



Supreme Court of Illinois

January 15, 2026

ILLINOIS DRUG COURTS RECEIVE \$45K GRANT TO BOLSTER SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAMS IN 6 RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) announced today that the Southern Illinois University (SIU) School of Medicine's Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development Rural Health Substance Use Disorder (CRHSSD) Leadership Center has recently awarded \$45,000 to rural drug courts in Illinois. Six rural courts (Clinton, Hancock, Jackson, Montgomery, Richland, and Whiteside) will receive funds to enhance existing programs.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is funding the initiative through a State Opioid Response Grant to the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Drug courts offer an alternative to probation or incarceration for high-risk, high-need defendants, offering intensive, individualized treatment and court supervision. Participants typically spend one to two years in these programs, which have proven highly effective. Nationally, drug court graduates have a 10–15% recidivism rate, compared to 66% for individuals on traditional probation or in prison.

“Drug courts not only reduce recidivism but also transform lives,” said Liesl Wingert, CRHSSD Leadership Center program coordinator. “By addressing the root causes of substance use, these programs help participants rebuild their lives, strengthen families and revitalize communities. These programs provide a pathway to recovery and long-term success for individuals struggling with substance use disorders.”

The \$45,000 in funding reflects the CRHSSD Leadership Center’s mission to improve the health and well-being of rural communities and is part of a broader effort to foster innovative solutions to substance use challenges across Illinois. The announcement of this support underscores the importance of community partnerships in fostering innovation and solutions for rural Illinois.

The AOIC would like to thank the SIU School of Medicine CRHSSD Leadership Center for their commitment to Illinois’ rural communities and encourages you to visit the CRHSSD Leadership Center website for more information about its programs and services.

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