

What happens in the end?

The length of time participants spend in either the **Mental Health Court Program** or the **Court-Monitored Drug Treatment Program** is based on the seriousness of the criminal charges they face and on their progress in the program.

Typically, participants can expect to be involved in the Program for at least 12 to 18 months.

The outcome when a participant successfully completes either the Mental Health Court or drug treatment programs depends on the nature of the charges and on the participant's progress.

Successful participants may not go to jail and some do not get a criminal conviction.

When participants complete the **Court-Monitored Drug Treatment Program** or leave early, they can continue to get treatment through the Nova Scotia Health Authority's Opioid Treatment Program, as long as needed, if they continue to comply with OTP requirements.

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Please note: The fact that a person has been involved in either of these programs, and the details of his or her involvement, are kept confidential.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Nova Scotia Mental Health Court
Dartmouth Provincial Court
Courtroom #5, 1st Floor
Offices, 2nd Floor
277 Pleasant Street
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
(902) 722-1040
www.courts.ns.ca

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The Court sits most
Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.



NOVA SCOTIA'S MENTAL HEALTH COURT & DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAM



The **Mental Health Court Program** helps people charged with crimes related to their mental disorder so they will be less likely to re-offend.

The **Court-Monitored Drug Treatment Program** offers alternative criminal sentences for people charged with crimes related to their opioid addiction by helping them recover.

Both programs also carefully manage any potential risks the participants may pose to the public while they are being helped.

The Nova Scotia Mental Health Court Program

Less formal than a traditional court, it helps people deal with their mental health and their lives. Participation is voluntary.

Who qualifies?

Applicants to the Program must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Face criminal charges in Provincial Court
- Reside in the Halifax Regional Municipality
- Have a substantial connection to the HRM, such as work or school
- Have mental health support persons and programs within the HRM
- Accept responsibility for the crime(s)
- Have a disorder connected to the crime(s)
- Be accepted by the Crown attorney
- Have the risks they pose managed

What mental disorders qualify?

Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder are some examples.

A person may qualify if he or she is ...

- unable to think and/or problem solve
- unable to control emotions
- unable to control behavior
- has a neurodevelopmental disorder
- has a brain injury
- has a personality disorder

People with substance abuse issues and disorders such as pedophilia do not qualify.

What can a participant expect?

Participants are expected to:

- Disclose details about their mental health, treatment, substance abuse, and history
- Appear in Court often, so the Judge can monitor their progress
- Stay in the program as long as necessary, based on their progress

If the participant does not follow the support plan, the Judge may impose special conditions, including more frequent court appearances, closer supervision, directed projects, probation changes, bail withdrawal, or send their charges back to the Provincial Court.

The Court-monitored Drug Treatment Program

A collaborative partnership involving the criminal justice system, the Mental Health Court, Nova Scotia Health's OTP, and the community.

Who qualifies?

Applicants to the Program must:

- Be 19 years of age or older
- Live in the Halifax Regional Municipality
- Be dependent on opioids
- Be able to be treated with methadone
- Have an addiction related to the crime(s)
- Accepts responsibility for the crime(s)

People referred to the Mental Health Court who are addicted to opioids may also qualify.

What can a participant expect?

First, the person is assessed by Addictions Professionals.

The Court's Crown attorney also reviews the charge(s) and decides whether to allow him or her to participate.

If accepted, the participant will then ...

1. Discuss a guilty plea with the Crown and defence and enter it in Court;
2. Sign a consent and waiver form detailing what will be expected

3. Be stabilized on a daily dose of methadone or suboxone
4. Take part in addiction treatment and support sessions
5. Appear in Court, once a week at first, and then as directed
6. Submit to regular urine tests

If the participant does not follow the support plan, the Judge may impose special conditions, including more frequent court appearances, closer supervision, directed projects, probation changes, bail withdrawal, or send their charges back to the Provincial Court.