

Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project

Anchorage Mental Health Court

What is the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project (ACRP)?

The Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project (ACRP) - also known as the Anchorage Mental Health Court - is a voluntary “therapeutic” or “problem-solving” court located within the Anchorage District Court that hears cases involving individuals diagnosed with mental disabilities who are charged with misdemeanor offenses and focuses on their treatment and rehabilitation.

Created in 1998, the ACRP is a post booking diversionary response to the problem of “criminalization” - or an increased likelihood that people with mental disabilities will be processed through the criminal justice system instead of the mental health system. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the Alaska Court System provide funding for the project.

What is the Purpose of the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project?

The mission of the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project (ACRP), also known as the Anchorage Mental Health Court, is to divert people with mental disabilities charged with misdemeanor offenses from incarceration and into appropriate community treatment and services to prevent further contacts with the criminal justice system.

Defendants who experience mental disabilities are more frequently jailed and detained longer than defendants who do not. Jail is rarely a therapeutic environment for people experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Those who are engaged in treatment have been found to cycle through jails and psychiatric hospitals far less often than those that are not engaged.

Objectives of the Anchorage Community Resources Project:

- Promote public safety
 - Reduce inappropriate incarceration of offenders with mental health disorders and promote their well being in the community
 - Relieve the burden on the Alaska Department of Corrections presented by inmates with mental health disabilities
- Reduce repeated criminal activity among mentally disabled offenders (legal recidivism)
- Reduce psychiatric hospitalization of mentally disabled offenders (clinical recidivism).

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for participation in the ACRP, a defendant must be:

- Charged with a misdemeanor offense with no felony charges, or on felony probation
- A person who experiences mental illness; mental retardation or similar disabilities; chronic alcoholism with psychosis; or Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia
- A resident within the Municipality of Anchorage and eligible to receive community treatment services
- Willing to voluntarily participate in an individualized treatment plan in lieu of traditional bail or sentencing conditions

How does the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project work?

Collaboration: The Project involves a team of designated and specially trained judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and case coordinators who consistently participate in court hearings and monitors participants' progress.

Community Based Treatment:

Defendants receive assistance from the project in developing, coordinating, and monitoring an individualized community treatment plan. The court orders the plan as a condition of bail or probation. Coordination and monitoring of the plan is provided by the Department of Correction's Jail Alternative Services (JAS) case coordinators (2), or the Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) case coordinator.

Extra Supervision and Court

Monitoring: In regular district court, there is no provision for active monitoring of regular misdemeanor probation. The ACRP problem solving court provides continued supervision through hands-on monitoring of the defendant's treatment plan through regularly held status hearings. The court hears reports on the defendant's progress in treatment and provides incentives or sanctions as needed to motivate treatment adherence.

Invitation:

Court is open to the public and anyone may observe the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project Hearings.

Judge Stephanie Rhoades
Courtroom 204
Tuesday and Thursday at 2:30 P.M.

Judge John Lohff
Courtroom 203
Wednesday at 2:30 P.M.

Nesbett Courthouse
825 West 4th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Referral Process

Anyone can make a referral to the Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project. Police, corrections staff, lawyers, friends, family members, community behavioral health providers, judges, and court staff can alert the Project Coordinator that a defendant may be eligible to have his or her case heard in this therapeutic court.

For more information on court observation days and times, or to make a referral, contact the Project Coordinator at (907) 264-0886.

The Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project is a cooperative effort of:

- Alaska Court System
- Alaska Department of Corrections
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Alaska Office of Public Advocacy
- Alaska Department of Law
- Alaska Public Defender Agency
- Anchorage Municipal Prosecutor's Office
- Law Firm of Gorton, Logue & Graper
- Criminal Defense Attorneys
- Community Behavioral Health Providers
- Consumers and Family Members

For more information:

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