



**STATE OF FLORIDA**  
**SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**  
Flagler, Putnam, St. Johns & Volusia Counties  
125 E. Orange Ave., Rm. 200  
**Daytona Beach, Florida 32114**

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Media contacts:  
Mark Weinberg, 386-257-6097  
David Hunt, 386-248-8172

### **Seventh Judicial Circuit at the forefront of innovative justice solutions**

For over two decades the Seventh Judicial Circuit's problem-solving courts have played a significant role in the community by restoring lives, strengthening families, and enhancing community safety. The Seventh Judicial Circuit – which spans Flagler, Putnam, St. Johns, and Volusia counties – has several problem-solving courts, including drug, veterans, and DUI courts. These specialized courts provide a focused and collaborative approach, bringing together public safety and health professionals to address complex issues such as substance abuse, mental illness, and related challenges within the criminal justice system.

"The impact of problem-solving courts extends far beyond individual legal matters; they represent a fundamental shift," said Chief Judge Leah R. Case. "By fostering partnerships and emphasizing treatment and support, these courts not only reduce recidivism, but also empower individuals to lead productive, fulfilling lives."

Research consistently demonstrates the effectiveness of problem-solving courts in improving treatment outcomes and reducing costs. Since their inception, problem-solving courts across the Seventh Judicial Circuit have achieved significant milestones.

#### **St. Johns County Problem-Solving Courts:**

##### **Drug Court:**

- Established in 2002; 280 individuals completed program requirements to date.
- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 95% of the 20 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judge: St. Johns County Court Judge Alexander R. Christine Jr.

##### **Veterans Court:**

- Began in 2017; 96 justice-involved veterans completed program requirements to date.
- From 2020 to 2022, recidivism data shows that 100% of the 11 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judge: Seventh Judicial Circuit Judge Howard O. McGillin Jr.

#### **Volusia County Problem-Solving Courts:**

##### **Drug Court:**

- Began in 1997; 1,320 individuals charged with drug offenses completed program requirements to date.

- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 58% of the 55 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judges: Effective May 6, 2024, Seventh Judicial Circuit Judge A. Kathleen McNeilly will succeed Seventh Judicial Circuit Judge Randell H. Rowe III as a presiding judge, alongside Seventh Judicial Circuit Judge Elizabeth A. Blackburn.

**DUI Court:**

- Began in 2012; 236 impaired driving defendants completed program requirements to date.
- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 92% of the 24 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judge: Volusia County Court Judge Wesley Heidt

**Veterans Court:**

- Began in 2013; 656 justice-involved veterans completed program requirements to date.
- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 81% of the 52 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judges: Volusia County Court Judge Bryan Feigenbaum and Volusia County Court Judge Robert A. Sanders Jr.

**Flagler County Problem-Solving Court:**

**Drug Court:**

- Began in 2006; 232 graduates completed program requirements to date.
- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 67% of the 21 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Seventh Judicial Circuit Court Judge Terence R. Perkins

**Putnam County Problem-Solving Court:**

**Drug Court:**

- Began in 2002; 249 graduates completed program requirements to date.
- Recidivism data from 2020 to 2022 reveals that 83% of the 6 2020 graduates remained arrest-free.
- Presiding Judge: Putnam County Court Judge Elizabeth A. Morris

These achievements underscore the collaborative efforts of judges, attorneys, treatment professionals, law enforcement, community supervision personnel, researchers, and educators who unite to create healing communities and promote positive change.

Throughout May, "Problem-Solving Court Month," the Seventh Judicial Circuit encourages community engagement, awareness-building, and support for these transformative court programs.