

## Outreach Court Provider FAQ's

Q: What is Outreach Court?

A: Outreach is a progressive diversionary program, allowing alternative resolutions in lieu of custody, fines, and fees for most misdemeanor charges

Q: Who is the Outreach Court for?

A: This program is designed for community members who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. These are community members who are taking steps to improve themselves, and may have a situation where a pending court case and/or warrant may be preventing progress. This program seeks to take these legal barriers away so that they can focus on more important things such as shelter, food and treatment.

Q: I have a client that I think might be eligible. What do I need to do to get the process started?

A: If you think your client is eligible please send an Outreach Court Referral Form and the Defendant's Release of Information and Consent Form (this form insures their information is kept completely confidential) to Lissa Lowe, Program Manager at [metrlgl@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrlgl@nmcourts.gov) or Deidra Soto, Outreach court Program Specialist at [metrdas@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrdas@nmcourts.gov) or call Deidra at 505-273-1105 or Martin at 505-938-4243. You can get the these forms from the Outreach Court website at <https://metro.nmcourts.gov/homeless-court.aspx>

Q: What happens after I send the referral?

A: We check to see if your client is eligible and if they have current representation. If your client is eligible and doesn't already have representation we will contact the Law Office of the Public Defender to insure representation is appointed to them. Judge Dominguez then becomes the assigned judge for the case. Any warrants on the case are cancelled and we will set a Meaningful Review Hearing 30-45 days out.

Q: What would prohibit someone from participating in Outreach Court?

A: We cannot take DWI cases due to statutory requirements. We also cannot accept any clients who have been convicted of a violent felony within the last 7 years. A domestic violence case or a case involving an officer victim needs prior approval by the District Attorney's office before being accepted into Outreach Court.

Q: Can my client participate if they have a traffic warrant that they got as a juvenile?

A: Absolutely. Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court handles all juvenile traffic warrants, so they would be eligible to participate in the Outreach Court Program.

Q: What if I am unsure if my client is eligible? Can I still send a referral?

A: yes please, or you can call with any questions Lissa Lowe at 505-938-4243 or Deidra Soto at 505-273-1105 . Referrals can be emailed to Lissa Lowe at [metrdas@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrdas@nmcourts.gov).

Q: Do I and/or my client need to go to the Meaningful Review Hearing?

A: No. We have taken the courthouse out of the equation. All that we request is that you write an Advocacy Letter prior to the review to update the Outreach Court on the client's progress. This letter is emailed to Deidra Soto at [metrdas@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrdas@nmcourts.gov). A sample Advocacy Letter is on the court's website at <https://metro.nmcourts.gov/homeless-court.aspx>

Q: How will I know if my client has been accepted?

A: After receipt of the Defendant's Release of Information and Consent Form along with the Outreach Court Referral Form, Deidra Soto will contact you to inform you of the Outreach Court's decision. If your client is accepted, Ms. Soto will ask you to complete a Client Commitment Form (this form is also on the court's website at <https://metro.nmcourts.gov/homeless-court.aspx>).

Q: What does my client need to do to comply?

A: The client must follow through with what you are asking them to achieve. Let us know in the Advocacy Letter how that is progressing.

Q: Does my agency need to submit a Provider Criteria?

A: The Outreach Court is building a comprehensive network of providers. We ask each agency to provide a list of expectations for your clients. Please submit your criteria to Ms. Soto or Ms. Lowe. It will be reviewed by the Outreach Court Steering Committee. If approved, your agency will be added to the provider network.

Q: If we are not currently an approved provider with criteria on file can I still refer clients?

A: Yes. We encourage providers to submit their criteria as soon as they can, while still submitting referrals.

Q: What forms do I need to submit to begin the referral process?

A: All current forms can be found on our website at

<https://metro.nmcourts.gov/homeless-court.aspx> and are:

1. The Outreach Court Referral Form
2. The Defendants Release of Information and Consent Form  
(These 2 forms are submitted at the time a referral is made)
3. The Client Commitment Form  
(This form is submitted 7-10 days after you receive word that the client has been accepted to the Outreach Court Program)
4. The Advocacy Letter  
(This is needed before the client's Meaningful Review, set 30-45 days from referral)

Q: Does the client need to go to the Court for this case?

A: Not during participation in Outreach Court. We are taking the courthouse out of the equation. Commencement Ceremonies will be held in various Community Provider locations.

Q: What is a Commencement Ceremony?

A: Upon Completion of Outreach Court we will hold a ceremony to recognize the accomplishments of each participant and provide them with closure paperwork for their case.

Q: How can my organization host Commencement Ceremonies?

A: Contact Lissa Lowe via email [metrlgl@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrlgl@nmcourts.gov) or at (505) 938-4243 or Deidra Soto via email [metrdas@nmcourts.gov](mailto:metrdas@nmcourts.gov) or at 273-1105 and we will get that set up!