



Behavioral Health Court

Established in 2009 | San Diego County, CA | 90-Person Capacity

About

Behavioral Health Court (BHC) is a treatment program for individuals who are living with a serious mental illness (SMI) and involved with the criminal justice system. The program blends the collaborative court model for reducing recidivism with the assertive community treatment (ACT) model for treating individuals with serious mental illness. Together, these frameworks form a multidisciplinary paradigm for rehabilitating individuals with complex needs in a community, as opposed to an institutional, setting.

The program is an 18-month commitment that is broken out into four competency-based phases. All members receive high-quality housing, mental health treatment and medication support. Criminogenic risk and need are addressed as part of the treatment plan. Members attend regular status hearings before a dedicated Judge and are mentored by a dedicated probation officer.

Population Characteristics¹

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender Identity<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Male: 62%○ Female: 38%• Primary Diagnosis<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Schizoaffective Disorder: 28%○ Schizophrenia: 24%○ Bipolar Disorder: 21%○ Unspecified Psychosis: 8%○ Major Depressive Disorder: 8%○ Other Diagnosis 11% | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Criminal Offense<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Assault: 37%○ Domestic Violence or Battery: 13%○ Burglary: 13%○ Criminal Threats: 7%○ Resisting Arrest: 7%○ Robbery: 4%○ Carjacking: 3%○ Other (Theft, Vandalism, Drugs, etc.): 16% |
|--|--|

Performance Outcomes

- ✚ The program has a 56% graduation rate and a 21% recidivism rate²

¹ Gender identity and primary diagnosis were compiled for individuals who participated in the program between 2009 and 2021. Criminal offenses were compiled for individuals who were actively enrolled in the program as of May 2022.

² Of the individuals who successfully completed the program between January 2009 to December 2020, 21% have been charged with a new felony in San Diego County.