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## The What, How, and Why

-  What is VTC?
-  How does it work in JOCO?
-  Why is our work important?

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# WHAT IS VETERANS TREATMENT COURT?

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<https://youtu.be/sxeAMKCav5I>

*Courtesy of Justice for Vets, NADCP*

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## Aligning to a Trauma-Informed Lens



### SAMHSA's Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Care

- Safety
- Trustworthiness & Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration & Mutuality
- Empowerment; Voice & Choice
- Cultural, Historical, & Gender Issues

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## Collaboration & Mutuality

- Interagency
  - 10<sup>th</sup> District Court of Kansas
  - Kansas City VA
  - Johnson County District Attorney's Office
  - Johnson County Public Defender's Office
  - Johnson County Court Services
  - Johnson County Sheriff's Office
  - Johnson County Mental Health
  - AverHealth Testing
  - Justice Information Systems
- Collaborative Team
  - Justice-Involved Veteran
  - Judge
  - Court Coordinator
  - Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator
  - JCMH Coordinator
  - Veteran Mentor Coordinator
  - Probation Officer
  - District Attorneys
  - Public Defenders
  - Sheriff Deputies
  - Mentors
  - Many Community Partners

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## Safety & Empowerment; Voice & Choice

How does VTC create a sense of physical and psychological safety

- Veteran-only Dockets
- Confidential Staffing
  - *Private info stays private*
- Law Enforcement specifically assigned to VTC

Empowering Voice & Choice

- Veteran works with Case Manager to set up plan
- Direct access to the Judge
- Veteran can appeal positive UA's
- Phase Promotions throughout the program
- Veteran chooses pro-social activities
- Veteran develops ongoing Recovery Plan

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## Trustworthiness & Transparency

Promote sobriety, recovery, and stability through

- Routine contact with treatment providers
- Accountability meetings with Court Services
- Frequent testing
- Incentivizing positive behavior
- Pre-Identified, graduated sanctions
- Scheduled Home Visits



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## Peer Support & Cultural Issues

- Each justice-involved veteran is assigned a vetted veteran mentor
- Veterans on the VTC Team
- Veterans paired with treatment providers who curate specific treatment plans
- Uphold military camaraderie
- Connect veterans with local veteran community organizations community service and pro-social activities
- Team regularly attends training and community events regarding veteran issues

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## Volunteer Veteran Mentors

- Structured Mentoring
- Supporting:
  - *Securing Stable Housing*
  - *Securing Transportation*
  - *Finding a Job/Job Training*
  - *Furthering Education*
  - *Filing Compensation Claims*
  - *Contesting Discharge Status*
  - *Connecting with services and community resources/services*



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<https://youtu.be/bQYd6Zn47AQ>

*Courtesy of Justice for Vets, NADCP*

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# HOW DOES IT WORK IN JOHNSON COUNTY?

Innovative alternative approach for Veterans from incarceration into supervised treatment and supportive services.

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## In short...

We identify veterans in the criminal justice system and, when eligible, place them into treatment and court supervision as an alternative to incarceration.

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## Mission Statement

The Mission of the Johnson County, Kansas Veterans Treatment Court is to promote public safety by providing an **interagency, collaborative, non-adversarial treatment** strategy to veterans in the criminal justice system who suffer from mental health and/or substance abuse issues related to their service in our Armed Forces.

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## Early Detection of Justice-Involved Veterans

### Self-identification

- With a partnership with JCSO, all new arrestees admitted into the detention facility have the opportunity to self-identify with veteran status
- At first appearance if a veteran status is made known, they're case will be reassigned to DIV 18 Vet Docket.

### Continuation

- When assigned to DIV 18 Vet Docket, veterans (and counsel) will have opportunity to speak with team members directly regarding:
  - *Diversion*
  - *Probation/Post-Imprisonment*
  - *Probation Revocation*
  - *VA/JCMH services*
- Pretrial Veterans are assigned a VTC-trained Probation Officer.

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## Who is Eligible?

**Any identified veteran** of the US Military can apply for VTC apart from the following:

### Excluded Offenses

- Off Grid Offenses
- Felony Sex Offenses
- Registered Sex Offenders
- Offenses Involving Serious Bodily Harm or Death
- Drive-by Shootings
- Offenses Requiring Interstate Compact Supervision
- Felony Levels 1-3 (no Diversion)
- Drug Felony Levels 1-3 (no Diversion)

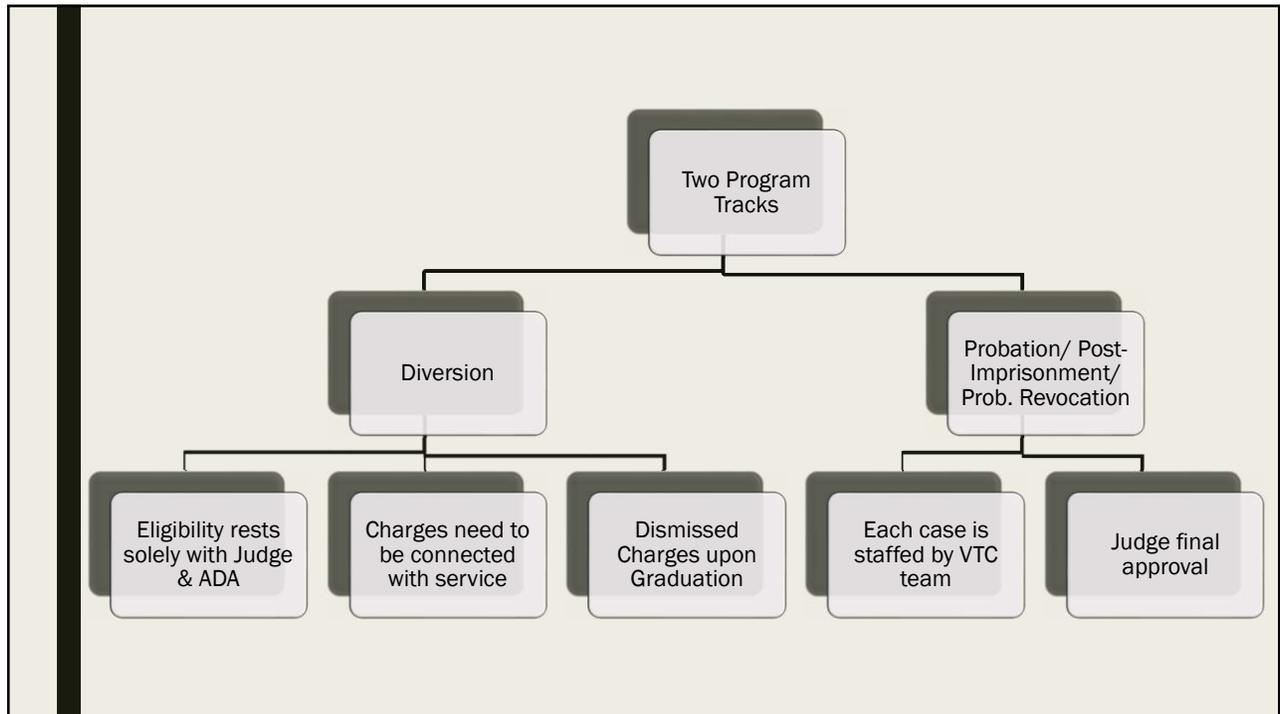
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# Unique to Johnson County, KS

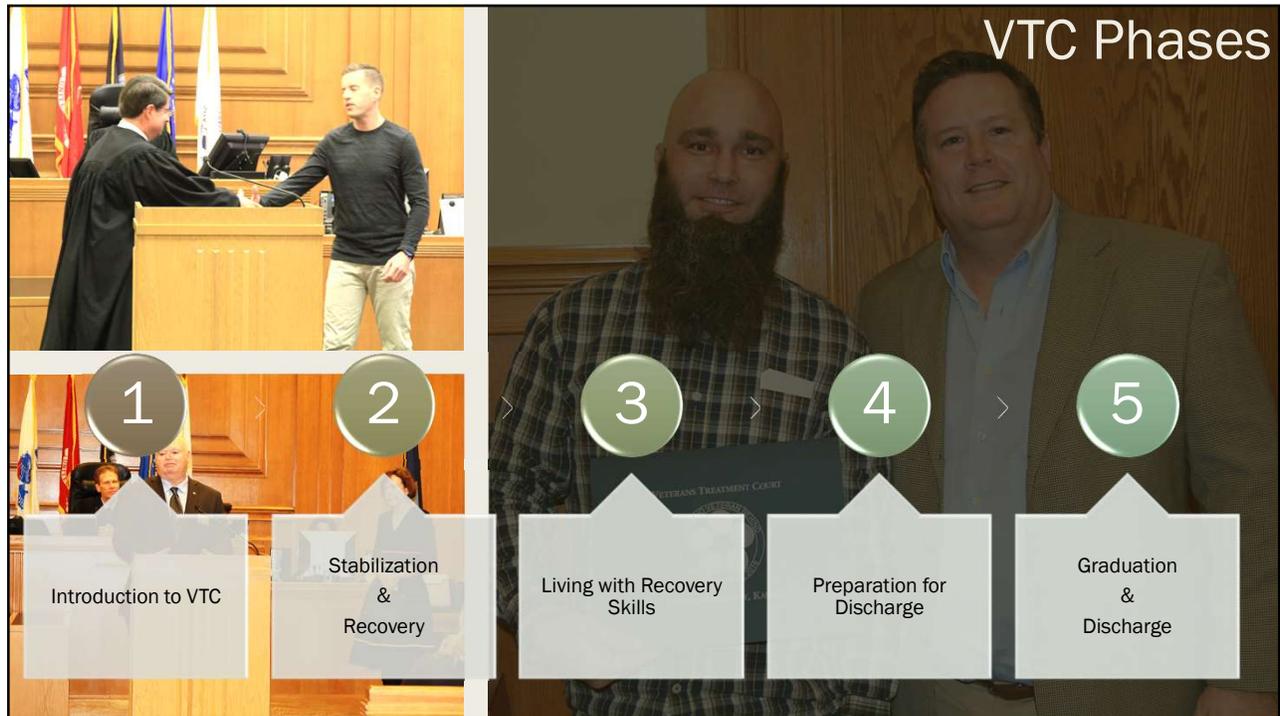
Because of our unique partnership with JCMH, we can accept veterans with a wide array of discharge statuses including those ineligible for VA benefits & services.



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## Incentives & Non-Profit Foundation

Participants' behavior is positively reinforced through:

- Gift cards
- Personal Care Items
- Apparel

\*The VTC Foundation provides support for barriers to treatment.

Our Foundation has helped veterans pay bills, fix and purchase vehicles, travel vouchers, etc.

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## Graduation and Public Recognition

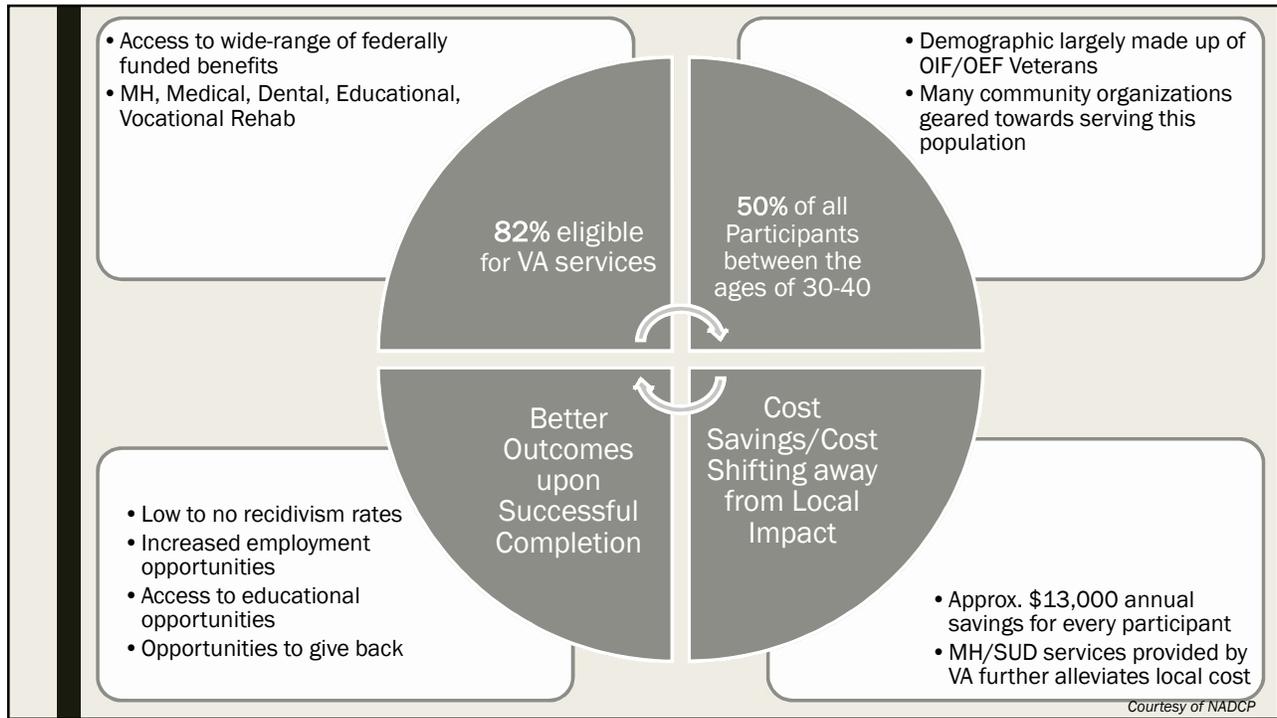
- Intentionally a big deal!
- Veterans are welcomed back into community
- Encouraged to speak about their journey
- Pass on lessons learned
- Interact with stakeholders and community leaders



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WHY IS THE WORK  
IMPORTANT?

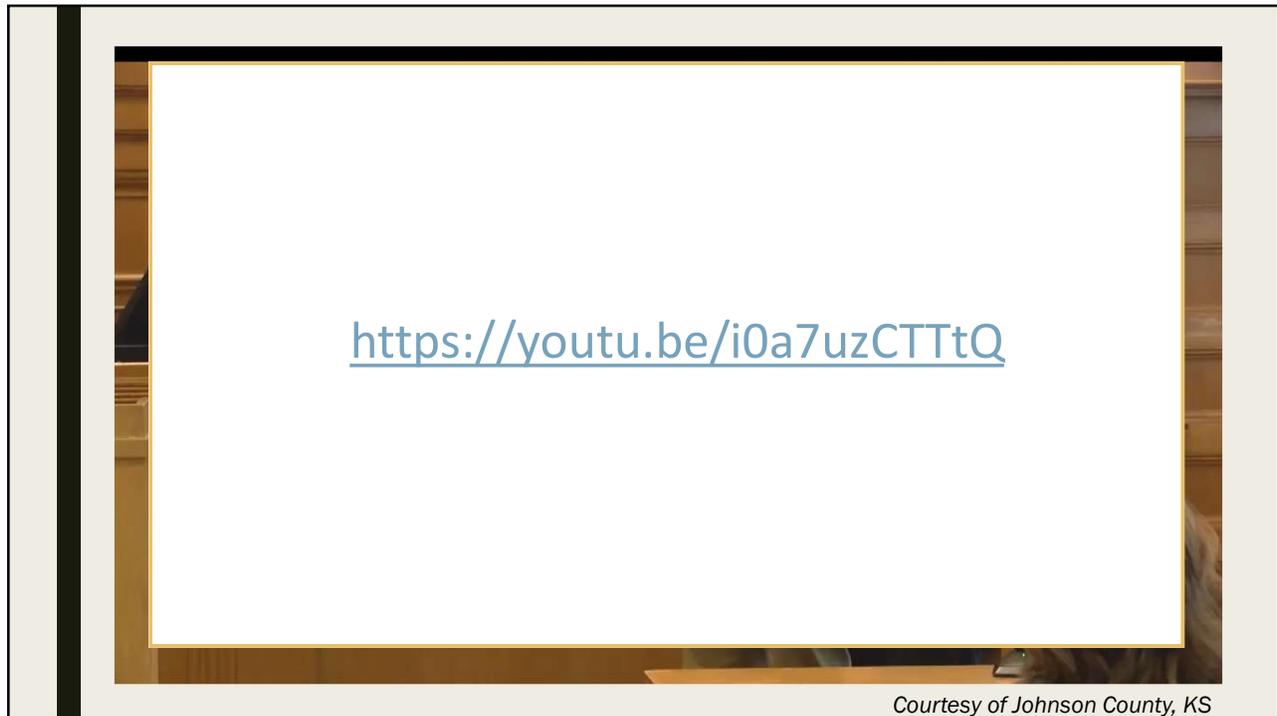
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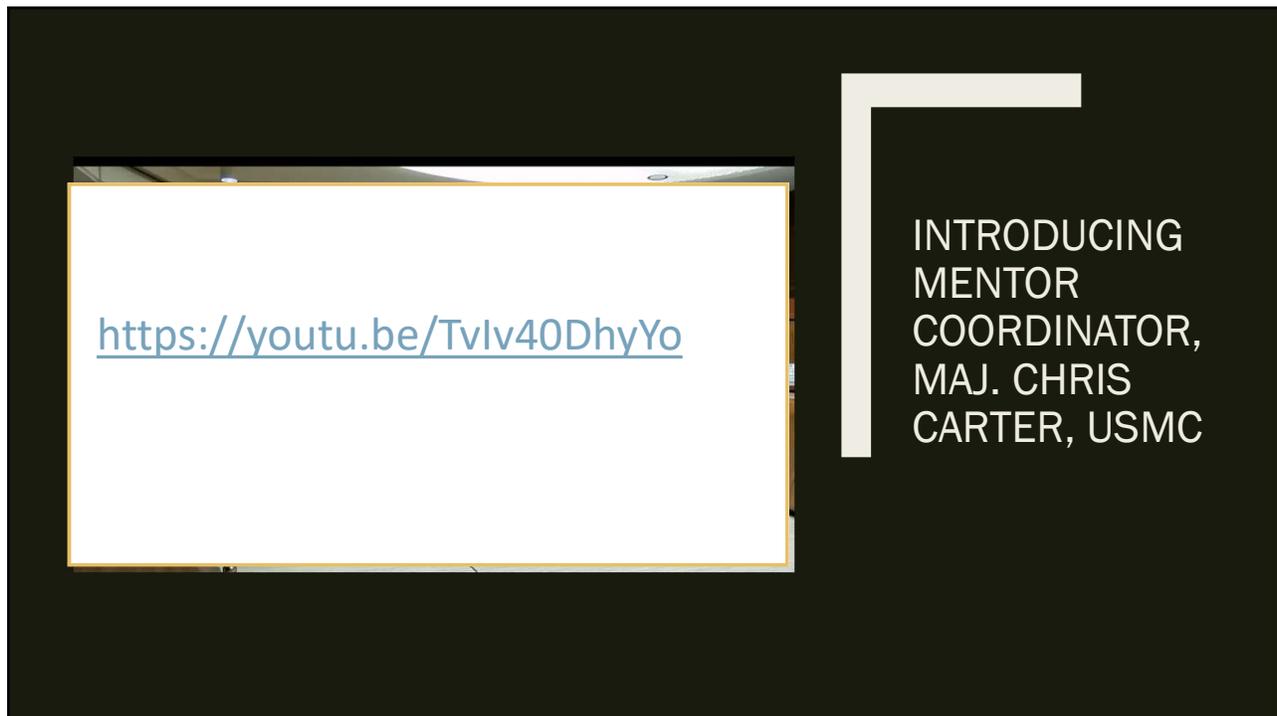
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THE WORK OF THE VTC IS ABOUT GIVING VETERANS THE AGENCY TO REGAIN SELF-CONFIDENCE. WHEN WE INVEST IN THE VETERAN, WE ARE INVESTING IN THEIR FAMILY, FRIENDS, COWORKERS, AND OUR COMMUNITY.

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