



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

Administrative Office
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East
Bldg. 1, Room E-316
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
(304) 340-2305 Jennifer Bundy
(304) 340-2306 April Harless
(304) 558-4219 / TTY
(304) 558-1212 / FAX
Web Site: www.courtsvw.gov
Twitter: [WVCourts](https://twitter.com/WVCourts)
Information Services Division
Email: Jennifer.Bundy@courtsvw.gov
Email: April.Harless@courtsvw.gov

Justice Benjamin to address treatment court professionals

For immediate release Wednesday, November 9, 2011

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Supreme Court Justice Brent D. Benjamin will give the keynote address to a conference of treatment court professionals at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, November 14, in the third floor pavilion of the Marriott Charleston Town Center Hotel.

The speech, like the conference, will concern alternatives to incarceration for certain first-time, non-violent offenders.

The West Virginia court system continues to add treatment courts throughout the state and to celebrate graduates who complete such specialty court programs. Justice Benjamin attends as many treatment court openings and graduation ceremonies as his schedule allows as the Supreme Court's representative, an indication of how important the Court believes the programs are.

West Virginia currently has eleven adult drug courts serving twenty-eight counties, ten juvenile drug courts serving twelve counties, one adult reentry court, and one adult mental health court.

The goal of treatment courts, also called problem-solving courts, is to help participants overcome addictions and mental illnesses that may have led them to commit crimes, thus improving the quality of life for them and their families. Turning people who might have become repeat offenders into productive citizens also improves public safety. The programs can be more productive, cost-effective, and humane than incarceration for those who have committed non-violent crimes and are a low to moderate risk to be released into the community.

In all treatment court programs in West Virginia, people who are registered as sex offenders or who have a prior conviction for a felony crime of violence are not eligible, and prosecutors and judges choose which offenders may participate.

For more information about West Virginia's treatment courts, see the West Virginia Judicial System website www.courtsvw.gov.

##