

Grand Forks County
Domestic Violence Court

PROJECT NEWS

Trainings aimed at enhancing regional response to domestic violence



During an interactive session, participants filled in puzzle pieces describing their roles in system response to domestic violence cases.

Three experts in domestic violence cases were in Grand Forks in May for a day-long training attended by more than 40 area professionals.

The training, sponsored by CVIC's Coordinated Community Response Program with project grant funds, addressed a variety of topics including:

- The impacts of trauma and ways to incorporate a trauma-informed approach in response
- Identifying types of violence
- Enforcing protection orders associated with lethality risk

An interactive session helped attendees better understand complex reasons a victim might choose to remain in or return to an abusive relationship.

"Everyone played the role of a married mother of two in an abusive relationship," said Domestic Violence Court Coordinator Max Kollman, "but not everyone had the same amount of resources or available options. And each decision the victim made came with a cost. It was a thought-provoking exercise for all of us."

Sessions were led by:

- The Hon. Mary Madden, who is currently the lead judicial officer with Minnesota's Fourth District Family Court Enhancement Project.
- Darren Mitchell, a respected expert on domestic violence. Since 2000, he has trained judges, attorneys, advocates, and others.
- Jennifer Arsenian, who has worked in the domestic field for more than 20 years, currently serving as a senior program manager for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

"We are so fortunate to have had the opportunity to bring this training to Grand Forks. As we continue work to address domestic violence and strengthen collaboration among agencies and community stakeholders, events like this bring us together and reinforce our collective commitment to ending interpersonal violence," said Director of Community Response Jennifer Albert.

Blake addresses Consortium attendees

Judge Richard Blake, chief judge of the Hoopa Valley (Calif.) Tribal Court, was among the break-out presenters at the 2022 National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts in Grand Forks recently.

His session addressed challenges in Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and domestic violence highlighting topics including:

- Use of social media to groom youth for human trafficking
- Importance of removing the word 'prostitution' from states that have child prostitution statutes
- Advocating for equal access to justice and resources, comparing examples of national attention received when people of color go missing versus those who identify as Caucasian

“This is such an important topic and we were so fortunate to hear from one of the nation’s leading experts,” said Kollman.



More than 40 attended a day-long training in May hosted by CVIC’s Coordinated Community Response Program.

Webinar series provides continuing ed opportunity

In collaboration with the North Dakota Supreme Court and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, CVIC sponsored a portion of a 5-part webinar series this spring for ND judicial staff on topics including:

- Domestic Violence Victim and Perpetrator Behavior: Understanding Context and Coercive Control
- Incorporating Trauma Informed Responses into DV Cases
- Enhancing Court Responses to Civil Protection Orders
- Addressing Vicarious Trauma
- Improving Strategies for Enhancing Court Security Measures in DV Cases

Attendees responding to evaluations appreciated the convenience of attending virtually. “I think an educated judiciary about these issues is a good thing,” commented one respondent while another said a benefit of the sessions was “learning about the barriers in and out of the court system and how court professionals can work through those barriers.”

CVIC seeks to extend DVC funding

The Community Violence Intervention Center applied for a grant to extend Domestic Violence Court funding for another 3 years. The Office of Violence Against Women Justice for Families federal funding, which supports the collaboration efforts of Grand Forks County Domestic Violence Court, ends September 30.

As part of the application process, DV Court Steering Committee members identified a next step to conduct a thorough evaluation of the court in order to ensure the court is efficient and effective.

An announcement is expected this fall.

County duo attends court safety conference

DV Court Steering Committee member and Grand Forks County Clerk of District Court Alison Fiala and Grand Forks County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Haydn Harmon recently attended a conference exploring court safety and security.

The conference, hosted by the National Criminal Justice Training Center, provided attendees with:

- effective strategies and best practices to enhance a collaborative courthouse security philosophy.
- tools and resources from experts on current state and federal court services related to security planning.
- jury and witness safety considerations.
- threat assessment and management.

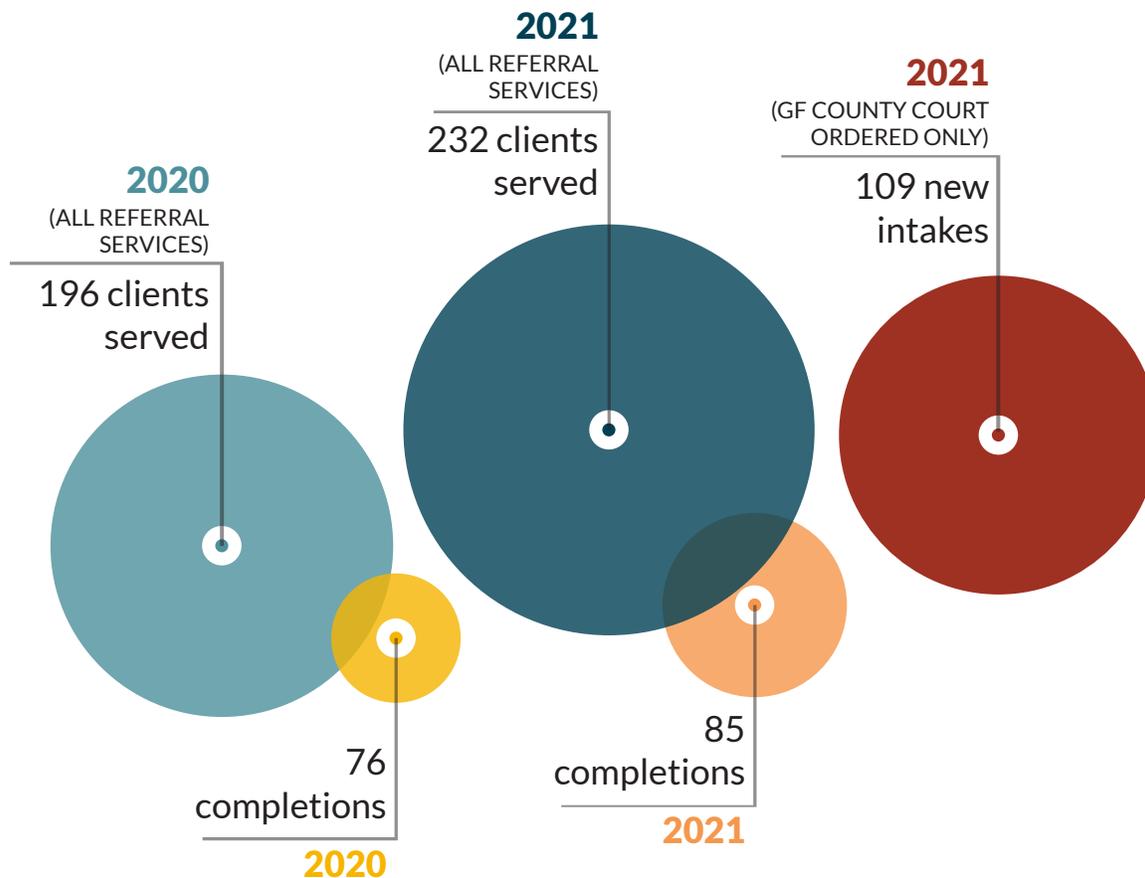
Presenters included experts in the areas of law enforcement, state and federal attorneys, judges and other court services.

Although this was a smaller conference than usual, due to the pandemic, attendees received an abundance of resources and ideas to implement in their communities to enhance courthouse safety and security for all who enter.

The highlighted topic sessions included: “What happens when a virus, a protest, and a media circus comes to town”; “Protective security details for high risk/profile court cases – from planning to execution”; “Social media and court room threats”; “Zero to 100 in 6 seconds – are you ready?”.

“Every presenter had a wealth of knowledge to share,” said Fiala, “I would highly recommend this conference as an annual training for court and law enforcement personnel.”

New Choices participants impacted by program



“When you first start, you don’t know what to expect. I thought I was going to be in a group with mean girls, but it could be anybody. It was nice to have support and sources for venting and alternatives. **All of our topics are like a tree that branches and connects.** Even if it seems like we are not directly talking about violence, we are in some way.”

- PARTICIPANT EXIT INTERVIEW

“The subjects I’ve learned from New Choices were very important. **You taught me to find better exits instead of using violence** ...(Violence) damages someone. It causes them to constantly live in the past because it causes trauma and it puts fear toward the partner or people in general. It takes years to heal from something traumatic in the past. ... I found better exits to diffuse an escalating situation without violence being involved, and what I’m taking from group into the community is to refrain from misbehaving because violence is not needed in a public place including someone else’s household. ...violence in the community is not an acceptable behavior; and it’s problematic thinking because that’s dangerous for anyone who thinks that way and it isn’t healthy for them.”

- PARTICIPANT EXIT INTERVIEW

NEW CHOICES BY THE NUMBERS

January-December 2021

137 defendants were ordered to complete an intake during this time period

- 117 DVC
- 15 non-DVC
- 5 ordered to DOCR

Out of **109** intakes provided during this period, **94** were DVC participants*

- Average of **28 days** between disposition/ release from incarceration to intake date
- On average intake was completed **6 days before** due date for DVC participants
- On average intake was completed **13 days after** due date for non-DVC participants

*Defendants are given 30 days from the date of sentencing or release from incarceration to complete an intake.

Average days from start to completion **

- 223 DVC
- 238 Non-DVC
- 164 DVC (Women’s group)

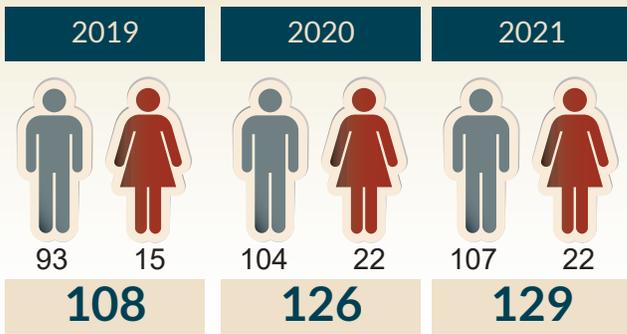
**If participants use all of their allotted absences it could take them 224 days for the men’s program and 168 days for the women’s program to complete.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT DATA

2019-2021

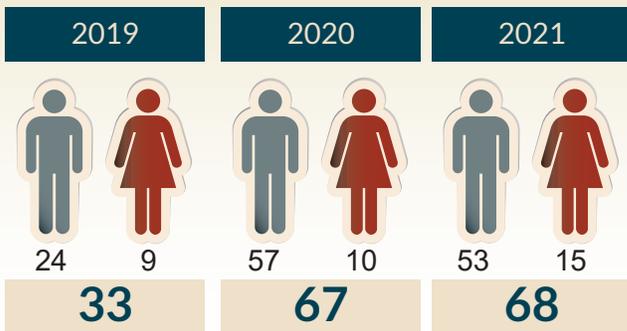
DV COURT STEERING COMMITTEE

DEFENDANTS ORDERED INTO DV COURT*



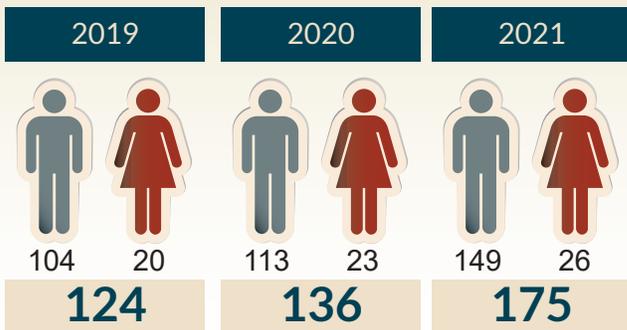
*Some defendants were ordered to DV Court in multiple cases.

DV COURT PARTICIPANTS COMPLETED**



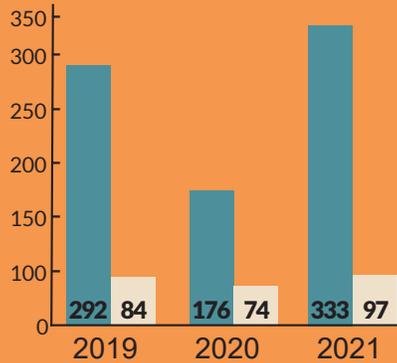
**Participants that completed during each reporting period could also include cases that were ordered the year(s) before.

UNDUPLICATED PARTICIPANTS WITH A SCHEDULED POST-SENTENCE REVIEW HEARING



(During the reporting period only)

DV COURT PARTICIPANT HEARING ATTENDED STATUS

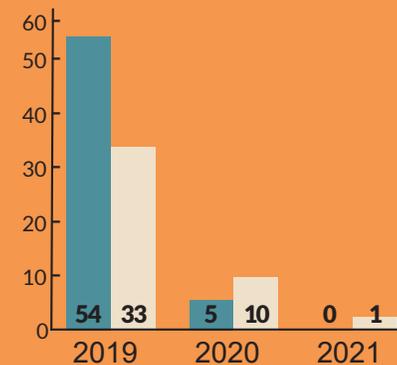


■ ATTENDED/APEARED
■ BENCH WARRANT

DV COURT SESSIONS HELD



OSC DEFENDANT HEARING ATTENDED STATUS:



■ ATTENDED/APEARED
■ BENCH WARRANT

TOTAL CASES HEARD IN DV COURT



***Due to COVID-19 four sessions were cancelled in 2020. As DV Court hearings resumed in June 2020, the focus was primarily on non-compliant participants, which resulted in fewer cases on the calendar per session. These are the primary reasons for the decrease in hearings in 2020.

Northeast Central Judicial District

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DISTRICT JUDGE

Scott Johnson
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Alison Fiala
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