



The Philadelphia Courts

First Judicial District of Pennsylvania



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The MENTOR Program



Mission:

The MENTOR Program, an initiative of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, seeks to reduce criminal recidivism by providing mentoring to individuals involved in the criminal justice system and returning to the Philadelphia community.

About MENTOR

MENTOR is a court-based program, coordinated by Judge Michael Erdos and Judge Lisa Rau, that matches individuals serving county sentences with volunteer mentors. Over the course of the one-year program term, mentors provide emotional support and encouragement to their participants, as well as practical assistance to overcome some of the traditional barriers to successful reentry. MENTOR also empowers its participants to take advantage of additional resources provided through a network of community-based partner organizations.

When a participant successfully completes the MENTOR Program, he or she will receive a substantial reduction in the remaining term of court supervision. This is a carrot, not a stick. In addition, it is expected that participation in MENTOR will result in healthier communities and families, and a decrease in the various human and financial costs associated with crime, prosecution, and incarceration.

MENTOR Partner Organizations:

- BENEP Philly
- Community Legal Services
- Connection Training Services
- Defender Association of Philadelphia
- EMIR (Every Murder is Real)
- Face to Face
- Federation for Neighborhood Centers
- Fox Rothschild Center for Law and Society | Community College of Philadelphia
- Mayor's Project RISE
- Philadelphia Adult Probation and Parole
- Philadelphia District Attorney's Office
- Philadelphia FIGHT
- Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity
- Philadelphia Mural Arts Program
- The Center for Returning Citizens



Press

- Patricia Madej. "Courts play mentoring matchmaker" Philly.com. Web. 13 June 2014.
- Martha Fisher. "Mentor Program Offers Blueprint For Re-Entry" Philadelphia Bar Reporter. Web. July 2014.
- Gabriel B. Roberts. "MENTOR: A Blueprint for Successful Re-entry" FJD-Intranet. Web. 27 June 2014.
- Helen Ubinas. "With full-time job, ex-con gains some independence" Philly.com. Web. 2 July 2014.

MENTOR Program Overview

Participant Eligibility:

MENTOR participants are men and women, ages 18-30, who have pled guilty in front of Judge Michael Erdos, been referred by the Defender Association of Philadelphia and approved by the

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Interpreter Services

If you or someone you know requires the use of a language interpreter, **free of charge**, please contact Roseann DiPrimio at 215-683-8000, or email interpreters@courts.phila.gov and we will be happy to assist you.

To contact Court Interpreter Administration, [click here](#). Para contactar a la Oficina Administrativa de Intérpretes de los Juzgados, [haga un clic aquí](#).

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Employment

Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, and have accepted an offer to be part of the MENTOR Program. Defendants with current firearms offenses, violent felonies or sex crimes -- or a history of such offenses -- are ineligible for the program. Participation in the MENTOR Program is entirely voluntary.

Mentor Eligibility:

Mentors are men and women, ages 21 and older, who volunteer their time and are committed to helping returning citizens become productive members of the Philadelphia community. Current mentors include graduate students, members of faith-based organizations, formerly incarcerated citizens and many other dedicated individuals from various walks of life. MENTOR encourages mentor applicants who have previously been involved in the criminal justice system but they must have been discharged from court supervision for at least two years before serving as a mentor. Those interested in mentoring must submit an application to the MENTOR Program, complete an in-person interview, and submit to a criminal background check. Every mentor candidate must also be approved by the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office.



Program Requirements:

To satisfy the requirements of the MENTOR Program, participants must communicate with their mentors by phone, text or email twice per week. Participants must also meet with their mentors in person two times per month for thirty minutes or more.

In addition to building a relationship with their mentor, participants are required to appear before Judge Erdos for monthly status hearings to monitor their progress participate in educational programs. . Participants must also complete an intake meeting at Project RISE, a reentry employment assistance program of the City of Philadelphia Mayor's Office.

Contact MENTOR

For more information on the MENTOR Program, [click here](#).

To apply to be a MENTOR, [click here](#).

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