
California Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Plan

Moving Veterans Treatment Courts Forward

Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Plan
In collaboration with the Judicial Council of California's Collaborative Justice Courts
Advisory Committee

By the Center for Court Innovation

© November 2019
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Acknowledgements

This report was supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance through the State-Based Adult Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance grant (#2016-MU-BX-K015). Many thanks to our policy advisor Gregory D. Torain for his support throughout this project.

We extend our gratitude to the stakeholders and agency representatives who generously took the time to speak with us and to provide feedback on the policies and procedures of veterans treatment courts and other collaborative courts in California. Special thanks to Francine Byrne and Michael Roosevelt, the Judicial Council of California, the California Association of Collaborative Courts, and the strategic planning committee: Susann Adams, Steven Andrews, Steve Binder, Linda Benoit, Kellie Blumin, Danica Bogicevic, Sgt. Anthony Elliot, Deputy Magdalena Gomez, Jennifer Hard, Octavio Jimenez, Rosa Junqueiro, Harrison Kennedy, Honorable Eileen Moore, Chief Tina Nieto, David Shernoff, Allyson West, Dr. Kathleen West, and Brendon Woods.

At the Center for Court Innovation, thank you to Alejandra Garcia and Caitlin Flood for their tireless efforts in researching, writing, and editing this report, and Michael Friedrich for his work editing this report.

The opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and the members of the strategic planning committee and do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Bureau of Justice Assistance or the Center for Court Innovation State-Based Adult Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary	iii
Background	iv
Methodology	vii
Strategic Plan	1
Goal 1 Accurately identify justice-involved veterans in California.	1
Goal 2 Create clear guidelines for screening and eligibility for veterans treatment courts.	4
Goal 3 Identify national, state and local opportunities to provide role specific training for veterans treatment courts.	6
Goal 4 Educate justice-system leadership on veterans treatment courts.	8
Goal 5 Provide training and education to courts on how to better connect justice-involved veterans with services.	10
Goal 6 Clarify the roles and responsibilities of veterans treatment court team members including veterans justice outreach specialists.	11
Goal 7 Provide information to veterans treatment courts on funding sources.	14
Conclusion	16
References	17
Appendices	
Appendix A Action Plan	18
Appendix B Participation list of Judicial Council of California staff	23
Appendix C Strategic planning committee members	24
Appendix D Participation list of California Association of Collaborative Courts members	25

Executive Summary

This report details the results of the Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Planning Initiative in California, funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and conducted by the Center for Court Innovation (the Center) in conjunction with some members and staff of the Judicial Council of California's Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee (CJCAC) between January and June 2019. Through a comprehensive needs assessment, Center staff identified the strengths, resources, and challenges of California's veterans treatment courts, and offered guidance on how to support the planning of future courts. Following the needs assessment, the Center convened a two-day stakeholder workshop culminating in the creation of a comprehensive strategic plan. This report describes the goals and objectives developed through the strategic planning process, provides a rationale for each goal, and details the activities necessary to accomplish the plan. This strategic plan reflects months of research and collaboration between Center staff, the CJCAC, and a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders who represent the essential members of veteran treatment court teams. At the conclusion of the strategic planning process it was decided that the California Association of Collaborative Courts (CACC) is the entity best suited to receive and manage the passthrough funds.

Background

The Center for Court Innovation promotes new thinking about how the justice system can respond more effectively to issues like substance use, intimate partner violence, mental illness, and juvenile delinquency. The Center achieves its mission through a combination of operating programs, original research, and expert assistance. For over two decades, the organization has been intensively engaged in designing and implementing problem-solving courts, and each year, it responds to hundreds of requests for training and technical assistance and hosts hundreds more visitors at its operating programs. Its staff includes former prosecutors, defense counsel, probation officials, senior administrators of major criminal justice agencies, social workers, technology experts, researchers, victim advocates, and mediators. Under the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) Statewide Adult Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program, the Center provides training and technical assistance to statewide treatment court systems, helping state-level treatment court coordinators and other officials enhance the operation of drug courts and other treatment courts throughout their state.

History of United States Veterans Treatment Courts | There are approximately 18 million veterans living in the United States, representing over seven percent of the U.S. population.¹ Due to the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. faces an additional influx of veterans who return home grappling with new battles with mental illness, substance use, intimate partner violence, and homelessness. The over two million troops deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan display a significantly higher incidence of psychological damage than physical injuries.² Approximately one out of ten veterans returning from those conflicts has a substance use disorder³, and one in five has symptoms of a mental health disorder or cognitive impairment.⁴ By 2008, 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans had been diagnosed with depression or post-traumatic stress disorder⁵, both afflictions that have been shown to increase the likelihood of substance abuse and violent behavior. These conflicts have also resulted in an increased number of veterans who have experienced traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma. An average of one in four women and about one in 100 men have been reported victims of military sexual assault.⁶ As in the general population, veterans experiencing trauma, mental health disorders, or substance abuse problems frequently exhibit behavioral symptoms that place them at risk for justice-system involvement.⁷

The latest available data suggests an estimated 181,500 U.S. veterans are incarcerated in prisons and jails across the country.⁸ This represents approximately 8 percent of all inmates.⁹ According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, veterans in prison (23 percent) were twice as likely as nonveterans (11 percent) to report that a mental health professional told them they had post-traumatic stress disorder.¹⁰ A higher percentage of veterans (55 percent) than nonveterans (43 percent) in jail reported that, at some point in their lives, a mental health professional told them they had a mental disorder.¹¹ The most common disorder for veterans

¹ U.S. Census. <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

² Rajeev Ramchand, Benjamin R. Karney, Karen Chan Osilla, Rachel M. Burns, and Leah Barnes, "Prevalence of PTSD, Depression, and TBI Among Returning Servicemembers," in *Invisible Wounds of War: Psychological and Cognitive Injuries, Their Consequences, and Services to Assist Recovery*, 2008., 35–85. ("Although most service members return from Iraq and Afghanistan without physical injuries, many return with symptoms of PTSD or depression.")

³ Teeters, J.B., Lancaster, C.L., Brown, D.G., & Back, S.E. (2017). Substance use disorders in military veterans: prevalence and treatment challenges. *Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation*, 8, 69-77. doi:10.2147/SAR.S116720.

⁴ <https://justiceforvets.org/what-is-a-veterans-treatment-court/>

⁵ Rand Corporation. "One In Five Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Suffer from PTSD or Major Depression." <https://www.rand.org/news/press/2008/04/17.html>

⁶ Department of Defense. "Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military." 2018 https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/DoD_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf

⁷ Teeters, J. B., Lancaster, C. L., Brown, D. G., & Back, S. E. (2017). Substance use disorders in military veterans: prevalence and treatment challenges. *Substance abuse and rehabilitation*, 8, 69–77. doi:10.2147/SAR.S116720

⁸ U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Fewer Veterans in Prisons and Jails in 2011-12 Than 2004." News release, December 7, 2015. Fewer Veterans in Prisons and Jails in 2011-12 Than 2004. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/press/vpj1112pr.cfm>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

(34 percent) and nonveterans (30 percent) was major depressive disorder.¹² These numbers demonstrate the need for specific interventions for justice-involved veterans.

Because of these realities, many justice-system and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) professionals saw the need for alternative interventions and treatments for the veteran population, ones that would allow the justice system and its personnel to be more responsive to veterans' needs as they pass through the nation's police stations, courthouses, and jails. Veterans treatment courts have become a popular avenue for addressing these needs. The first such court began in Anchorage, Alaska, in 2004. The model gained traction in 2008 when the next veterans treatment court launched in Buffalo, New York, under the leadership of Judge Robert Russell. Between 2012 and 2016, the number of operational veterans treatment courts and veterans dockets within drug, mental health, or criminal courts grew from 168 to 461.¹³ "The Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Courts," developed by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals' Justice For Vets, provides the foundation for these court operations.¹⁴

The veterans treatment court model adopts many elements from the adult drug and mental health treatment court models, including frequent court appearances and individualized treatment plans. Programs offer substance use and mental health treatment to justice-involved veterans as an alternative to traditional case processing. They also often include alternatives to incarceration, case dismissal, reduction in charges, and reduction in supervision. One element of the veterans treatment court model that sets it apart from adult drug treatment court is the participation of veteran peer mentors. The camaraderie of fellow veterans, which taps into the unique aspects of military and veteran culture, is another distinctive component that may aid justice-involved veterans' program completion.

California ranks first in the nation for highest veterans population, with 1,681,730 veterans as of September 2017. Veterans comprise 6.10 percent of the total adult population, which is comparable to the national average of 6.6 percent. California has nine VA medical centers, 30 Vet Centers, and 62 community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs).

Veterans Treatment Court 2019 Statewide Strategic Planning Initiative | In 2019, BJA funded the Center to develop and implement statewide strategic plans for veterans treatment courts in five states. The project included three major components: (1) a needs assessment to identify each state's strengths, resources, and challenges; (2) an onsite strategic planning workshop with the state's planning committee to develop a strategic plan; and (3) a \$200,000 subaward to help the state implement specific parts of its strategic plan. California was one of five states selected for assistance after a competitive, nationwide application process.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "Veterans Court Inventory 2016 Update." News release, March 2017. Fact Sheet. <https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/VJO/2016-Veterans-Court-Inventory-Update-VJO-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

¹⁴ "Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Courts." Justice For Vets. March 29, 2017. <https://justiceforvets.org/resource/ten-key-components-of-veterans-treatment-courts/>.

Judicial Council of California’s Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee | The Judicial Council of California (JCC) is the constitutionally created policymaking body of the California courts, tasked with guiding fiscal policy and adopting court rules and procedures. The Judicial Council’s Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee (CJCAC) advises the Judicial Council on collaborative-justice (i.e., problem-solving) courts. The CJCAC also makes recommendations to the Judicial Council for developing collaborative-justice courts, improving case processing, and overseeing the evaluation of such courts throughout the state. CJCAC’s Veterans in the Court and Military Families subcommittee makes recommendations to the full committee related to veterans treatment courts and veterans issues.

Today, California has a robust network of veterans treatment courts, with 34 spread across 30 of the state’s 58 counties. The first veterans treatment court in the state was established in 2008, and the majority of veterans treatment court operations are five to six years old. Considering the proliferation of veterans treatment courts in California, the CJCAC seeks to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the operation, administration, and enhancement of these courts in the coming years. Specific areas of interest include improving identification, access, and services in counties with veterans treatment courts; determining how to serve populations in counties without treatment courts; and adapting to the shifting population of veterans.

California Association of Collaborative Courts |

The California Association of Collaborative Courts (CACC) is the principal statewide nonprofit organization providing education and support for sustaining and developing collaborative courts of all types in California. CACC membership includes judges, court staff, treatment and justice system partners, as well as families, graduates and participants in collaborative courts. CACC is a key partner with the California Judicial Council’s Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee (CJCAC) members and staff in providing outreach and educational programs for collaborative courts. Specific activities addressing veterans and veterans courts include partnering with CJCAC to host a veterans symposia as a preconference program at CACC’s statewide conference in 2018. This symposia included outreach and programming for mentors in veterans courts. At the CACC statewide 2019 conference, CACC and CJCAC partnered to develop a track on veterans courts and veterans issues, including wellness, effective treatment/case processing, and family centered approaches. CACC also partners with CJCAC members and staff to provide direct outreach to local court programs, court staff, and judges, as well as to county and justice system partners regarding educational and funding opportunities, research findings, and areas of special interest such as court-community partnerships and mentoring. These efforts are specifically designed to strengthen and support collaborative courts and to promote use of effective practices, implement practice standards and guidelines, and support evidence-based practice. CACC is committed to maintaining and enhancing the partnership with the CJCAC in order to expand support for veterans courts and veterans in the court system.

Methodology

Center staff worked directly with selected members and staff of the Judicial Council’s Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee (CJCAC) between January and June 2019 to complete a needs assessment. With guidance from the Center, the CJCAC identified 17 stakeholders from a range of disciplines, including some members of the CJCAC to join the strategic planning committee. Center staff interviewed each member of the committee, as well as other people committee members identified as having relevant information about veterans’ needs or available veteran services. In addition to stakeholder interviews, Center staff analyzed demographic data, justice-system data, and documents relating to California’s veterans treatment courts provided by CJCAC staff. By synthesizing this information, the Center identified the following needs:

- Early and accurate identification and screening of justice-involved veterans
- Clarity on veterans-related legislation
- Broader eligibility and increased incentive to participate in veterans treatment courts
- Team training in substance use disorders, treatment, and veteran-specific issues
- Veterans justice outreach specialist roles and responsibilities
- Better recruiting, retaining, and training of veteran peer mentors
- Enhancements in wraparound services
- Statewide coordination

In June 2019, following the needs assessment, Center staff facilitated an intensive two-day strategic planning workshop with the strategic planning committee in San Francisco, CA. During the workshop, Center staff delivered research-based presentations covering risk-need-responsivity theory and national trends in veterans treatment court operations. Following the presentations, Center staff facilitated a roundtable discussion in which committee members reviewed the findings from the needs assessment, contributed supplemental information, brainstormed ways to address the findings, and provided feedback for the whole group. During the second half of the workshop, Center staff collaborated with the committee and CJCAC staff to complete an action plan. The committee broke into groups to develop goals and objectives responsive to the findings in the needs assessment. The stakeholders then came back together, shared their results, and solicited input from the entire group on the goals and objectives they had created.

This visit culminated in the development of a draft action plan with goals, objectives, action steps, and a timeline responsive to the needs assessment findings and stakeholder input during the workshop. (See Appendix A for the action plan.) The goals and objectives of that action plan form the basis for this strategic plan.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan is divided into seven goals with a varying number of objectives for each goal and a narrative description of the action steps necessary to complete the goals and objectives. The strategic planning committee created the following mission statement to serve as the foundation for the strategic plan:

“Veterans treatment courts in California honor current and former U.S. military service members by restoring them to the community as healthy and productive members of society through individualized evidence-based interventions. This promotes public safety, reduces recidivism, and serves the interests of justice.”

Goal 1 | Accurately identify justice-involved veterans in California.

Rationale: Veterans treatment court teams must identify participants who are veterans and meet the legal and clinical eligibility criteria for admission. California uses a variety of methods to identify veterans and refer them to veterans treatment courts. Stakeholders reported that the most commonly used identification methods are self-reporting at jail intake, defense attorney referrals, the MIL-100 Notification of Military Status form (MIL-100), and Veterans Re-Entry Search Service (VRSS). VRSS is a free tool the VA offers for justice-system agencies to check the veteran status of defendants or incarcerated people. While VRSS is a valuable tool to supplement proper self-reporting processes, it is not consistently used by jurisdictions, and it was noted that it cannot be the only method of identification in jails with high volume and turnover. MIL-100 collects information about a defendant's military status and provides information about penal codes relevant to veterans (PC §1170.9, PC §1170.91, and PC §1001.80). This form has not been widely institutionalized. In the absence of consistent practices for early identification, stakeholders indicated California's veterans treatment courts may be missing eligible participants and delaying enrollment.

Objective 1A: Increase identification of veterans in the criminal justice system.

California will improve its methods of identification of veterans in the justice system in order to refer and enroll more eligible participants to veterans treatment courts. Early identification of veterans and prompt admission into veterans treatment court are integral to program success.¹⁵ Defendants should be screened for veteran status as soon as they enter the criminal-justice system, and at every subsequent stage in criminal-justice processing, to

¹⁵ Ibid.

increase the odds of reliable reporting. To do this, veterans treatment courts and justice system partners could use the sequential intercept model, which involves establishing screening protocols at six distinct intercept points: (0) prior to law enforcement contact while engaging with community-based crisis intervention programs, (1) at the point of law enforcement contact, (2) during initial detention and initial court hearings, (3) while housed in jails or appearing in courts, (4) upon reentry, and (5) while engaged with community corrections.¹⁶ Members of the sheriff's department, pretrial services agency, or probation department should inquire of each arrestee, immediately upon arrest, whether they have ever served in a branch of the military. Judges, attorneys, and other criminal-justice personnel should also repeatedly inquire about veteran status.¹⁷ In addition to creating multiple intercept points for self-reporting, courts should establish a process for making referrals to veterans treatment courts and ensure that the process is well known and understood throughout the criminal justice community.

To identify justice-involved veterans through self-reporting, the best practice is to use broadly worded questions about military service. For example, justice-system representatives should ask defendants or incarcerated people, "Have you ever served in the U.S. military?" or "Have you served in the armed forces?" rather than, "Are you a veteran?"¹⁸ Phrasing questions about military service more broadly can improve rates of identification of service-involved defendants, including active-duty military personnel. Many veterans hold the belief that only combat service or VA-eligibility qualifies them as a veteran. Moreover, some veterans are reluctant to disclose their military status because they fear losing VA benefits, appearing weak, receiving an unfavorable mark on their service record, or bringing dishonor to their unit. It is important for those who screen for veteran status to clarify that deployment, combat, or VA-eligibility are not required to identify as a veteran; that disclosing veteran status can lead to access to services; and that it will not blemish their service record.

Jails can also facilitate identification by using the VRSS system. VRSS allows jail or corrections administrators to create an account and upload a CSV data file on defendants or incarcerated people, which the VA then returns with confirmation of whether the person is a veteran. Although in many cases, the implementation of VRSS is challenging, this system has been shown to identify a greater number of veterans than self-report alone.¹⁹

Action steps: The California Association of Collaborative Courts (CACC) will work with the CJCAC Veterans in the Courts and Military Families Subcommittee and the veterans

¹⁶ "The Sequential Intercept Model." Policy Research Associates, 2019. <https://www.prainc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/PRA-SIM-Letter-Paper-2018.pdf>.

¹⁷ "Identifying Those Who Served: Modeling Potential Participant Identification in Veterans Treatment Courts." Baldwin, et. al. Drug Court Review, 2019. <https://ndcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/DCR1-Research-Article-1.pdf>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Department of Veterans Affairs, VRSS New User Orientation. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs analysis of the California Department of Corrections, 2.7 percent of inmates self-identified as veterans compared to 7.7 percent when using the VA's Veterans Re-entry Search Service (VRSS, a system used to upload identifiers and check them against VA records). The study showed approximately 5,000 justice involved veterans had not been identified by self-report.

treatment court strategic planning group to determine how to engage partner agencies, such as the VA and California Sheriff's Association, probation, and Public Defenders, to identify procedures and educational materials on best practices for the identification of justice-involved veterans that will be posted online and distributed to other appropriate venues by the end of 2020. The content of these materials will be determined by collaboration between the veterans treatment court strategic planning committee, CJCAC's Veterans in the Courts and Military Families Subcommittee, and partner agencies. The materials will include suggested language for improving self-reporting, methods for implementing and interfacing with VRSS, and template procedures for how to referral to veterans treatment court. The sequential intercept model may be used as a guide to map pathways, identify critical points for identification, and educate stakeholders on this method.

Objective 1B: Educate justice-system partners and veterans treatment court team members on the use of MIL-100 within two years.

The CJCAC developed MIL-100 to better collect veteran identifier information from defendants. Despite the availability of this form on the CJCAC's website, it has not been widely institutionalized and is not mandatory for use. The CJCAC has proposed a revision the form to make it more user-friendly and to change it from an optional to a mandatory form, for those who choose to disclose their military status Courts can streamline identification and referrals to veterans treatment courts by integrating this form into their proceedings. Additionally, courts can provide education about MIL-100 to staff at county veterans service offices (VSOs), who receive and process the forms, since stakeholders indicated that they are not always aware of the form's purpose or what steps to take once they receive it.

Action steps: CJCAC members and staff will educate the public and justice-system professionals about how to use MIL-100, the changes that have been made to the form, and disseminate all supplemental materials developed by the Veterans in the Courts and Military Families Subcommittee. They will also produce educational materials that explain how some courts have incorporated robust referral processes and develop a training for court staff and VSOs on using, displaying, and disseminating MIL-100.

Objective 1C: Educate judges on the use of MIL-100 and encourage them to take an active leadership role in promoting its use by September 2021.

In addition to court staff and VSOs, judges are important stakeholders in the use and dissemination of MIL-100. Judges can use MIL-100 at first appearances, promote its use to other judges, and take an active leadership role in integrating the form into regular proceedings. This objective will give judges additional tools to comply with PC §858, which requires them to inform criminal defendants of their rights as military personnel or veterans.

Action steps: CJCAC staff, with guidance from the Veterans in the Courts and Military Families Subcommittee, will create and deliver a webinar for judicial officers that discusses

the use of MIL-100 and other ways to help identify court-involved veterans. The CACC will announce and promote the webinar in order to ensure the participation of the maximum number of judges.

Goal 2 | Create clear guidelines for screening and eligibility for veterans treatment courts.

Rationale: There are three California statutes on the adjudication of cases involving current or former members of the U.S. military.²⁰ Stakeholders across the state have differing interpretations of how each of these statutes apply to eligibility to participate in veterans treatment courts. Each veterans treatment court in California determines its own eligibility standards, and it is outside of the scope of the Judicial Council to mandate eligibility requirements. Some jurisdictions interpret PC §1170.9 as requiring a nexus to be established between a participant’s military service, diagnosed disorder, and crime, while many other jurisdictions do not require any nexus for eligibility. The courts that use PC §1170.9 for eligibility must also determine the method and the person or entity responsible for establishing these nexuses, which is an imprecise and often subjective process that can result in varied outcomes. The needs assessment process revealed that challenges related to the application of the nexus standard may exclude veterans who need the services these courts offer. Mental health and substance use disorders arise from a variety of social, environmental, and biological factors, which cannot always be directly linked to experiences in the military. The needs assessment and strategic planning workshop made evident the need for instruction this legislation, as well as eligibility criteria and screening protocols based in treatment court best practices.

Objective 2A: Analyze differing veterans treatment court program models throughout California to understand eligibility criteria and outcomes by summer 2020.

Many counties have developed additional eligibility requirements on top of those posed by PC §1170.9. According to the California Veterans Legal Task Force’s data on eligibility, existing criteria include VA eligibility, criminal charge, veteran discharge status, county of residence, and combat service.²¹ Stakeholders noted that charge exclusion is a specific area of veterans treatment court eligibility that ought to be re-examined. California Veterans Legal Task Force’s data on thirteen veterans treatment courts indicates that the vast majority of these courts exclude violent felonies, serious felonies, arson, and crimes that involve children or the elderly as victims.²²

²⁰ Cal. Pen. Code §1170.9, §1170.91, and §1001.80.

²¹ “California Veterans Treatment Court Survey.” California Veterans Legal Task Force. 2016.

<http://www.cvltf.org/files/120643618.pdf>.

²² Ibid.

Research on the risk profile of justice-involved veterans is limited and still in development. In the absence of definitive veterans-specific research, many veterans treatment courts rely on drug court research to target the high-risk, high-needs population. This research indicates that targeting a high-risk, high-need population reduces reoffending approximately twice as much as serving lower-risk and lower-need offenders and returns approximately 50 percent greater cost savings.²³ Although it is not yet clear, without more research, how closely these outcomes extend to veterans treatment courts, the fact that veterans treatment courts employ many of central practices of drug courts—and that many participants suffer from problematic substance use similar to those in drug courts—suggests that similar outcomes can reasonably be expected. Best practices for drug courts also indicate that “if adequate treatment and supervision are available, there is no empirical justification for routinely excluding violent offenders.”²⁴ Furthermore, research shows that violence is one way that trauma manifests itself in the justice-involved veteran population.

In 2017 California passed Senate Bill 339 (SB-339), which requires the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature the results of a study of veterans and veterans treatment courts, on or before June 1, 2020. This study included a statewide assessment of veterans treatment courts currently in operation and a survey of counties without veterans treatment courts to assess the barriers to and need for program implementation. The Judicial Council staff will use the results of the study to inform webinars and other educational activities.

Action steps: Judicial Council staff will analyze data from SB-339 on veterans treatment courts throughout California to document how various criteria for inclusion in veterans treatment courts are employed. The JCC will submit a comprehensive report on the findings of this to the legislature. JCC staff will also develop case studies on three veterans treatment courts that use different approaches to the PC §1170.9 nexus. The CJCAC will present these findings in a webinar to be broadcast to all veterans treatment courts by the end of 2020.

Objective 2B: Provide a resource to veterans treatment courts on the nexus determination in PC §1170.9 to expand eligibility by the end of 2020.

PC §1170.9 offers incentives to participate in treatment post-conviction as an alternative to traditional probation for veterans who have an established nexus between their diagnosis and military service. The use of this statute as the basis for eligibility in veterans treatment court can result in denying otherwise eligible participants who cannot establish that nexus. Stakeholders indicated the need for additional consensus of justice system partners on the application of PC §1170.9 to help court teams resolve: a) whether a participant’s enrollment is contingent on that nexus, b) which team members are responsible for determining whether that nexus exists, and c) how the determination is made.

²³ “Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, Volumes 1 & 2.” National Association for Drug Court Professionals. 2018. <http://www.nadcp.org/Standards>.

²⁴ “Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, Volumes 1 & 2.” National Association for Drug Court Professionals. 2018. <http://www.nadcp.org/Standards>.

Action steps: The CACC will develop and host a website that contains resources for veterans treatment courts. This will include information on PC §1170.9 and the eligibility criteria used by various veterans treatment courts, as well as relevant studies on this subject. It will have available a model eligibility guide with guidance on decision-making points and promising practices for identifying and reaching the target population including high-risk and high-need offenders.

Objective 2C: Provide information and resources to all veterans treatment courts interested in developing diversion model programs by the end of 2020.

Some adult drug treatment courts in California operate as diversion or pre-plea courts. In this model, defendants who meet eligibility requirements are diverted from traditional court proceedings into a drug court prior to pleading to a charge. To date, most veterans treatment courts in California operate post-plea, but some have incorporated pre-plea defendants into the programs. Many stakeholders indicated a desire to have the option to expand pre-plea options for veterans treatment courts.

Action steps: The CACC website discussed in Objective 2B will also act as a clearinghouse for veterans treatment courts interested in pursuing a diversion track, providing information on how adult drug treatment courts implement the pre-plea model and methods to translate those successes to veterans treatment courts.

Goal 3 | Identify national, state, and local opportunities to provide role specific training to veterans treatment courts.

Rationale: Veterans treatment courts are distinct from other problem-solving courts. To work effectively with justice-involved veterans, team members must understand how the unique experience of military service may impact a veteran’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and be familiar with the landscape of services and treatment for veterans facing mental health and substance use disorders. There is also a high incidence of trauma among veterans, so training in trauma-informed care and treatment is critical. Research has shown that team training leads to more effective programs in the drug court context.²⁵ For example, a multisite study found that drug courts were nearly two and a half times more cost-effective and over 50 percent more effective at reducing recidivism when the teams participated in formal training prior to implementation.²⁶

Objective 3A: Provide every veterans treatment court team member with information about training events on a continuous basis beginning in 2020.

²⁵ “Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, Volumes 1 & 2.” National Association for Drug Court Professionals. 2018. <http://www.nadcp.org/Standards>.

²⁶ Carey, S.M., Finigan, M.W., & Pukstas, K. (2008). Exploring the key components of drug courts: A comparative study of 18 adult drug courts on practices, outcomes and costs. Portland, OR: NPC Research.

The needs assessment revealed that veterans treatment court teams do not receive consistent training on working with justice-involved veterans. The CJCAC and CACC offer training events on the collaborative court model across the state and many of those trainings are relevant to veterans treatment court teams. Stakeholders also noted that national training events help teams improve adherence to best-practice standards, remember the importance of fidelity to the model, and learn from other courts across the country. The needs assessment identified the following important training topics: crisis-intervention and suicide-prevention training, trauma-informed care, incentives and sanctions, team-building, gender-specific treatment, military and veterans culture, and the use of Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT). While trainings on these topics occur routinely, veterans treatment court teams may not always be aware of or have access to them.

Action Steps: The CJCAC and CACC will use websites, listservs, announcements, and posted advertisements to publicize training opportunities for veterans treatment court teams and judges, including virtual, local, and national education programs. This multi-platform approach will increase the likelihood that teams are aware of upcoming training events.

Objective 3B: Facilitate cross-court training, including problem-solving court evaluations, for veterans treatment courts in 2020.

Across the country, treatment court coordinators must implement effective and affordable evaluations to assess courts' fidelity to best practice standards. One method for this is cross-court training and peer to peer networking. Peers help each other identify areas for improvement and share successes and challenges, creating a sustainable learning community and building relationships between programs. Some of California's veterans treatment courts have already begun this process informally by hosting visitors and sharing resources. This objective will formalize the process.

Action Steps: The CACC will design and implement a cross-court collaboration model that includes identifying courts to participate; requesting training and technical assistance from a national provider, such as NPC Research or the Center for Court Innovation; and organizing cross-court visits, peer-to-peer networking opportunities, and/or local court showcase trainings to systematize training and technical assistance for veterans treatment courts in California. The CJCAC will develop a veterans treatment court technical assistance request process for courts to access their training and technical assistance. These training and technical assistance opportunities will allow courts to access assistance customized to their team and participant populations.

Objective 3C: Identify veterans treatment courts to target for local problem-solving court training by the end of 2020.

Stakeholders reported that veterans treatment courts often contend with unique local challenges that require tailored responses, such as working with resistant team members,

managing high caseloads, and handling judge turnover. A one-size-fits-all approach to training does not help with these problems, so the CJCAC will identify courts in need of targeted problem-solving court training.

Action Steps: The CACC will survey courts to identify tailored education needs, inquiring about local challenges, topics of interest, and areas for improvement. To support tailored training and technical assistance, the CACC will work within the pilot project outlined in Objective 3B.

Objective 3D: Host a veterans treatment court summit for all veterans treatment teams and members of the strategic planning committee by the end of 2020.

Hosting a veterans treatment court summit that brings together new and more senior programs can allow teams to discuss issues and brainstorm areas of growth. This opportunity could be extended to jurisdictions without a veterans treatment court that are considering implementing one.

Action Steps: The CACC will use the training and technical assistance assessment in Objective 3C and existing data to explore the need for and interest in a veterans treatment court summit across the state. In partnership with some staff and members of the CJCAC, the CACC will host a statewide veterans treatment court summit that includes breakout sessions for trial court judges who preside over, or have an interest in creating, a veterans treatment court. This effort will be funded through the passthrough money from this strategic planning initiative.

Goal 4 | Educate justice-system leadership on veterans treatment courts.

Rationale: Stakeholders reported that in counties where a veterans treatment court is needed, one roadblock to support is the lack of buy-in and knowledge of the model among justice-system leadership. Such education is important because judges, in particular, have a strong impact on veterans treatment court program outcomes. In the adult drug court context, research has shown that when a judge receives adequate training on evidence-based practices in substance use disorders, mental health treatment, and community supervision, the program results are significantly better.²⁷

Objective 4A: Identify court leadership in need of training on veterans treatment courts and train them by the end of 2020.

²⁷ “Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, Volumes 1 & 2.” National Association for Drug Court Professionals. 2018. <http://www.nadcp.org/Standards>.

Stakeholders reported that judges and judicial administrators in California need more training about veterans treatment courts and how to implement and sustain a new program. Typically, the impetus for beginning a veterans treatment court within a California trial court comes from the presiding judge and executive officer. Educating these stakeholders is necessary for the model to grow.

Action steps: Based on information gathered from the training and technical assistance outlined in Objective 3C, the CACC will work with CJCAC staff to contact all court executive officers in California to assess the need for training on veterans treatment courts. It will then develop and disseminate a resource guide that highlights the successes of veterans treatment courts, the implementation process, and available resources through webinar, in-person meetings, and other methods. The CJCAC will also educate judicial officers on identification of veterans using MIL-100 in compliance with PC §858, as outlined in Goal 1.

Objective 4B: Host one convening for veterans treatment court leadership and stakeholders by fall 2020.

California’s veterans treatment courts would benefit from improved collaboration and communication among leadership from veterans service organizations and courts. Stakeholders reported that several veterans organizations and treatment courts have formed committees and initiatives to serve the veteran population, but these are not always known to one another and can duplicate efforts within and across jurisdictions.

Action steps: The CACC will facilitate statewide gatherings aimed at bringing these groups together. The California Association of Collaborative Courts provides training and technical assistance and mutual support to collaborative courts throughout the state, including hosting an annual conference for all collaborative courts. CACC designed and implemented a veterans treatment court track for this conference in 2019 with the intent of making it an annual offering. As outlined in Objective 3D, the CACC will also host a veterans treatment court summit that includes education for court staff and judges of veterans treatment courts. To achieve these goals, the CACC will convene meetings that include members of the strategic planning committee and the CJCAC’s veterans subcommittee.

Objective 4C: Train court professionals on veterans treatment courts and the collaborative court model annually.

Training a broad range of legal professionals in non-adversarial approaches is essential to the success of veterans treatment court programs.²⁸ Lack of prosecutors and defenders buy-in impedes problem-solving court functionality. Court operations require the support of not only the attorneys who directly participate in the treatment court team but also the entire

²⁸ “Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Courts.” Justice for Vets. March 29, 2017. <https://justiceforvets.org/resource/ten-key-components-of-veterans-treatment-courts/>.

prosecutor's office, the public defender's office, and private defense attorneys. In order for the court to operate effectively, all of these professionals must coordinate on early identification, intake and referrals, and plea negotiations.

Action steps: The CACC and CJCAC will collaborate to design a veterans-specific track for the California Association of Collaborative Courts conference in 2020, as outlined in Objective 4B. For the conference, it will engage expert speakers and offer sessions that encourage public defenders, private defense attorneys, and district attorneys to attend. The CACC and CJCAC will also identify stakeholder groups, such as California Defense Counsel, California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, and the State Bar Association of California, with which to collaborate on training attorneys on veteran treatment courts.

Goal 5 | Provide training and education to courts on how to better connect justice-involved veterans with services.

Rationale: The provision of timely and holistic wraparound services is integral to the success of veterans treatment court participants. The needs assessment revealed the importance of providing services that are specifically tailored to the veteran population and address gender-specific issues, socioeconomic factors, and behavioral health needs. While the VA offers many such services, some gaps persist.

Objective 5A: Identify, compile, and publicize veterans resources that the VA and other organizations provide.

The needs assessment revealed that participants of veterans treatment courts need additional social services including housing, transportation, and employment. Many resources are available for veterans through the VA and other service organizations across the state, but not all veterans treatment court staff or participants are aware of these resources. Streamlining access to information about these materials on one accessible, regularly updated platform will help spread information vital to veterans program success.

Action steps: The CACC will engage partners to identify, compile, and publicize veterans-related resources, hosting them on its veterans website by the end of 2020.

Objective 5B: Provide training to courts and justice-system partners on veterans-related resources.

Stakeholders reported that they want to better understand how to connect veterans with resources outside of the justice system. Those surveyed in the needs assessment phase indicated law enforcement officials in particular want to learn to connect veterans with services earlier in case processing. Other veterans treatment court team members could benefit from training on the landscape of available veterans resources in the state.

Action steps: The CJCAC will facilitate a webinar with case studies to highlight methods to identify veterans, collaborate with the VA, work with veterans justice outreach specialists, and link participants to resources by the end of 2020.

Objective 5C: Create and disseminate information on services for women veterans as well as recommendations for identifying gender bias.

Women veterans have unique needs that are best addressed through gender-informed programming. Large numbers of women veterans have experienced trauma in the military, many times involving peers who are men, and veterans treatment courts should design treatment plans that respond specifically to women participants' needs. Stakeholders reported that in certain counties there are very low numbers of identified justice-involved women veterans. Even where women veterans have been identified, many were hesitant to engage in group therapy through veterans treatment courts because they often involved male veterans. Some courts do offer military sexual trauma programming specific to women. Gender-specific programming through remote teleservices could bring together justice-involved women veterans in virtual group therapy meetings.

Action steps: The CJCAC will report on gender-specific issues in veterans treatment courts in 2020 will work with CACC to create a resource map to determine where gender- or trauma-informed services are offered, and how to connect the veteran population to appropriate services in person or virtually through teleservices.

Objective 5D: Create a statewide e-mail listserv for all veterans treatment court personnel by the end of 2020.

An e-mail listserv is a powerful method to disseminate specific information to a targeted audience and allow people with experience to answer questions quickly. By creating an online network of veterans treatment court personnel, court teams will not only improve their own practices and operations but also foster collaboration within the larger community.

Action steps: The CJCAC will create and facilitate a veterans treatment court listserv, sharing it with all veterans treatment court teams along with guidelines and tips for use, by the end of 2020.

Goal 6 | Clarify the roles and responsibilities of veterans treatment court team members including veterans justice outreach specialists.

Rationale: For the collaborative court model to work, team members must understand their roles and responsibilities and develop a cohesive approach to operations. California's

veterans treatment courts team members do not always clearly understand or adhere to their roles and responsibilities, which can vary from one jurisdiction to another. While local variance is normal in a state as diverse as California, the needs assessment revealed that some teams are not functioning at an optimal level.

In addition to prosecutors and defense attorneys, two key team members whose role stakeholders reported to be misunderstood are veterans justice outreach specialists (VJOs) and veteran peer mentors. VJOs provide direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans in courts, jails, and prisons. Because of the unique issue posed by the nexus determination addressed in Goal 2, VJOs in many counties have been asked to step outside of their clinical role and provide legal determinations on the eligibility criteria from PC §1170.9. While in some jurisdictions VJOs are comfortable contributing to the nexus determination, in many others VJOs are not. In Northern California, a group of VJOs released a memo specifically delineating the tasks they are qualified to complete and the tasks they will not; in the memo the Veterans Integrated Service Network Director specifically prohibits VJOs from making a nexus determination.

Veteran peer mentors play a unique role within the veterans treatment court model. Volunteer veterans engage with veterans treatment courts by encouraging participants to change their lives. Mentors can connect to participants based on their shared military service and provide unique peer support based on this experience. While veteran peer mentors are highly beneficial, many programs in California, like every other state taking part in this project, reported difficulties recruiting, retaining, and training mentors. The needs assessment revealed that California's veteran peer mentors often do not understand their role and general court operations—e.g., miscommunications arose around scheduling court appearances and being left out of staffing meetings. Additionally, stakeholders reported witnessing veteran peer mentors behave inappropriately with participants, such as making sexist comments that alienated female participants. It is important that the CJCAC provide comprehensive training on roles, responsibilities, and effective mentor skills.

Objective 6A: Work with VA to disseminate clear roles and responsibilities for VJOs to every jurisdiction with a veterans treatment court by the end of 2020.

Many of California's veterans treatment courts rely on VJOs to establish the legal nexus determination for their participants. However, a group of Northern California VJOs were uncomfortable with this role and released a memo stating that they are “unable to explicitly state that a veteran's medical, mental health, or substance use disorder is a result of his/her military experience [because] it is out of our scope of practice and is ultimately a legal determination.” These VJOs said they can provide information that may be the basis of the determination, such as VA eligibility, medical status, and treatment needs, but that the determination is not ultimately their responsibility. Stakeholders noted many other regions of the state also face this challenge and need similar clarity.

VJOs also reported being overextended, which they said can burden the whole team. In addition to being team members for one or several veterans treatment courts, VJOs perform other job duties, including jail outreach and first-responder training, across large regions of the state. Some VJOs, based on their specific licensing, can provide continuing case management for veterans treatment court participants, while others can only provide assessments and limited case management. VJOs are an invaluable asset to teams and participants—not only can they identify eligible participants in jails, but they are the critical link to the VA healthcare system. There are currently 37 VJOs in California, and stakeholders reported that the state needs more.

Action steps: The staff and members of CJCAC, in collaboration with strategic planning committee representatives from the VA, will develop materials to provide clarifying information on the role of the VJO in veterans treatment courts, including documents and web resources with recommended duties within the veterans treatment court team and role in the nexus determination. While these responsibilities may vary by jurisdiction, both VJOs and teams will benefit from statewide guidance on best practices.

Objective 6B: Provide all veterans treatment courts with well-defined guidance on roles, responsibilities, and training for veteran peer mentors.

California’s veteran peer mentors need additional training on roles, expectations, and subject areas such as mental health treatment and trauma-informed practice. Mentors do not always enter their roles with expertise in mental health, substance use, criminal-justice processes, or effective mentoring skills. Additionally, to preserve confidentiality in the relationship between mentor and participant, mentors typically do not participate in veterans treatment court team meetings. However, stakeholders in California reported that this often results in miscommunication and misunderstandings among mentors about case flow and court proceedings. To improve understanding, many courts nationally employ mentor coordinators to train mentors and act as conduits for information between mentors and the court team. In general, California’s veterans treatment courts need more training opportunities for their mentors, as well as state guidance on model job duties and expectations. Because stakeholders reported witnessing inappropriate behavior by veteran peer mentors, that should be addressed through training on sexual harassment and trauma-informed care. Additionally, California’s veterans treatment courts should consider developing more robust strategies for recruiting female veteran peer mentors to support their female participants.

Action steps: The CJCAC will identify training opportunities for veteran peer mentors and regularly announce them to veterans treatment court teams. The CJCAC will also create, host, and provide resources online that delineate model roles and responsibilities for veteran peer mentors and mentor coordinators. The CJCAC will continuously seek out and monitor the latest research on veteran peer mentors, and make this research available to veterans treatment court teams.

Objective 6C: Develop a webinar highlighting case studies on three veterans treatment courts that clarify roles and responsibilities of team members by the end of 2020.

As described in Objective 2B, the CJCAC is currently analyzing survey data from SB-339. From this data, its staff will develop case studies of three veterans treatment courts to analyze the roles and responsibilities of the team members in depth.

Action steps: The CJCAC will produce and deliver a webinar highlighting the three veterans treatment court case studies to provide veterans treatment court teams clarity on model team member duties. The CJCAC will develop a promotion strategy for the webinar that maximizes participation.

Goal 7 | Provide information to veterans treatment courts on funding sources.

Rationale: Many stakeholders expressed a need for improved statewide coordination in providing veterans treatment courts with information on accessing funding. At the federal level, there has been an increase in available funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, from \$6 million in 2016 to \$22 million in 2019. At the state level, California is resource-rich and contains many multidisciplinary organizations dedicated to funding treatment for veterans. However, many veterans treatment courts are unaware of these opportunities and need assistance identifying and accessing them.

Objective 7A: Apply for funding to support veterans treatment courts at the county level.

Stakeholders noted that staying updated on funding opportunities available through the many federal, state, and local veterans organizations can be onerous. E-mail listservs are a powerful method to disseminate specific information to a targeted audience and to have questions answered quickly by those with hands on experience, and they can be used to share accurate and updated information about funding opportunities.

Action steps: The CJCAC will launch a listserv to disseminate updated information on funding opportunities for veterans treatment courts. Through this listserv the CJCAC will encourage courts in need of funding to apply for grant opportunities. This listserv may also be advertised to veterans organizations throughout California in the future to encourage them to share funding information.

Objective 7B: Provide training and technical assistance on seeking funding to all interested counties.

Many veterans treatment courts are well-positioned to apply for federal funding but lack the grant writing expertise to navigate the process. Training and technical assistance in the form of identifying grant opportunities, writing grant proposals, and assessing program readiness can connect veterans treatment courts to the funding they need.

Action steps: The CJCAC will develop an electronic request system for veterans treatment courts that need training and technical assistance for seeking funding, and provide them direct assistance. When necessary, the CJCAC will refer courts to national training and technical assistance providers or peer courts for further assistance, as outlined in Objective 3B.

Objective 7C: Assist veterans treatment courts to access California mental health funding.

Veterans in prison are twice as likely as nonveterans to report that a mental health professional told them they had post-traumatic stress disorder, and a higher percentage of veterans than nonveterans in jail reported that, at some point in their lives, a mental health professional told them they had a mental health disorder.²⁹ The Mental Health Services Act, which was reauthorized in 2019, provides the California Department of Mental Health increased funding, personnel, and other resources to support county mental health programs and monitor progress toward statewide goals for children, transition-age youth, adults, older adults, and families. Funding for mental health services increases the capacity of veterans treatment courts by providing funding for treatment services to participants with mental health or co-occurring disorders.

Action steps: The CJCAC will create and distribute materials to all veterans treatment courts in California by the end of 2019 with information on accessing funding through the Mental Health Services Act. It will work with the strategic planning committee to determine the best methods to distribute this information.

²⁹ U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Fewer Veterans in Prisons and Jails in 2011-12 Than 2004." News release, December 7, 2015. Fewer Veterans in Prisons and Jails in 2011-12 Than 2004. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/press/vpj1112pr.cfm>.

Conclusion

Several themes presented themselves as issues for veterans treatment courts in all five states that participated in the Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Planning Initiative: 1) a need for clarity on veterans treatment court eligibility; 2) challenges with early identification of veterans; 3) recruiting, retaining, and training veteran peer mentors; and 4) adequate and consistent training for the treatment team and community. California is well positioned to address each of these issues and emerge as a leader in the enhancement of veterans treatment courts. The Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee, the California Association of Collaborative Courts, and the strategic planning committee will use the goals in this strategic plan to address the needs of veterans treatment dockets, monitor their progress, and include additional stakeholders as needed. The strategic planning committee will evaluate their success on a continuing basis with an eye towards accomplishing all planned activities by 2023. This statewide strategic plan for veterans treatment courts places California in a strong position to enhance this unique and effective problem-solving court model.

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Appendix A

GOAL # 1	
Goal:	Accurately identify justice-involved veterans in California.
Purview:	California Association of Collaborative Courts, in conjunction CJCAC staff and with partner agencies as appropriate including VA/CA Sheriff Association
Objectives 1A: Increase identification of veterans in the criminal justice system.	Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop educational materials to be posted on website or other appropriate venues. Procedures to identify justice-involved veterans and their families in collaboration and coordination with the VA and law enforcement by the end of 2020.
Objective 1B: Educate justice system partners and veterans treatment court team members on the use of the MIL-100 within two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make information available for the courts and the public on how to use the MIL-100. Provide trainings to self-help center or other court staff that includes information on the use of the MIL-100.
Objective 1C: Educate judges on the use of MIL-100 and encourage them to take an active leadership role in promoting its use by September 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar for judicial officers that discusses the use of the MIL-100 and other ways to help identify court-involved veterans. The Veterans in the Courts and Military Families Subcommittee and the CJCAC will coordinate on developing scripts to be disseminated to judicial officers at their regular educational events.

GOAL # 2	
Goal:	Create clear guidelines for screening and eligibility for veterans treatment courts.
Purview:	CJCAC staff
Objectives 2A: Analyze differing veterans treatment court program models throughout California to understand eligibility criteria and outcomes by summer 2020.	Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CJCAC will analyze data from SC-339 on veterans treatment courts throughout California. The CJCAC will also develop case studies on three veterans treatment courts that use different approaches to the PC §1170.9 nexus.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit report to Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee with potential recommendations for expansion as appropriate. • Present the findings in a webinar to be disseminated to all veterans treatment courts by the end of 2020.
<p>Objective 2B: Provide a resource for VTCs on the nexus determination in PC §1170.9 to expand eligibility by the end of 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and host a website for veterans treatment courts that contains resources addressing PC §1170.9 and its local application to eligibility criteria in veterans treatment courts. • Create and disseminate model eligibility criteria • Provide guidance on best practices for expanding eligibility to reach their target population of high-risk/high-need offenders.
<p>Objective 2C: Provide information and resources to all veterans treatment courts interested in developing diversion model programs by the end of 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop website as a resource for court VTCs.

GOAL # 3	
Goal:	Identify national, state, and local opportunities to provide role specific training to veterans treatment courts.
Purview:	Judicial Council, CACC, Veteran affiliated agencies, VA, & NADCP
Objective 3A: Provide every veterans treatment court team member with information about training events on a continuous basis beginning in 2020.	<p>Deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Court News Update, the Judicial Council website, listserv and other venues, publicize training opportunities for court staff and judges to attend local and national education programs.
Objective 3B: Facilitate cross-court training, including problem-solving court evaluations, for veterans treatment courts in 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement VTC track at state collaborative court conference. Investigate opportunities to utilize VTC Technical Assistance (VTC-TA) Pilot Project and VTC-TA Application.
Objective 3C: Identify VTCs to target for local problem-solving court training by the end of 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey to identify court technical assistance, training, and education needs.

<p>Objective 3D: Host a veterans treatment court summit for all veterans treatment teams and members of the strategic planning committee by the end of 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the need for VTC roundtables throughout northern, central, and southern regions. • CACC will plan and host VTC summits/roundtables using pass through money
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GOAL # 4	
Goal:	Educate justice-system leadership on veterans treatment courts
Purview:	California Association of Collaborative Courts, CJCAC staff
<p>Objective 4A: Identify court leadership in need of training on veterans treatment courts and train them by the end of 2020.</p>	<p>Deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to all courts executive officers in California to assess the need for training on veterans treatment courts. • Develop and provide veteran related training.
<p>Objective 4B: Host one convening for VTC leadership and stakeholders by fall 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement VTC track at state collaborative court conference. • CACC will convene a stakeholder group made up of the CJCAC’s Veterans subcommittee and members of this project’s strategic planning group.
<p>Objective 4C: Train court professionals on veterans treatment courts and the collaborative court model annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop(s) for the legal profession in collaboration with the California Association of Collaborative Courts conference or other stakeholders.

GOAL # 5	
Goal:	Provide training and education to courts on how to better connect justice-involved veterans with services
Purview:	CACC, CJCAC staff

Objective 5A: Identify, compile, and publicize veterans' resources from the VA and other organizations.	Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage partners to identify, compile, and publicize veterans-related resources. Veterans related resources will be on the Judicial Council Veterans webpage by the end of 2020.
Objective 5B: Provide training to courts and justice system partners on veterans-related resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar with VTC case studies to highlight methods to identify veterans, collaborating with VAs, working with VJOs and mentors, etc. by the end of 2020.
Objective 5C: Create and disseminate information on services for women veterans as well as recommendations for identifying gender bias.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on gender-specific issues in veterans treatment courts in 2020. Create a resource map to determine where gender- or trauma-informed services are offered, and how to connect the veteran population to appropriate services in person or virtually through teleservices.
Objective 5D: Create a statewide e-mail listserv for all veterans treatment court personnel by the end of 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a veterans treatment court listserv by the end of 2020

GOAL # 6	
Goal:	Clarify roles and responsibilities of VTC team members including veterans justice outreach specialists.
Purview:	CACC, CJCAC staff with VJO/VA
Objective 6A: Work with VA to disseminate clear roles and responsibilities of VJOs to every jurisdiction with a VTC by the end of 2020.	Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop documents and/or web resources to provide clarity on the role of the VJO in veterans treatment courts Include recommended guidance on the nexus determination as well as clarity on duties as a member of the veterans treatment court team
Objective 6B: Provide all veterans treatment courts with well-defined guidance on roles, responsibilities, and training for veteran peer mentors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify training opportunities for veteran peer mentors and announce them to veterans treatment court teams across the state on a regular basis Create resources to be hosted online that delineate model roles and responsibilities of veteran peer mentors, and mentor coordinators.
Objective 6C: Develop webinar highlighting case studies on three VTCs that clarify roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a webinar that will highlight the three veterans treatment courts selected for the case studies by the end of 2020. CJCAC will develop a promotion strategy for the webinar that maximizes participation.

and responsibilities of team members by the end of 2020.	
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GOAL # 7	
Goal:	Provide information to veterans treatment courts on funding sources.
Purview:	CJCAC staff
Objective 7A: Apply for funding to support veterans treatment courts at the county level.	Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VTC Listserv to disseminate funding information by the end of 2020. • Advertise listserv to veterans service agencies throughout California
Objective 7B: Provide training and technical assistance on seeking funding to all interested counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on grant seeking technical assistance opportunities will be provided to all VTCs. • CJCAC will develop an electronic request system for veterans treatment courts that need training and technical assistance for seeking funding, and provide them direct assistance • Refer interested parties to national technical assistance providers for more assistance
Objective 7C: Assist veterans treatment courts to access California mental health funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and distribute materials to with information on accessing Mental Health Services Act funding by the end of 2019.

Appendix B

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