

Coordinator hired for Leavenworth County Veterans Treatment Court

OFFICE OF LEAVENWORTH COUNTY ATTORNEY
TODD THOMPSON, COUNTY ATTORNEY
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LEAVENWORTH COUNTY, Kan. --- The Leavenworth County Attorney's Office and the First Judicial District Court are pleased to announce Abigail Allman has been named Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator for the Leavenworth County Veterans Treatment Court.

As Court Coordinator, Allman will be responsible for coordinating all participants and entities involved in the treatment court, including the Veterans Administration, veteran mentors, treatment providers, and the justice-involved veterans.

Allman comes to the Leavenworth County Attorney's Office after previously working for the Johnson County Mental Health Department in Olathe, Kansas.

The Leavenworth County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) is scheduled to begin operations later this year. Funding for this specialty court was made possible when Leavenworth County Attorney Thompson and Assistant County Attorney Christopher Lyon secured a federal grant of \$1 million offered by U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran. The grant fund is expected to fully cover four years of court services in Leavenworth County.

County Attorney Thompson said, "This is a great opportunity for our veterans, the people who sacrificed to assure our safety."

The VTC is a specialty court for justice-involved veterans who are charged with criminal offenses in Leavenworth County District Court. VTC offers supervised treatment and supportive services as an alternative to incarceration. As part of VTC, the County Attorney's Office offers VTC Diversion, which is intended to give a "second chance" to veterans who have committed criminal offenses deemed eligible for diversion within the court. The primary objective of VTC is to promote public safety by providing an inter-agency, collaborative, non-adversarial treatment strategy to veterans in the criminal justice system who suffer from mental health and/or substance abuse issues related to their service in our armed forces.

For more information about volunteer opportunities, please email Abigail.Allman@kscourts.org.



(Pictured left to right) Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson, VTC Coordinator Abigail Allman and Assistant County Attorney Christopher Lyon

Additional information regarding VTC:

The VTC is voluntary. Eligibility will be determined before any hearings as strict guidelines for acceptance into the specialty court will be followed. The VTC may accept veterans charged with either felony or misdemeanor offenses, subject to limitations.

Offenses and offenders excluded from participation in VTC:

- Off-grid offenses
- Felony sex crimes
- Registered sex offenders
- Offenses involving serious bodily harm or death
- Offenses requiring interstate compact supervision

To qualify for VTC Diversion, a defendant must have served in the armed forces of the United States of America and: 1) live in the state of Kansas and be eligible to receive benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or 2) be a resident of Leavenworth County, Kansas. There is no guarantee diversion will be granted in any given case. The needs of the offender are less important than those of public safety and the rights of the victim(s).

In determining whether to grant diversion, the County Attorney will consider whether the defendant demonstrates a genuine sense of remorse and is prepared to acknowledge the act(s) charged and accountability for the consequences of their actions. Two assessments will be completed, and if the need for treatment has been determined, a formal conference with the veteran and the VTC Team will be scheduled to decide if the veteran will be approved for VTC Diversion.

The VTC involves five phases, each phase involves less oversight of the justice-involved veteran while placing more accountability on the veteran. During the phases, each veteran is tested for drug and alcohol use a minimum of twice per week. Each veteran is assigned a veteran mentor who will act as an advocate. Each veteran is “incentivized” to continue participation. Each veteran, who fails to adhere to the rules, may be sanctioned with termination from VTC. The final stage includes graduation from VTC. Upon satisfactorily completing requirements, participants will graduate in a ceremony conducted in court – charges will be officially dismissed and diversions will be completed.

Contact countyattorney@leavenworthcounty.gov for additional information, or questions.