

Community Engagement

The Community Justice Center has an advisory board where all city partner agencies involved in the project are represented alongside members of the Community Benefit Districts of the four neighborhoods served by the project. The board meets quarterly, and supports the Justice Center in several ways including by providing updated information on homeless outreach efforts, new housing that is available for the population served, and relevant new initiatives being spearheaded by partner agencies.

Outcomes*

- Annual caseload: 1450
 - Number of social service referrals annually: nearly 600
 - Hours of community service performed annually: Over 700 hours
- *2015 data*



The San Francisco Community Justice Center.

About Mentor Courts

In 2014, the San Francisco Community Justice Center was selected by the Center for Court Innovation, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, to serve as one of four exemplary mentors to courts around the nation.

The mentor court initiative promotes the implementation and enhancement of the community court model and the wider application of its core principles in general court calendars.

The mentor courts—which were chosen in a peer-reviewed competitive process—host site visits, answer questions over the phone or Internet from practitioners, and participate in conferences and workshops.

For more information about the San Francisco Community Justice Center, please contact Allyson West, Court Coordinator, at (415) 551-5941 or AWest@sftc.org.

For more information about community courts, please visit www.courtinnovation.org or contact the Center for Court Innovation at info@courtinnovation.org.

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BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

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San Francisco Community Justice Center



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www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/divisions/collaborative/community-justice

Community Courts

Community courts are collaborative (or “problem-solving”) courts that attempt to address the underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior and give justice system officials more meaningful options when handling lower-level offenses. They seek to implement new, creative approaches to community engagement; they spread evidence-based practices to link offenders to appropriate interventions; and they encourage the use of judicial monitoring to promote accountability and offer meaningful alternatives to incarceration.

Overview of the Court

Opened in 2009, the San Francisco Community Justice Center—a partnership between the San Francisco Superior Court and numerous other agencies—is a collaborative court and social service center that seeks to improve public safety and the lives of participants and community residents.

The Justice Center promotes responsibility among participants through judicial monitoring and by providing social services to address issues that may be contributing to criminal behavior.

The services provided at the San Francisco Community Justice Center are focused on the high-crime Tenderloin catchment area. The Service Center is open to all who need assistance.

Over 50% of incoming clients are substance dependent.

Fewer than 10% of clients are employed at intake. Nearly 40% of clients are homeless, and an additional 41% of clients have unstable housing.

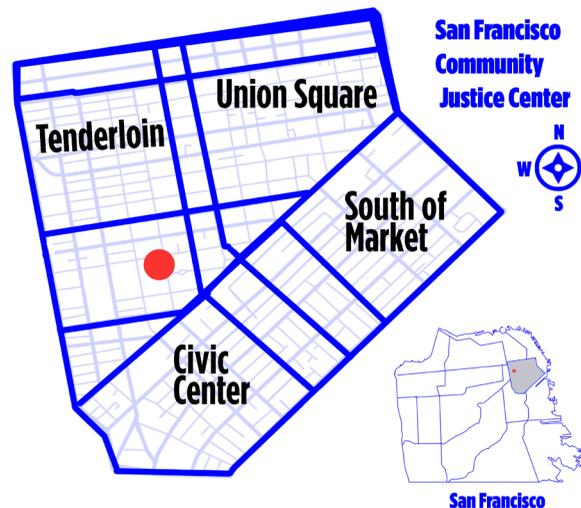
Eligible Offenses

Eligible cases typically originate as a summons or arrest that is arraigned at the community court within one week.

The court accepts misdemeanor cases that compromise public safety as well as non-violent drug-related offenses that occur in the area served. The most common types of cases include grand and petty theft; vandalism and graffiti; battery; commercial and auto burglary; and narcotic possession offenses.

In addition to hearing misdemeanor cases, the San Francisco Community Justice Center is one of the few community courts to hear serious case types—including nonviolent felonies and probation revocation cases—from the area served by the project: the Tenderloin, Civic Center, Union Square, and SOMA neighborhoods.

San Francisco Community Justice Center Catchment Area



Social Services

The Community Justice Center links participants to individualized community and court-based services after a screening by the social services team to determine their needs.

In most instances, if participants comply with the mandated conditions, their case will be dismissed.



The courtroom at the San Francisco Community Justice Center.

Community Service

Many participants are ordered to perform court-supervised community service in lieu of being sent to jail or paying fines.

Participants may work on beautification projects for the Parks and Recreation Department or perform community service for partnering nonprofit organizations.