

## How does the Veterans Treatment Court work?

With the passage of SB 1940, Bexar County staff, Veterans groups, representatives from the Veterans Administration and other interested persons designed and implemented the Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court. The Veterans Court docket is called in County Court at Law #6.

The Court promotes sobriety, recovery and stability through a coordinated response that involves the cooperation and collaboration with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care networks, the Veterans Benefits Administration, volunteer Veteran mentors, Veterans family support organizations, the Center for Health Care Services and the Bexar County Veterans Services Office.

Based on the successful Drug Court model, the Veterans Treatment Court will serve Veterans struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), addiction, mental illness and/or co-occurring disorders. **The long term goal of this problem solving court is the restoration of the veteran's quality of life and the reduction of conflicts that might lead to additional incarceration events. This goal will be accomplished by providing the veteran with the treatment and supportive services.**

The Veterans Treatment Court has a case management component that promotes service coordination and easier access to services such as employment, education, housing, and benefits counseling. The Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court is the first in the County to have a pre-trial diversion component.

For Veterans who are accepted for the **pre-trial component (Track I)** of the Veterans Court, successful completion of the Veterans Court program will mean that their case will be dismissed with no criminal conviction on their record. Participation in the program is generally one year.

For Veterans who are accepted in the **probation component (Track II)**, the veteran is expected to participate in and comply with the treatment plan and terms of probation. Generally, the term of probation is one year.

The Veteran's compliance will determine how often the Veteran must meet with the Judge and the other members of the treatment team.

Substance abuse and mental health services are provided by the Veterans Administration. Under certain circumstances, substance abuse and mental health services can be provided by community partners.

### What is the Eligibility Criteria for the Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court?

#### Defendant must:

- have a pending misdemeanor offense(s)
- be a veteran, on active duty or in the reserves or National Guard
- be a resident of Bexar County, Texas, or an adjacent county or be eligible for courtesy supervision by a Texas VTC program
- have a mental illness or substance abuse disorder,
- or if a defendant whose participation in a veterans treatment court program, is likely to achieve the objective of ensuring public safety through rehabilitation of the veteran
- the consent of the victim is required to proceed, if applicable

The District Attorney has final approval for eligibility. All misdemeanor cases will be reviewed for acceptance on case by case basis.

“Bexar County’s very own Veterans Treatment court represents this community’s dedication to the men and women who wear our nation’s uniform. In acknowledging the unique needs of our combat veterans, Bexar County has come together and proven yet again why San Antonio can proudly and rightly call itself ‘Military City USA’.”

- Former Senator Van de Putte



“Jail is not a place for nonviolent offenders who are committing crimes as a result of mental illness or substance abuse, which are treatable illnesses and not crimes. We’ve found through our Drug Courts that if we treat the root cause of a person’s criminal behavior, their drug addiction or mental illness, that person is less likely to return to jail or prison.”

- County Judge Nelson W. Wolff

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court is to assist Veterans and their families to become integral and productive members of the community through a collaborative effort. To honor them and restore their dignity for their selfless service to our country, we shall leave no veteran behind.

### **The Honorable Wayne Christian**

Wayne Christian was elected Judge of County Court at Law No. 9 in 1996, serving for six years. During that time, his court disposed of more criminal cases (over 30,000), tried more jury trials (over 300), and recovered the most restitution for victims of any county court in Bexar County history. He established the Family Violence Impact Court and the RECON (Recognizing Career Opportunities From Your Nation) probation program. Christian additionally volunteered to serve as an Associate Civil District Court Judge handling family law matters. Christian has served for over 30 years as a Certified Texas Peace Officer, Criminal Justice Prosecutor, Criminal Defense Counsel and Texas State Judge. He has been an Adjunct Instructor for the San Antonio Police Academy and is presently an Adjunct Professor of Law and Consultant for the Center For Terrorism Law at St. Mary's University School of Law. Christian is a native of San Antonio and a graduate of Alamo Heights High School, Trinity University and St. Mary's University School of Law. Recently retiring as a JAGC Colonel from the U.S. Army Reserve after a 30-year career, Christian is a combat veteran of the 3rd Special Forces Group who awarded him the Bronze Star Medal for his service in Afghanistan in 2003. As a result of his extensive military background, Christian is uniquely qualified to serve as the presiding Judge of the Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court and has held this position since 2011.

## VTC Contact Information

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### Social Media

#### **Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/BCVTC.LeaveNoVeteranBehind/>

#### **Website:**

<https://www.bexar.org/1085/Veterans-Treatment-Court>



This program is supported by the Texas Veterans Commission *Fund for Veterans' Assistance*. The *Fund for Veterans' Assistance* provides grants to organizations serving veterans and their families. For more information, visit: <https://TVC.Texas.gov>



This program is supported in part by a grant from the Office of the Texas Governor, Criminal Justice Division. For more information visit: <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/criminal-justice-division>

## BEXAR COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

### LEAVE NO VETERAN BEHIND!

**BEXAR CO. JUSTICE CENTER**  
300 DOLOROSA  
COUNTY COURT 6, 2ND FLOOR  
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78205