



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Chief Justice to attend Preston County drug court graduation

For immediate release Tuesday, July 23, 2013

KINGWOOD, W.Va. – Supreme Court Chief Justice Brent D. Benjamin will speak at a ceremony honoring two graduates of the Preston County Adult Drug Court at 3 p.m. Thursday, July 25, in the courtroom of Eighteenth Judicial Circuit (Preston County) Judge Lawrence S. Miller, Jr.

Judge Miller's courtroom is in the Preston County Courthouse, 101 West Main St. Keyser. Judge Miller oversees the adult drug court, which was established in 2009, and handles post-plea and probation violation cases. It is one of sixteen operational juvenile drug courts and twenty operational adult drug courts in West Virginia.

Adult and juvenile drug courts are intensive supervision probation programs. Juvenile drug court participants are usually in the program for six to eight months. Initially, a participant meets with the drug court judge weekly and a probation officer several times per week. Juvenile drug court is intended for youth who are at risk of becoming addicted, not those who are already addicted.

Adult drug court is for those who already are addicted. Participants complete a treatment program of no less than twelve months. They are required to attend group and individual counseling, to take drug tests multiple times per week, and to do community service work. They meet with a probation officer frequently and see the drug court judge at least weekly in the beginning of the program.

The average annual cost incurred by the state for one adult drug court participant is approximately \$7,100 compared to \$18,000 in jail or \$25,000 in prison. About 10 percent of drug court graduates return to jail, but 30 percent of traditionally incarcerated defendants return.

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