



SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COURT

**OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
CRIMINAL DIVISION**

Criminal Division



- In 2014, over 20,000 cases reviewed and 13,700 cases issued
- The General Trial Unit had an 90% conviction rate for cases that went to trial in 2014
- The Domestic Violence and Sex Crimes Unit had an overall conviction rate of 96.1% in 2014
- With the passage of Proposition 47, our office now handles more drug and theft related offenses

Problem-Solving Courts, Restorative Justice Programs & Partnerships



- Homeless Court & Stand Down
- Behavioral Health Court
- Veteran's Treatment Court
- Beach Area Community Court
- Prostitution Impact Panel (PIP)
- Survivors of the Streets (SOS)
- Serial Inebriate Program (SIP)
- Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)

Criminal Justice System



“Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.”

San Diego Community Court



What exactly is San Diego
Community Court?



San Diego Community Court



“We created Community Court so these low-level offenders had a chance to keep their records clean and get on the right path before it’s too late. ... The public service they perform is just one of the many benefits, which also includes millions of dollars in taxpayer savings.”

-City Attorney Jan Goldsmith

San Diego Community Court



All misdemeanor offenses are eligible for Community Court subject to certain exclusions.



San Diego Community Court



Offense Exclusions

- Driving under the influence
- Domestic violence
- Sex offenses
- Child abuse
- Elder abuse
- Hate crimes
- Cases eligible for other statutory diversion
- Infractions

Offender Exclusions

- Registered sex offenders
- Offenders with strike priors within the last ten years
- Chronic offenders (i.e. SIP eligible)
- Arsonists
- Offenders with open warrants

**The prosecutor reserves the right to exercise prosecutorial discretion as to which cases are eligible to participate.*

San Diego Community Court



Eligible participants earn a dismissal of their criminal case if he/she completes:

- 16 hours of community work service within 60 days
- \$120 administrative fee or indigent slot
- Future court appearances are vacated

Participants who fail to complete the terms will be sentenced to 2 or 5 days in jail.



San Diego Community Court



SDCC is optional and voluntary. Offenders can choose to still go through the traditional criminal justice system.

- Incentives:
 - 90 days = shorter process than going through courts
 - Avoid fees, lengthy court process, summary probation, criminal conviction
 - Exposure to local social service providers and opportunities for placement



San Diego Community Court is a program led the San Diego City Attorney's Office in cooperation with:

- The Public Defender's Office
- San Diego Sheriff's Department
- Urban Corps of San Diego County
- Alpha Project
- Community members (District 4)

San Diego Community Court



SDCC Offers	Accepted Offers	Rejected Offers	Total Offers
Overall	849 (66%)	436	1285
October	94 (71%)	38	132
September	64 (64%)	35	99
August	70 (74%)	24	94
July	94 (76%)	30	124
June	81 (68%)	38	119
May	60 (59%)	42	102
April	93 (76%)	29	122
March	63 (57%)	48	111
February	80 (66%)	42	122
January	73 (61%)	46	119
December	61 (55%)	49	110
November	16 (52%)	15	31

*Data through 10/31/15

San Diego Community Court



- More than 8,720 hours of work service has been completed in the City of San Diego through San Diego Community Court.
- Approximately \$85,020 of taxpayer savings based on the current minimum wage of \$9.75 per hour.

Successful Completion	545 (83%)
Failed to Complete	114
Total	659

San Diego Community Court



This is an amazing partnership and a win-win for everyone involved.

– *Bob McElroy, the President and CEO of Alpha Project*



As jurisdictions across the state continue to implement Proposition 47, the San Diego Community Court may serve as a model new approach designed to improve public safety and taxpayer money.

– *Margaret Dooley-Sammuli, the Criminal Justice and Drug Policy Director of the ACLU*

San Diego Community Court

The Community Court experience has been positive for the vast majority of participants. These folks are eager to sign up, quietly perform their community service work, and at the end of the day express gratitude for the opportunity to clear their name by giving back to the City of San Diego.

– *Sam Lopez, Urban Corps*



The City Attorney's Community Court program has been an immediate success – not only by diverting nonviolent and non-serious offenders out of the criminal justice system but by generating thousands of work hours performed by our clients that directly benefit the San Diego community.

- *Henry C. Coker, the Public Defender of San Diego County*

San Diego Community Court



Moving forward:

- Implement evidence-based risk assessments in the Community Court process
 - Establishes risk and harm reduction as fundamental goals
 - Efforts will be measured, justified and replicated
- Expand upon the linkage to social services
 - Housing, employment, education, counseling, health care, access to benefits ideally through the case manager model
- Integrate community participation
 - Advisory boards, impact panels, work service participation, etc.



**CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY
NEIGHBORHOOD PROSECUTION UNIT**

JAMIE LEDEZMA

JLEDEZMA@SANDIEGO.GOV

(619) 533-5500