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# Pima County Possible Site for Drug Court

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The U.S. Department of Justice is funding the establishment of a multi-disciplinary team to explore development of a Pima County Drug Court Program. Primary participants will be the Pima County Superior Court, Office of the Pima County Attorney, Justice and Law Enforcement Department, Public Defender, Legal Defender and the Pima County Sheriff's Department.

In a growing number of specialized drug courts throughout the nation, innovative ways of handling substance abuse cases are being developed. For example, alternative case processing procedures are being established within the drug court system, as well as offices of the prosecutor and public defender. In addition, community resources are being tapped to provide increased mental health treatment options, employment and training

services, adult education, vocational rehabilitation and academic remediation.

During an eight-month planning period, the Pima County strategic development team will assess the ability of a drug court program to alleviate court overcrowding, jail overcrowding and recidivism. The group will also survey existing drug court programs, collect and evaluate local criminal justice system data relating to drug cases and substance abusing defendants, and identify local community resources, explore treatment costs and identify potential funding sources.

If the overall benefits of a drug program are determined to outweigh the detriments, the team will develop an implementation plan and timetable for establishing a program in Pima County.