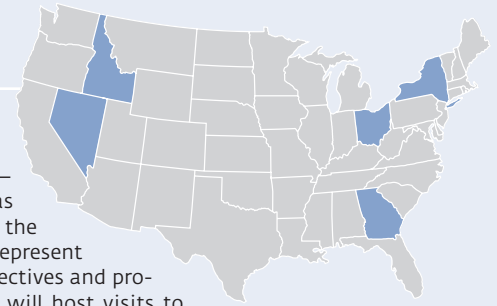


## MENTAL HEALTH COURT LEARNING SITES

**About the Mental Health Court Learning Sites.** The number of mental health courts (MHCs) in the U.S. has grown exponentially over the past decade. State and local officials who have recently launched—or are considering whether to launch—such programs in their jurisdictions often seek out more experienced MHCs for guidance and advice.

To facilitate peer-to-peer assistance among jurisdictions that have established, or are planning to establish, MHCs, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)—through its technical assistance provider, the Council

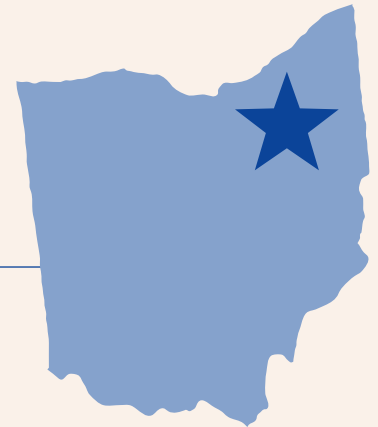
of State Governments (CSG)—has designated five MHCs as “learning sites.” Located across the country, these learning sites represent a diverse cross-section of perspectives and program examples. Learning sites will host visits to their courts and respond to telephone/email inquiries from the field.



# Akron, Ohio Mental Health Court

Established in **2001**

**Approximately 100 participants** are under MHC supervision on any given day



### NOTABLE FEATURES

- Targets only people whose offenses are serious enough to warrant at least 60 days in jail
- Operates in a medium-sized jurisdiction that also has a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)
- Works with Kent State University to collect data and evaluate the program; findings due in 2007
- Collaborates with a small number of community mental health and substance abuse service providers, one of which is directly involved in program management
- Provides mandatory “cross-system training” to all MHC personnel twice per year
- Maintains separate mental health and criminal justice files for participants
- Allows for the possibility of vacating guilty pleas/sentences and dismissing cases upon successful program completion

## ADMINISTRATION

- **Planning:** Designed by a “criminal justice forum” that was also involved with the creation of the CIT
- **MHC team:** Comprises a municipal court judge, a program manager (who is also the chief probation officer for the Akron Municipal Court), a court liaison, a clinical director (who is a psychiatrist), a treatment manager, and five “community living specialists”  
—Meets extensively on a weekly basis to discuss cases and make decisions about program participant

## ELIGIBILITY

- Accepts participants with misdemeanor charges and an Axis I diagnosis of bi-polar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, or schizophrenia
- Screens potential participants for competency before acceptance to the program, and when necessary, restores competency before entrance into the program

## TREATMENT AND OTHER SERVICES

- Uses Community Support Services (CSS), a mental health treatment and social services agency (which is directly involved in program management) and Oriana House, a chemical dependency treatment and community corrections agency (which is not directly involved in program operations) as its primary community-based treatment providers
- Brokers services that include psychiatric counseling, case management, vocational training, assistance with housing, medical benefits, and residential support

## FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Secured the support of community service providers and municipal agencies, who provide treatment and services to participants
- Receives funding annually from the county’s Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Board

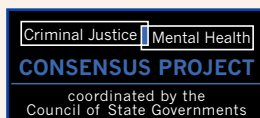
To learn more about the Akron Mental Health Court, see the program’s long overview at: <http://consensusproject.org/mhcp/> or contact:

Anthony Ingram  
Chief Probation Officer  
Akron Municipal Mental Health Court  
(330) 375-2760 x. 3316  
ingrato@ci.akron.oh.us

The Mental Health Court Learning Sites are a part of the technical assistance offered by BJA’s Mental Health Courts Program (MHCP). Information about the MHCP and mental health courts generally can be found at <http://consensusproject.org/mhcp/>.

To learn more about the Mental Health Court Learning Sites, visit <http://consensusproject.org/mhcp> or contact:

**Lauren Almquist**  
Research Assistant  
Council of State Governments  
(646) 383-5743  
[lalmquist@csg.org](mailto:lalmquist@csg.org)



To download other mental health court resources, please visit <http://consensusproject.org/mhcp/info/mhresources/pubs/>:

- *The Essential Elements of a Mental Health Court*
- *A Guide to Mental Health Court Design and Implementation*
- *A Guide to Collecting Mental Health Court Outcome Data*
- *Navigating the Mental Health Maze*

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