

New Mexico Drug/DWI Court Peer Review

The New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) seeks to establish a process to improve drug/DWI court program best practices and increase alignment with the New Mexico Drug Court Standards. The AOC has determined the development of a peer review learning community would help to accomplish these goals. The New Mexico Drug Court Standards are research-based, organized on the foundation of the 10 Key Components of Drug Courts, and include guidelines for policies and practices that will help ensure that programs provide access to treatment and other needed services, reduce recidivism, and remain cost effective.

What's the purpose?

The peer review process is intended to create a learning community in New Mexico among drug/DWI court teams. The idea is for peers to help each other identify ideas for program improvements and share successes and challenges. This will allow New Mexico's drug/DWI court community access to information and support at a low administrative cost while building relationships between programs. It will also provide important information to the AOC about areas of needed technical assistance and training, and how to focus those resources most effectively.

How does it work?

Individuals who are involved in a drug/DWI court will assess another program and provide feedback about that program's alignment with New Mexico Drug Court Standards. The peers will be trained in how to conduct the assessment, including an in-person visit to the other program, and compile the information into a simple report that includes suggestions and resource ideas. In turn, the peer will have the opportunity to learn about innovative and successful practices that have been implemented in another program.

The main activities involved in the peer review process include:

- Online survey about program characteristics, policies, and procedures completed by the program being reviewed.
- 2-day (or possibly 3-day) site visit where peers observe staffing and court hearings, interview team members and partner agency staff, talk with program participants, and review program documents.
- Review of performance measures.
- On-site debrief of assessment findings.
- Summary report of feedback, including a table of best practices and which ones the program is meeting, recommendations for program improvement, documentation of innovative/successful practices to share with other programs, and requests for future training or resources.
- Follow-up phone call with the program under review to discuss the report including additional findings, commendations, and recommendations that were not covered during the on-site debrief.

Who participates?

Peer reviews will occur every 3 years, and/or can be requested by the AOC for programs that do not meet criteria for certification. Peer review reports will be provided to the AOC, which will address any inconsistencies between the peer review and certification. They will also be used as an opportunity to provide support, technical assistance and additional information for both the AOC and the program to improve program operations. Peer review teams will include a judge and coordinator (who are not necessarily from the same court), at a minimum.