

# New Specialty Courts Added, New Grants Awarded to Benefit Families and Community

By Chief Judge Linda Marie Bell

The surge of opioid abuse has overwhelmed the child welfare system in our community, leaving many families devastated. The Nevada Eighth Judicial District Court (EJDC) has been awarded an \$874,097 U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs grant for family-treatment drug court inpatient treatment and housing with intensive outpatient treatment. The funding will be used to address the crisis-level need in the family-treatment drug court for housing and wraparound services. The court applied to the DOJ for the much needed funding that will

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break down to approximately \$291,365 a year. The grant will cover 13 residential beds and 13 housing slots with intensive outpatient treatment each year, until September 30, 2021. The grant will help achieve the court goal to improve outcomes to reunify families; improve parent engagement and retention; decrease substance abuse and

improve family functioning. The District Court Family



**Judge Linda Marie Bell** assumed the chief judge post effective July 1, 2018. She was elected to the Eighth Judicial District Court, Department 7, in 2008. Since taking the bench in January 2009, she has handled both civil and criminal cases and managed the criminal division specialty courts for more than two years.

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Treatment Drug Court program is a voluntary program. Participation in the program involves either a written referral from a Department of Family Services case manager and/or parental request to start the program.

The EJDC was also awarded a \$381,551 U.S. DOJ Office of Justice Programs grant for mental health court (MHC). MHC provides intensive treatment and will use the DOJ grant funding to implement an actuarial, gender-responsive criminogenic risk/need assessment to tailor the services and supervision for mental health court participants. The grant will fund implementation of capacity analysis, training on the implementation of the women's risk/needs assessment, and the adoption of cognitive-behavioral, gender-responsive programming.

The family division also recently added an autism treatment court to address juveniles in the justice system diagnosed with autism. Hearing Master Sunny Bailey presides over the new specialty court under the direction of Judge William Voy. An approach that is

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geared to promote success with those on the spectrum is used in the autism court. Resources are made available to families so participants can get adequate treatment, rehabilitate, and get their lives on a positive path.

The Nevada Eighth Judicial District court launched the first gambling treatment diversion court (GTDC) in Nevada. Judge Cheryl Moss presides over the gambling diversion court. Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 458A was amended in 2009 to permit a defendant to enter a gambling diversion treatment program if a criminal judge deems they are eligible in lieu of incarceration. The GTDC will use the best practices already in place in Clark County's other specialty courts. Nevada is a world leader in gaming and our specialty courts have achieved significant success, so it makes perfect sense that our state should lead the way when it comes to gambling treatment diversion. The gambling treatment diversion court is the first of its kind in the state and the second in the nation. 



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