

# Statewide Strategic Planning for Problem-Solving Courts

There are more than 3,000 problem-solving courts nationwide, and some states have dozens, or even hundreds. As problem-solving courts continue to expand, it is increasingly important that states engage in thoughtful planning and coordination to ensure that these courts are adhering to best practices and achieving the best possible outcomes. The Center for Court Innovation supports states in these efforts by facilitating statewide strategic planning for problem-solving courts. Using the Center's guided strategic planning process, states can develop statewide training programs, create performance standards, allocate resources more efficiently, and strengthen problem-solving court operations.

## The Strategic Planning Process

The Center's strategic planning process is flexible and can be adjusted to fit the needs of state court systems, state problem-solving court associations, or other organizations. The basic steps are outlined below.

### 1. Planning Committee

The strategic planning process begins by convening a multi-disciplinary planning group representing all of the key stakeholder agencies that participate in, support, or are impacted by problem-solving courts. The Center can help to assemble an appropriate planning committee and facilitate committee meetings as needed.

### 2. Needs Assessment

A thorough needs assessment is critical to identifying the challenges and opportunities facing a statewide problem-solving court system, as well as the strengths and resources that can enable the state to meet these challenges. The needs assessment allows the planning committee to develop a full understanding of the system's

current operations and areas of need. The Center guides the planning committee through a robust needs assessment that includes the following:

#### — *Drug Court Operations Survey*

The Center provides the state with a detailed survey and assists the planning committee in administering the survey to all of the state's problem-solving courts. The survey is designed to assess target population, screening and referral processes, treatment services, client supervision, and many other areas of operations. It also gathers important data from the state's problem-solving courts. The Center analyzes the results of the survey and produces a report summarizing key findings.

#### — *Stakeholder Focus Groups and Interviews*

The Center facilitates focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, including treatment court judges, court coordinators, treatment providers, probation officers, and others, to develop a more nuanced understanding of the issues facing the state's problem-solving courts.

### **3. Strategic Planning Workshop**

Following the needs assessment, the Center leads an on-site strategic planning workshop with the planning committee. With the Center's guidance, the planning committee reviews the needs assessment, identifies planning priorities, develops a mission statement, and creates a detailed action plan outlining goals, objectives, and tasks needed to carry out the strategic plan. Common areas of focus include promoting fidelity to best practices, developing statewide training strategies for new and experienced team members, creating a statewide data collection and evaluation protocol, and allocating resources efficiently.

### **4. Final Plan and Ongoing Support**

After the strategic planning workshop, Center staff continue to work closely with the planning committee to finalize the strategic plan and provide implementation support.

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### **For More Information**

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