

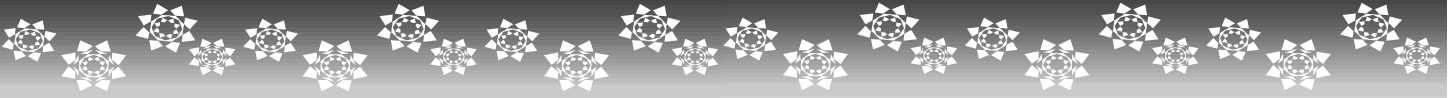


Strafford County Department of Corrections

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

February 2006

Published by Strafford County Jail Industries
Generously supported by a Justice Grant from the NH Bar Foundation



Dear Families,

I found this on the internet a couple of years ago and I felt it really expressed so much of what I was feeling. I am being allowed to share this with you. The title, "Until It Comes to Your Door", sums up the reaction one experiences when actually faced with this situation. I, like the author, never thought I would have a loved one incarcerated but I did – my son. It did indeed feel exactly like described below.

So, as I publish this first Family Newsletter, I pray it will comfort you somehow, knowing that others are aware of how difficult this situation can be for families. Please know that the snacks and materials offered at our Family Reception Center come from people who want to make this experience easier for you.

Peace,

Marilyn Allen
Strafford County DOC Industry Director
Family Reception Center Coordinator

Until It Comes To Your Door

Who would have ever thought my hands would strike these keys to speak of sorrows such as this. There is seldom a place of refuge or a place for compassion in a world that is ignorant to an experience such as this. We that come here to read, those of us that have in spirit gone to prison ourselves, serve time in a place so intimately our own for few can comprehend the depths of our loss. Though no one has died, we mourn, though no person has been laid to rest the fact of the matter is the person we once knew has left us forever and will never be the same – neither will we.

Who can know what it is like to manage a face of courage when inside your heart is screaming with fear and frustration? And how can any understand the prejudice that we encounter when others are appalled at the notion that we would associate ourselves with such degenerates. They do not know. They do not know this journey that we share as the casualties to the varying scenarios that brought our loved ones to incarceration. And oddly enough having once sat in that seat of innocent ignorance and condescendence what they really do not know, is that it can happen to anyone, even them.

Until it comes to your door, you can not imagine or remotely fathom the capacity this beast of agony has to torment your life – and although we have come here to share and expose to each other our commonalities in pain – each one of us silently cries specific tears that only God can understand. This we know, this we live and may God be with anybody who ever reads this and may He richly console you in your loss. May His promise of His peace that surpasses all understanding be with you.

The following is information on two new alternative sentencing options:

Strafford County Adult Drug Treatment Court Program

What are Drug Courts?

Drug courts started out as diversionary programs dealing with less-serious, non-violent offenders, typically charged with simple drug possession or under the influence charges. As drug courts have proven their effectiveness in controlling both the drug usage and criminality of drug-using offenders, communities successfully have expanded drug court programs to probationers, including drug-using offenders charged with non-drug offenses. As of 12/31/05 there were 1,621 drug courts in operation in the US. The number of operational drug courts has increased by 37% in the past year alone.

Drug Courts Provide a Viable Alternative

Not only do offenders benefit, but public safety is also strengthened through the monitoring and accountability that occurs in drug court. The offender attends an intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment program through Southeastern NH Services, along with life skills courses, random drug testing and judicial meetings. Drug court participants are monitored by the drug court team, led by the Judge. As the participants move through the phase schedule, they continue to meet with the Judge on a regularly scheduled basis. Drug courts across the country control participants' drug usage and activity through: frequent drug testing, intensive supervision and judicial monitoring and immediate sanctions that include terms of incarceration to respond to program violations. Drug courts also provide incentives to participants who comply with program requirements. This same population has historically not been motivated by the threat of incarceration alone. In fact, drug court participants find drug court more challenging than jail or prison. Research shows that drug courts lead to significant reductions in recidivism.

**The Strafford County Adult Drug Treatment Court Program will be a Post-Plea Drug Treatment Court, subject to an order vacating the conviction upon successful completion of the program followed by one year probation (pocket-plea.)*

**The target population of the Strafford County Adult Drug Treatment Court program will be adult individuals, diagnosed substance-abuse dependant, that have committed non-violent drug and drug-related property crimes and/or substance abuse-related violations of probation.*

Goals of Strafford County Adult Drug Treatment Court

1. Provide early screening, assessment and court intervention to offenders within the target population.
2. To provide effective court supervision.
3. To provide an integrated program of drug treatment and education, Monitoring and rehabilitation services.
4. To promote public safety by reducing recidivism

Who is Eligible for Strafford County Adult Drug Treatment Court?

Qualifiers

Offender Characteristics:

- *Strafford County Residents
- *Substance Use Diagnosis
- *Available Transportation
- *Cognitive/Physical ability to participate effectively
- *Stabilized Dual Diagnosis

Offense Characteristics:

- *Non-Violent Crimes
- *Drug & Drug-related Property Crimes
- *Substance-related Violations of Probation (VOP's)

Disqualifiers

Offender Characteristics:

- *Non Residents
- *Convicted Violent Offenders
- *Un-stabilized Dual Diagnosis
- *Methadone Maintenance
- *Unavailable transportation
- *Chronic illness, Cognitive and physical inability to participate effectively

Offense Characteristics:

- *Misdemeanor DWI's
- *Aggravated DWI's with 3rd party injury.
- *Violent Crimes
- *Drug Profiteers

For more information

contact:

**Carrie McGowan
Drug Court Coordinator
603-834-6198 or email:
cmcgowan@co.strafford.nh.us**

Residential Therapeutic Community at the Strafford County Department of Corrections

***Strafford County Department of Corrections has received funding for a residential "therapeutic community" for offenders housed at the jail.**

***Program space for 10 offenders will be in place for December 1, 2005.**

Program Framework

*Participants are housed in a separate housing unit that is removed from the general population. All participants share the common goal of substance abuse recovery

*A program counselor from SENHS is assigned to the program for up to 5 hours a day to oversee participants, conduct groups and individual sessions and set up activities for the group to complete during evening and weekend hours.

*During off hours, the program participants must complete peer support activities and assignments for the next day. All offenders complete specific assignments and treatment "phases" consisting of assignment modules, as well as individual and group counseling as indicated by individual's treatment plan. Admissions are rolling, offenders start as they are deemed acceptable.

*To provide 90 days of treatment for the full program, but participants can receive partial credit for milestones such as 30 and 60 days in the program as they meet specific competencies.

*Participants will also attend all normal jail programs such as education, life skills, anger management, vocational and enrichment programs as determined by their jail program plan.

Target Population

*Program can be used for a "Pre-Treatment" program for "borderline acceptable" clients of other intermediate sanction programs such as Academy, Community Corrections and Drug Court. Offenders can be assessed to determine motivation and suitability for less restrictive programs.

*Program can be used as a treatment alternative for offenders who are denied admission to traditional community based programs.

*Program can be used as a sanction for drug court or academy violators; the offender receives jail time for violation but still continues treatment and could be reassessed for re-entry into prior program.

Admission Criteria

*The courts and other stakeholders can recommend the program

*Offenders can apply on their own accord

*Program counselor and other stakeholders review applicants on a case by case basis to determine program admission and report program progress to stakeholders in intermediate sanction programs.

For More information

Contact:

**Jail Programs Dept: Officer Jake Collins
Project Manager
603-742-3310 or email:
jcollins@co.strafford.nh.us**

Exercising the Right To Vote



Every state has different laws regarding the right to vote after a felony conviction. Please see the list below to see what the laws are in your loved one's state:

No disfranchisement for felony convictions (prisoners may vote):

ME, PR, VT

Voting restored after release from prison:

DC, HI, IL, IN, MA, MI, MT, NH, ND, OH, OR, PA, SD, UT

Voting restored after release from prison and completion of parole (people on probation may vote):

CA, CO, CT, NY

Voting restored after completion of prison, parole and probation:

AK, AR, GA, ID, KS, LA, MN, MO, NE*, NJ, NM, NC, OK, RI, SC, TX, WV, WI

Permanent disfranchisement for some felony convictions, unless government approves individual rights restoration:

AZ, DE, MD, MS, NV, TN, WA, WY

Permanent disfranchisement for all felony convictions, unless government approves individual rights restoration:

AL, FL, IA, KY, VA

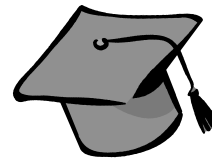
Tournaments

Some tournaments we have had are: handball, chess, basketball, and cards (spades). The inmates that have participated seem to enjoy it. We are going to have more of these in the upcoming year.

At this time I would like to thank everyone who makes these tournaments happen.

Thanks,
Lt. Sullivan

Record Number of GED Graduations



Stafford County Department of Corrections is pleased to announce that in 2005 there were a record number of GED graduates from our educational program!

In 2005, 44 inmates housed here successfully completed the GED exam and received the GED diploma. This is the highest number of graduates in the jail's history. The GED is nationally recognized as the equivalent of a high school diploma. Passing the GED can open up many new opportunities such as better jobs, college and technical school for graduates.

**Congratulations to all of the "Class of 2005"
for an outstanding job!**

Strafford County Public Defenders

Strafford County Attorney Randy Hawkes is Managing Attorney for the Public Defender's office for Strafford County. Jayne Young is Community Corrections Intake Coordinator. Attorney Hawkes responsibility is to protect and defend the rights of the indigent prisoner.

Public defenders represent indigent people charged with crimes, including everything from misdemeanors to murder. There is one public defender's office in every county in New Hampshire; the Strafford County office has 10 attorneys and their own investigators.

Defense attorneys counsel clients and act as their advocates to reach the most favorable outcome in each case. Defense counsel's role includes advising clients of all options, including negotiated dispositions and likelihood of prevailing if the case were taken to trial, as well as informing the client as to what a likely sentence may be if found guilty.

The Public Defenders (PD) Office handles only "court appointed" cases. A defendant may qualify for a PD whether the charge is a felony or a misdemeanor. When arraigned on a criminal charge, a defendant can fill out a financial affidavit and request a public defender. A formula based on earnings, savings, assets, and debt is used to determine whether an individual qualifies for a public defender. The client is responsible for paying set charges to the Office of Cost Containment according to the nature of the crime as follows:

- \$275.00 Misdemeanor
- \$756.25 Felony
- \$2,282.50 Serious Felony (AFSA, FSA, 1st Degree Assault)
- \$15,000.00 Murder

After the arraignment, a defendant may be released on personal recognizance or held on cash bail.

Jayne Young, Intake Coordinator for Strafford County Community Corrections, works closely with the public defenders office on alternative conditions of bail.

On Bail:

Bail, in its simplest of forms is to ensure the defendants appearance to court for all future proceedings and to ensure the safety and security of the person, any other person and the community.

Types of Bail:

Bail conditions are tailored by the Judge on a case by case basis and can range from Personal Recognizance to a Cash only bail. Bail Supervision is used when the Judge believes the defendant does not need to be in jail but needs a little more supervision than just the promise of the defendant. The level of supervision is initially set by the Community Corrections Intake Coordinator but may be adjusted by the defendant's case worker, depending on the defendant's behavior and attitude.

If the court appoints a public defender, the PD Office will contact an incarcerated defendant ASAP, usually within 24 hours of appointment.

If a defendant wants his lawyer to be able to talk with anyone other than the defendant, he/she should write a letter to the lawyer authorizing the lawyer to discuss his/her case with his family, girlfriend, or any other person. This is important because – absent that authorization – the lawyer will not discuss the client's case with anyone other than the client. This is known as attorney-client privilege.

If a family member wants to make the lawyer aware of some particular medical / psychiatric / substance abuse issue a defendant is dealing with, they are free to call the attorney to discuss the matter. If appropriate, and cleared with the defendant, the PD will discuss the issue with the administrators of the jail.

If a defendant cannot make bail, he/she should avoid talking with anyone other than defense counsel about his/her case while incarcerated. Public defender attorneys will keep them updated on any developments in their case.

You should feel free to call the PD Office if there is something you want to discuss with your loved one's lawyer. However, you should bear in mind that the PD Attorneys are often in court or meeting with clients. If the attorney is unavailable, your call may not be "accepted". That does not mean that your loved one's attorney doesn't want to speak with you; it simply means that your loved one's attorney is unavailable (in court/in conference/or with another client) at the time you called.

If your loved one is indigent and not assigned a public defender, he/she will be assigned a contract attorney or another court appointed attorney. You should bear in mind that a defendant does not get to choose his attorney when receiving court appointed counsel.

Sometimes a defendant may be assigned an attorney other than a public defender. In some cases the public defender's office may have a conflict of interest. There can be a number of reasons that create a conflict (such as multiple defendants involved in the same crime, or prior representation of a victim of the charged crime). Do not take it personally as it has nothing to do with your loved one.

If your loved one does not hear from their court appointed counsel within a reasonable period of time, he/she may feel free to call or write to that attorney, asking him/her to please contact your loved one. If your loved one still does not hear from their attorney, they can write a motion to the court requesting new counsel. In the motion they should state the day they were arrested, how long they have been in jail, the attorney's name, and attempts they have made to contact their attorney.