

ing
the cycle

of quality-of-life crimes

The Philadelphia Community Court is a partnership of the City of Philadelphia, First Judicial District, District Attorney, Defender Association, Police Department, the City Coordinating Office for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Programs and the Center City District. The Court is supported with generous funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, Independence Foundation, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Penn's Landing Corp/Philadelphia Industrial Development Corp. Joint Operating Committee, U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance, Thomas Skelton Harrison Foundation, Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation, Philadelphia Bar Foundation, Samuel S. Fels Fund, Lincoln Financial Group Foundation and the City of Philadelphia, Michael A. Nutter, Mayor.

Philadelphia Community Court



Philadelphia Community Court

break

An Innovative Partnership

The Philadelphia Community Court

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community

service

behavioral

treatment



We want our criminal justice system to focus on serious crime. But too often in the past, petty crimes got a lower priority and troubled individuals who committed these offenses cycled through the system and wound up back on the street.

The Philadelphia Community Courts

- an innovative court that combines criminal justice and social service agencies under one roof for a comprehensive response to quality-of-life crimes.
- emphasizes community service sentences and behavioral treatment programs, rather than jail time, for low-level offenders.
- helps reduce repeat offenses by addressing the defendants' underlying social service needs.



The Philadelphia Community Courts

- has jurisdiction over quality-of-life offenses, including theft from auto, retail theft, minor drug possession, vandalism and prostitution.
- operates within a geographic boundary that includes Center City, University City and sections of North and South Philadelphia.
- provides expedited hearings, no later than the next business day after arrest.
- emphasizes community service sentences as restitution to the neighborhood where the crime was committed.
- provides offenders with a sense of personal achievement and fundamental job skills. Offenders have worked with sidewalk cleaning, kiosk maintenance and graffiti removal crews of the Center City District and the University City District; in the offices of nonprofit organizations that provide services to the homeless; and have assisted with neighborhood clean-ups.



The Philadelphia Community Courts

- addresses the underlying causes of criminal behavior with professional evaluations, performed by on-site social service staff and provided to the judge prior to sentencing.
- provides on-site classes in drug treatment readiness and anger management, as well as physical health screenings, nutritional medical care and referrals.
- places offenders in drug treatment, health care, education, job training and other programs, either mandated by the Court or entered voluntarily by the offender, to break the cycle of crime.

Philadelphia has placed a high priority on reducing quality-of-life crimes and the Philadelphia Community Court is a vital part of the solution. By focusing on carefully selected offenses with resources that address addiction and other social problems, and by making offenders accountable for the consequences of their illegal conduct, Community Court is an effective deterrent and response to quality-of-life crimes.

If your organization is interested in providing social services to the Community Court population, or if you would like to serve as a supervised community service placement site, please contact our program manager, at 215.683.1570.

If you would like to support the work of the Community Court, you can make a contribution to the Center City District Foundation, 800 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia PA 19106.

The official registration and financial information for the Center City District Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-785-6894.

