



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Justices to speak at drug court opening in Wayne County

For immediate release Thursday, February 2, 2012

WAYNE, W.Va. – Supreme Court Chief Justice Menis Ketchum and Justice Brent Benjamin will speak at the opening of a new adult drug court at 3 p.m. on Monday, February 6, in the Courtroom of Judge Darrell Pratt in the Wayne County Courthouse, 700 Hendricks Street, Wayne.

The drug court will serve adults in Wayne County who have been charged with, pled guilty to, or been found guilty of misdemeanor or felony drug-related offenses or offenses in which substance abuse is determined to have been a factor in the commission of the offense.

Judge Pratt will supervise the program, which is among twelve adult drug courts serving thirty West Virginia counties. Ten juvenile drug courts serve twelve counties, including Wayne County.

Drug offenders who volunteer for drug court may receive a sentence reduction or avoid a jail and prison sentence if they perform satisfactorily and complete the minimum one-year program. Successful completion may also result in withholding criminal charges, probation, deferred sentencing, or other incentives.

Offenders can be sanctioned or expelled from the program if they do not perform satisfactorily or otherwise violate the terms and conditions of drug court. Participants may be forced to repeat certain phases of the program. The judge may impose jail time if it is necessary.

Prosecutors and drug court judges pre-approve drug offender participation in drug court. People registered as sex offenders or who have a prior felony conviction for a felony crime of violence are not eligible.

Participants undergo substance abuse treatment, must submit to frequent and random drug testing, and are intensely supervised. If needed, participants may also undergo treatment for mental illness.

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