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Press Release

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Reno County to add new First-Time Felony Drug Offender Diversion Program

Reno County, Kansas – December 12, 2023

Starting on January 1, 2024, Reno County will add a new First-Time Felony Drug Offender Diversion Program to expand diversion opportunities to previously ineligible individuals.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding this diversion program between Reno County Community Corrections, Court Services of the 27th Judicial District, and the Office of the Reno County District Attorney pursuant to HB 2026 was signed by Thomas R. Stanton, Reno County District Attorney, Randy Regehr, Director of Reno County Community Corrections, and Stephanie Springer, Chief Court Services Officer. Reno County Counselor Patrick Hoffman signed and approved the document, and Donna Patton Reno County Clerk signed and attested to the MOU.

The MOU makes available to appropriate felony drug offenders in the 27th Judicial District a diversion program that furthers the pursuit of justice while maintaining public safety.

“Right now, we have speeding diversion, traffic diversion, and some misdemeanor drug diversion but we don’t have the ability to supervise someone who has a felony drug offense in treatment,” said Stanton. “The Kansas Legislature enacted a statute that allows my office to work with Community Corrections on an agreement that allows them to do our supervision for us. This is different in that, although the offenders apply to my office for diversion, it is the state community corrections that does supervision. I retain the authority to determine what’s going to happen in the case, whether it is successful or terminated and send it back to court. If somebody is successful in this diversion program, the case against them will be dismissed. They will not have a conviction or a record and therefore it will be easier for them to get a job, housing and hopefully the treatment they get will turn their lives around to the extent that we won’t see them again. That’s the whole focus.”

“I think what is important is that people are held accountable. If I’m in the public, I want to know that this is not like someone is possessing drugs and they get off with no problem,” said Regehr, Community Corrections Director. “They are going to be held accountable, they are going to be provided with treatment, they will be drug tested and they will be provided the services they need to be successful in the community. This is not like a ‘get out of jail free card.’ This is a good opportunity for someone to make changes in their life after a mistake they’ve made.”

The Reno County Board of Commissioners approved on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023, the Opioid Settlement Funds Advisory Oversight Committee’s recommendations to fund the Reno County First-Time-Drug Felony Diversion Program in the amount of \$25,000 from the Municipalities Fights Addiction Fund.

Go to <https://renogov.org/DocumentCenter/View/12808/Signed-First-Time-Felony-Drug-Diversion-MOU> to read the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the DA’s First-Time Felony Drug Offender Diversion Program.

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