

# PENNINGTON COUNTY VETERANS COURT

## **VOLUNTEER VETERAN MENTOR PROGRAM:**

The Volunteer Veteran Mentor Program is an integral component of the Veterans Court. The role of the Volunteer Veteran Mentor is to act as a coach, a guide, a role model, an advocate, and a support for the veteran participant with whom they are working. Veteran Mentors offer assistance, assess needs, and help the veteran participant solve their problems. Veteran Mentors support the veteran participant through their readjustment to civilian life and during navigation of the Court, treatment, and VA systems.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

If you served in the U.S. Armed Forces and are interested in becoming a Volunteer Veteran Mentor to support veterans during their journey through the criminal justice system, please contact:

**Mentor Coordinator Darla Crown**  
at (605) 391-5555 or  
[darlacrown@yahoo.com](mailto:darlacrown@yahoo.com)

## **PENNINGTON COUNTY VETERANS COURT TEAM:**

Honorable Todd Hyronimus (Judge)  
Ashlee May (Coordinator)  
Trevor Thielen (Prosecutor)  
Jonathan McCoy (Defense Attorney)  
Mandy Enders (Court Services)  
Alex Purcell (Health & Human Services)  
Uzo Obineche (Treatment-VA)  
Deanna Nolan (Treatment-ATS)  
Aimee Janvrin (Treatment-BMS)  
Captain Dustin Morrison (Law Enforcement)  
Darla Crown (Mentor Coordinator)

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**“Veterans fought for our  
freedom, now it’s our  
turn to fight for theirs”**

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**You are welcome to observe the  
Pennington County Veterans Court.  
Court sessions are held  
every other Tuesday morning at  
the Pennington County Courthouse.**  
Please call for specific dates and times.



315 E St Joseph Street  
PO Box 230  
Rapid City, SD  
(605) 394-2595

## MISSION

### WHAT IS VETERANS COURT:

The United States military instills values all Americans aspire to – discipline, duty, honor, and commitment – values that are evident in millions of veterans who return home strengthened by their experience. Although most veterans return home strengthened by their military service, the combat experience has unfortunately left a growing number of veterans suffering from substance abuse, mental health disorders, and trauma. Left untreated, mental health disorders common among veterans, such as Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, can directly lead to homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system. For those whose difficulties lead to involvement with the criminal justice system, Veterans Courts ensure that we leave no veteran behind.

Veterans Courts are making certain our veterans receive the benefits and treatment they have earned when they need it most. The structure of the Veterans Court program appeals to veterans who have experienced a loss of structure upon coming home. Veterans Courts build upon military camaraderie by allowing participants to go through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated and have common past experiences and through the use of volunteer veteran mentors. The courtroom truly becomes a place of hope and healing.

**The mission of the Pennington County Veteran's Court is to successfully habilitate veterans by redirecting them from the traditional criminal justice system, and providing them with the resources, and earned benefits (if applicable) they need to lead productive and law-abiding lives.**

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### PROGRAM OUTLINE:

The Pennington County Veterans Court was established in Rapid City, South Dakota in March of 2016. The Pennington County Veterans Court is a voluntary program that provides intensive case management of adult felony offenders whose service in the U.S. Armed Forces has resulted in substance abuse and/or mental health disorders.

The Veterans Court program is challenging and requires accountability on behalf of the veteran participants. The veteran participants are held accountable through regular appearances before the Veterans Court Judge, frequent and random drug testing, substance abuse counseling and/or mental health counseling in individual and group settings, educational classes, a system of behavior modification based on incentives and sanctions, and intense community supervision by the Veterans Court Team.

One of the many goals of the Veterans Court is to assist veterans who struggle following their service to recover and lead healthy, productive lives. The program length depends on each veteran participant's progress at meeting all requirements of the Veterans Court, but is no less than a year.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- ✓ Service in the U.S. Armed Forces
  - ✓ Voluntary participation
  - ✓ Substantially impacted by drugs/alcohol and/or a mental health disorder
  - ✓ Not required to register as a sex offender
  - ✓ High Risk / High Need
  - ✓ Not on parole
  - ✓ Willing to maintain residency as directed to ensure intensive supervision
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### HOW CAN YOU HELP:

- ◆ Donate goods and services to the Veterans Court (gift certificates for groceries, gas, haircuts, restaurants, recreation, etc.)
- ◆ Consider hiring Veterans Court participants
- ◆ Consider renting to Veterans Court participants
- ◆ Volunteer to be a Veteran Mentor
- ◆ Consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Pennington County Veterans Protocol Court Association.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about the Pennington County Veterans Court program, please contact:

**Coordinator Ashlee May  
at (605) 394-2595 or  
Ashlee.May@ujs.state.sd.us**