifications to program operations, procedures, and practices.

The DUI/Drug Court provides all requested data to the Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts as required by the Council of Accountability Court Judges, including a comprehensive end-of-year report.

Continuing Education

The DUI/Drug Court Team participates in the annual State of Georgia Accountability Court Conference and the Operational Tune-Up training at a minimum of every three years. A rotating selection of team members attend the NADCP Annual National Conference.

Counselors are required to attend a minimum number of training hours of education to maintain licensing and certification. Attorneys and judges are required to attend a minimum number of training hours to maintain their Georgia bar status and judicial status in good standing. All new Team members are required to attend formal training provided by the Georgia Judicial Council Accountability Court Committee, the Georgia Accountability Court Funding Committee, or the NADCP.

Community Partnerships

The DUI/Drug Court actively engages in forming and nurturing relationships between the Court and various community partners including local businesses,

other government agencies, and treatment courts in surrounding areas. The Court facilitates these relationships through forums, informational sessions, public outreach, and other forms of marketing.

Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

DUI Court Judges

The DUI/Drug Court judges provide supervision for the program and lead the DUI/Drug Court Team. The judges shall maintain a current knowledge of the law and research on best practices in accountability courts. The judges shall attend all pre-court staffing sessions and Status Conferences. The judges shall interact frequently and respectfully with all participants. The judges shall work closely with Team members. The judges shall give due consideration to input from all members of the Team. The judges must always maintain their judicial independence.

Solicitor-General

The Solicitor-General screens applicants for eligibility, serves on the DUI/Drug Court Team, attends DUI/Drug Court Sessions and is actively involved in ongoing development of the DUI/Drug Court. In addition, the Solicitor-General is responsible for recommending or not recommending consideration for participation in the program.

In addition, the Solicitor-General represents the State and makes recommendations after consultation with the probation officer and Team at any hearings where a participant is alleged to have violated the terms or conditions of the program.

Public Defender

The public defender team member attends DUI/Drug Court sessions, serves on the DUI/Drug Court Team, and is actively involved in ongoing development of the DUI/Drug Court. The public defender team member will not represent any participant in the program in a DUI/Drug Court proceeding, but will help to facilitate legal representation of a participant when needed.

Probation Officer

The DUI/Drug Court probation officer actively oversees the supervision of all participants. The probation officer is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the participants and consults with the Team when problems arise.

Counselors

A counselor is assigned to each participant in the DUI/Drug Court, and it is this counselor that first provides a clinical assessment of the participant to develop an individualized comprehensive treatment plan. This counselor shall manage the treatment during the time that the individual is a participant in the DUI/Drug Court. Each counselor reports to other members of the DUI/Drug Court Team during staffing to keep the Team informed of each participant's progress through treatment. The counselor shall relay all information pertinent to a participant's continued sobriety to the judges and the rest of the Team in order to properly treat each participant.

Case Manager

The case manager works closely with the probation officer, court coordinator, and counselors. The case manager is responsible for obtaining

information from the treatment providers in a timely manner and relaying that information to the Team and back to the treatment providers.

Treatment Case Manager

The treatment case manager is a member of the DUI/Drug Court Team and works closely with the counselors and DUI/Drug Court Team. The treatment case manager shall meet with participants and treatment providers on a regular basis, and shall be responsible for facilitating evaluations, making treatment referrals, preparing treatment plans, and coordinating treatment.

Court Coordinator

The court coordinator is a member of the DUI/Drug Court Team. The coordinator participates in the development and maintenance of eligibility standards, operating procedures, and rules for the DUI/Drug Court. The coordinator develops strategies to maintain funding for the program, reviews service contracts, and monitors program certification and operating procedures. The coordinator shall be responsible for data collection to monitor participant compliance and to provide a basis for evaluation of the DUI/Drug Court.

Police Officer

A police officer with the Athens-Clarke County Police Department is the main liaison between the DUI/Drug Court and other local law enforcement agencies. The police officer also assists in the supervision of the participants, particularly during the evening hours and in the field.

Drug Testing Advisor

The drug testing advisor answers questions from the DUI/Drug Court Team concerning drug testing and the effects of drugs and other medications on testing results and on the participants. This person also evaluates drug testing reports and closely monitors the tested drug levels.

Diversion Center

A representative from the Athens-Clarke County Diversion Center answers questions concerning the status of any participant who has been placed in the Diversion Center. The representative also acts as a liaison between the DUI/Drug Court and participants residing within the Center by helping to facilitate any necessary communication, transportation issues, and employment status updates.

DUI/Drug Court Team-Participant Relationships

The relationship between Team members and participants shall be professional, with all interactions based on adopted Athens-Clarke County Standards of Professional Conduct. Team members shall always maintain professional and objective personal conduct between themselves and the participants, the participants' families, and a participants' associates. Team members shall always maintain personal concern within the bounds of their professional responsibilities, so as to safeguard the welfare of the participant both during and after enrollment in the DUI/Drug Court.

Team members are prohibited from developing personal relationships with participants including sexual or romantic relationships, employment of participants, or engaging in business relationships with participants who are active in DUI/Drug Court. Their relationships with participants should never include behaviors on the part of the team member which would be abusive or damaging to

the participant. Team members must disclose pre-existing social ties or relationships with a participant prior to the individual's placement into DUI/Drug Court.