



Attorney General Doug Peterson

News Release

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Late in 2019, over forty attorneys general signed a letter encouraging Congress to further support Veteran Treatment Courts by passing the Veteran Treatment Court Coordination Act of 2019. Veteran Treatment Courts are diversionary court processes, similar to drug and mental health courts, used for minor, non-violent offenses. These courts pair veterans with mentors to address substance abuse and mental health issues and assist veterans with obtaining United States Veterans Administration benefits that can help them with treatment and employment. The U.S. Veterans Administration reported 561 Veteran Treatment Courts and similar court programs as of 2019.

The bill states, that “empirical studies show that veterans courts provide more effective means of rehabilitating justice-involved veterans than traditional criminal prosecutions. Although 20% of veterans court participants received jail sanctions during the program, only 14% experienced a new incarceration during an average of nearly one year in the program”.

The Veteran Treatment Court Coordination Act of 2019 passed on July 20, 2020, and was signed into law by the President on August 8, 2020.

The passage of the bill establishes the Veteran Treatment Court Program in the Office of Justice Programs, providing coordinated technical assistance to veteran advocates and local officials from the U.S. Department for veteran treatment courts.

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