

MENTAL HEALTH/VETERANS COURT | CANDIDACY INFORMATION

The information in this document should be used as a starting point to determine if an individual is a good candidate for Mental Health Court or Veterans Court; it is *not* an exhaustive list of all possible cases.

A client may be a good candidate for either court if they:

Show active mental health symptoms at the time of arrest;

Have been ordered for competency evaluation;

Express interest in “getting help” or being in treatment;

Have a history of or are currently in treatment for mental illness, including being prescribed psychotropic medications;

Are in custody in close observation or suicide watch in booking/intake area of the jail;

Exhibit a **Nexus**- a connection between symptoms of the mental health condition and the crime (direct or secondary)

Have co-occurring substance use and mental health disorder;

Were in a psychiatric hospital within a short time prior to or immediately after incident;

VETERANS COURT CANDIDATES ONLY

Client is a potential candidate for either court;

AND

Served in the United States military, including current active duty service members;

AND

Client is suffering from a mental health condition as a result of their service, such as PTSD, sexual trauma, depression, or anxiety as a trauma response;

Client experienced combat or traumatic experience in the military and have charges relating to substance use/possession (not manufacturing or delivery), violence, domestic violence, threat of violence, harassment, or malicious mischief.

Direct Nexus

Crime was committed because of mental health symptoms.

(For example, an individual with bipolar mania was eluding police in a stolen vehicle because in his manic state he believed he was in a video game)

Secondary Nexus

Crime was caused by some situation related to symptoms of a mental health condition.

(For example, an individual with post-traumatic stress disorder who drinks daily to self-medicate symptoms was arrested for DUI)

Ineligible current charges or previous convictions (per RCW 2.30)

Serious violent offense or sex offense as defined in RCW 9.94A.030.

Alleging intentional discharge, threat to discharge, or attempt to discharge a firearm in furtherance of the offense.

Vehicular homicide or an equivalent out-of-state offense.

Substantial or great bodily harm as defined in RCW 9A.04.110, or death of another person.