



National Treatment Court Month **TOOLKIT**

MAY 2025





Dear treatment court family,

At All Rise, National Treatment Court Month is our favorite time of the year. The powerful, positive stories of treatment court success lift our movement and motivate us every day.

The 2025 National Treatment Court Month Toolkit is your guide to sharing your success. Inside this kit and [on our website](#), you'll find a wealth of information on ways you can bring attention to your programs. Through proclamations, op-eds, and more, you can share your success with your local community, statewide, and across the country. Our samples will help ensure that elected officials, the public, and the media are aware of how vital treatment courts are in cutting crime, saving money, and making our neighborhoods safe.



During National Treatment Court Month and all year round, thank you for proving that when one person rises, we all rise.

Sincerely,

Carson Fox
CEO, All Rise



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National Treatment Court Month is our chance to celebrate the work of recovery happening in adult, family, juvenile, tribal healing to wellness, impaired driving, and veterans treatment courts nationwide, engage our stakeholders, and inspire our communities. Now is the time to start planning! The earlier you plan, the greater your impact will be.

Ways You Can Make an Impact

- **Hold a graduation ceremony:** Graduations are the most effective way to build support in the community and among elected officials. Consider holding a graduation event in May. Invite local, state, and federal officials and the media to see the positive effects of your program on the community. Elected officials' schedules fill up months in advance, so you need to send event invitations soon! [Click here for tips.](#)
- **Write an op-ed:** Submit an opinion piece to your local, state, and regional newspapers to share your success. National Treatment Court Month is a great hook for op-eds, and outlets will likely publish what you send them. [Click here to get started.](#)
- **Issue a proclamation:** A Treatment Court Month proclamation is a great way to garner city, county, or state support. Proclamations can also help generate media coverage. [Click here for a sample.](#)

Tell All Rise about your events: We want to amplify your success at the national level. Whether you're holding a graduation ceremony, celebrating a major milestone, participating in a proclamation or press conference, doing a community service event, holding a fundraiser, or finding another creative way to engage your community, we want to share it.

Tell us how your program is celebrating National Treatment Court Month: Submit your media coverage, event photos, proclamations, videos, and more.

SUBMIT



Elected Officials

There's no better way to build lasting support for your program than by holding a graduation ceremony and inviting elected officials—such as your members of Congress, governor, state legislators, or other elected officials—to attend.

Here Are the Steps

- 1. Invite the media.** Graduations are great events to invite the media to show the positive impact on your community. Let elected officials know the media is invited and offer to work with their communications staff to provide quotes and interviews. See the instructions for sending a media advisory on [page 6](#).
 - 2. Thank your supporters.** If your members of Congress or other elected officials have been particularly vocal and public in their support of treatment courts, consider presenting them with an award acknowledging their leadership on public health and public safety issues.
 - 3. Send the invitation.**
 - [Click here](#) to get contact information for your elected officials.
 - [Click here](#) to view the congressional calendar to know when your members will be in their districts.
 - Call the Washington, D.C. office and ask to speak to the person handling judiciary issues.
- When speaking to the staff person:
 - Introduce yourself. Tell them a little about your treatment court.
 - Invite your official to attend and deliver the keynote address for your program's graduation ceremony or other event.
 - Provide the date, time, and location information.
 - Ask for the scheduler's contact information.
 - Follow up with an email to the staff person and the scheduler:
 - Adapt the [sample event invitation](#) and attach it to the email.
 - Send background information on your treatment court (a brochure, local news story, or video of a graduate or graduation).
 - Follow up after a few days to confirm receipt.
 - If one or more of your elected officials agrees to attend, let them know you plan to send a media advisory, as their offices may need to review it before sending.

- 4. We're here to help.** If your elected official agrees to attend the event, contact legaffairs@allrise.org. We can help promote your event with the press and social media, assist with local and national talking points, and more.
- 5. After the event, send a personal thank-you letter.** Consider asking your graduates and participants to send letters of appreciation and/or thank the elected officials on social media.

Graduations are a perfect opportunity to highlight your success to members of Congress!



New Mexico's 11th Judicial District Treatment Court holds a graduation ceremony in May 2024.



Media

Your court's graduation ceremony or community event is newsworthy! Start planning now so you have an event the media can't wait to cover.

To make sure your court is prepared to manage the media and the message, designate a media coordinator and a spokesperson for your court. The media coordinator is responsible for identifying and contacting media for your court. The media spokesperson is the individual providing quotes and interviews to the media. The spokesperson must be knowledgeable about your court and able to speak from a position of authority. This is often the judge but could be another key member of the team.

Three Ways to Get Noticed

1. Send a media advisory.

- Adapt our [sample media advisory](#) and identify which media outlets to contact, including local, state, and regional. If you've worked with reporters in the past or know of reporters covering relevant issues or topics, reach out to them directly. Otherwise, contact the outlet and ask for the assignment desk.
- Email your advisory to each media outlet 5 to 10 days prior to the event. Include the advisory in the body of the email, not as an attachment.
- Make repeated follow-up calls and send follow-up emails. This is often what it takes to get noticed.

2. Write an op-ed.

- Start by adapting our [sample op-ed](#). Give your graduation ceremony or community event an extra news hook by including a unique graduate story or anecdote. Include compelling data or statistics on your program's success to demonstrate the positive impact your court has on the community.
- Know the word limit. Check the specific outlet's op-ed guidelines, usually 500 to 700 words.
- Humanize your piece. Anecdotes and personal stories help illustrate and bring clarity to complicated issues. Use names only with permission.
- Make a single strong point clearly and persuasively. Your first paragraph should draw the reader in, but if you choose to open with an anecdote, get to the point quickly.

Your graduations and other events are newsworthy!

- Make a specific recommendation about what's needed to ensure your court can operate effectively.
- End with a bang. Your final paragraph is as important as your opening paragraph and should summarize your argument.
- Follow up. If you haven't had a response from the opinion editor in one week, or if your piece is time-sensitive, follow up with a phone call to be sure it was received, and ask about its status.

3. Issue a proclamation.

- Ask your governor, county commissioners, city council, mayor, or even judge to make a proclamation declaring May as Treatment Court Month. Get started with our [sample proclamation](#).

We're here to help! If you need assistance with media outreach or drafting an op-ed or media advisory, contact communications@allrise.org.



Denton County, Texas, declares May as Treatment Court Month in 2024.



Social Media

Social media is one of the best ways to make your court program visible to the community it serves. Done right, social media is an indispensable tool to promote your impact, engage elected officials, broaden support, strategically connect with partner agencies, and make your voices heard.

Ways to Make Social Media Work for You

- 1. Use what's already in place.** If your state Supreme Court, judicial district, or circuit have social media accounts, reach out to the individuals responsible for them and ask them to help you promote National Treatment Court Month by sharing your program's positive news, events, and success stories.
- 2. Get the attention of elected officials.** Most elected officials and all members of Congress have social media accounts. You can find their social media information here. Don't forget to thank them publicly for their support, especially if they attend your event!
- 3. Let us help you.** Get started with our [sample posts](#); be sure to include photos and videos whenever possible! Be sure to [send us](#) your photos, videos, and media coverage so that we can promote what you're doing during National Treatment Court Month.

Tap into All Rise resources.

Use the [samples](#) provided to generate content. Our [YouTube channel](#) also has our powerful [Voices of Reform](#) video series, [celebrity PSAs](#), [RISE clips](#), [media compilation videos](#), and much more.

Remember that posts on social media (including text, photos, and videos) are public content. Whenever possible, obtain a signed photo release from the featured individual(s). Put a system in place to ensure that content posted or shared is factual, appropriate, and in accordance with the principles and responsibilities of your court and the U.S. judicial system.

Creative Events

Want your program to get noticed? You can promote National Treatment Court Month and your treatment court in numerous ways that don't include a graduation ceremony. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Donation drive: Choose a local food bank, community shelter, or charity and hold a donation drive throughout the month of May. Use this opportunity to connect with local business owners and garner support for your court program. Get your court participants involved in collecting and dropping off donations!

Recovery walk, run, or bike ride:

This is a fun community event that can easily become an annual tradition and fundraising opportunity.

Sports competition: Host a softball game, golf tournament, or other sporting event. Pit participants and alumni against court staff or law enforcement. Consider making it an annual tradition; make team shirts and award trophies!



Georgia's Dekalb County Accountability Court participants and staff hold a community cleanup event in May 2024.

Outdoor community cleanup project:

Invite your community to join treatment court staff, participants, program alumni, and family members cleaning up a local park, roadway, or school grounds. This is a great opportunity for community service hours.

Please plan your event in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, any liability insurance, permit, and licensing or law enforcement/traffic control requirements. As you select, plan, and implement your events, be sure to comply with local, state, and federal guidelines and protocols, ensuring the safety and health of all event planners, participants, and attendees.



Treatment court participants and staff from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands team up for a softball tournament in May 2024.



Planning Checklist

Want to make sure you've got everything covered in preparation for May? Use this checklist to help with planning, advertising, and engaging your community during the month's events. You can find samples for the resources below on our [National Treatment Court Month webpage](#).

- Schedule your court's next graduation ceremony during the month of May.
- Schedule other National Treatment Court Month events to engage your community stakeholders. [Click here for ideas](#).
- Invite your elected officials to attend your graduation ceremony or other event(s) virtually or in person.
- If your member of Congress or governor plans to attend, notify legaffairs@allrise.org and communications@allrise.org.
- Send a media advisory to your list of targeted media outlets 5 to 10 days before each event you hold.
- Prepare and submit an op-ed to your list of targeted print media outlets.
- Prepare a proclamation for your state and local leaders.
- Send the latest national treatment court [talking points](#) and/or statistics about your court program to hand to elected officials and media that attend your graduation ceremony or other event(s).
- [Send us](#) your milestones, stories, news media clips, and event photos and/or videos so that we can share your accomplishments with others.
- Send news media clips to your elected officials, and include a thank-you letter if they attended your graduation ceremony or other event(s).



Participants and staff from Oklahoma's Cleveland County Treatment Court prepare and deliver lunches for families in need in their community in May 2024.



Talking Points

Below are some treatment court messaging points for consideration when working with elected officials, the media, and your community. These points are easily adapted and enhanced by adding your specific program's statistics to demonstrate success.

- Treatment courts cut crime and save taxpayer dollars by holding individuals with substance use and mental health disorders accountable through a combination of treatment and rigorous supervision. They increase tax revenue by increasing the number of employed, tax-paying citizens in our communities.
- National Treatment Court Month is led by All Rise, the training, membership, and advocacy organization for justice system innovation addressing substance use and mental health at every intercept point.
- National Treatment Court Month honors effective alternatives to incarceration for individuals with substance use and mental health disorders; it's also a celebration of the lives transformed, communities made safer, and tax dollars saved.
- There are now more than 4,000 treatment courts in the United States. ([Click here](#) for more details and interactive maps.)
- Treatment courts unite public safety and public health to prevent fatal overdoses, strengthen families, and make communities safer.
- According to All Rise, treatment courts annually refer more than 150,000 people to lifesaving treatment and recovery support services.
- Treatment court participants have lower recidivism than non-participants, with an average drop in recidivism ranging from 50% to 38%.
- Research has shown that treatment courts save an average of more than \$6,000 for every individual they serve.
- Treatment courts produce economic benefits from reduced costs in court and prison expenditures, increased tax revenues, lowered foster care expenses, and decreased costs related to victimization.
- According to All Rise, treatment courts are the single most successful intervention in our nation's history for leading people with substance use and mental health disorders out of the justice system and into lives of stability, where they are gainfully employed citizens who pay taxes and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

All Rise Statements

- When one person rises, we all rise.
- When one person rises out of addiction and into recovery, we all rise.
- When a veteran receives the benefits and treatment they've earned, we all rise.
- When our roads are safe from impaired driving, we all rise.
- When a child gets their parent back, we all rise.
- When we reduce fatal overdoses, we all rise.
- When we work together to promote public health and public safety, we all rise.
- When a young person is given the opportunity to change their future, we all rise.
- When tribal members are restored to their communities, we all rise.



Treatment court advocates hold a rally at the Minnesota State Capitol in May 2024.



**Treatment
Court Institute**
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**Impaired
Driving Solutions**
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**Justice
for Vets**
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**Center for
Advancing Justice**
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Treatment courts perform their duties without manifestation, by word or conduct, of bias or prejudice, including, but not limited to, bias or prejudice based on race, gender, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, or socioeconomic status.

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