



ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

Therapeutic Court Overview



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Therapeutic Court Mission Statement:



The mission of the therapeutic courts is to divert people with substance abuse and/or mental health diagnoses with open court cases (both criminal and civil) into community treatment and services to prevent further contact with the legal system.



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The Therapeutic Court Approach



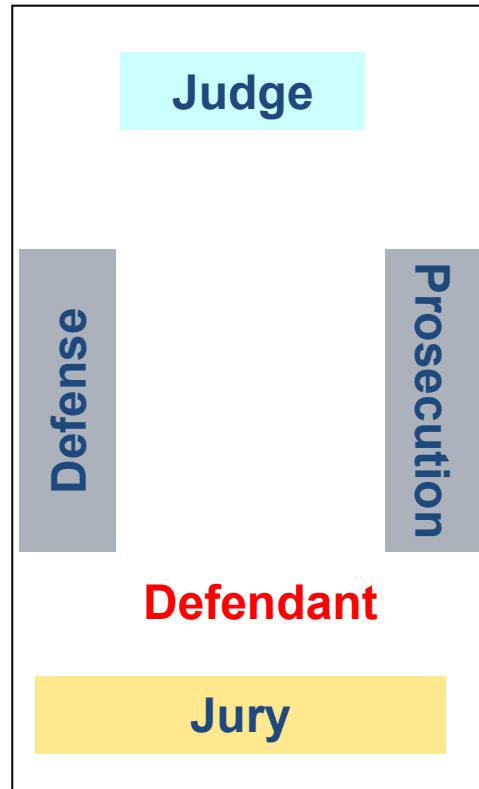
A non-adversarial approach in which together, the Therapeutic Court Team:

- Ensures public safety
- Protects due process rights
- Systematically addresses defendant's substance abuse, mental health, family, and criminality issues

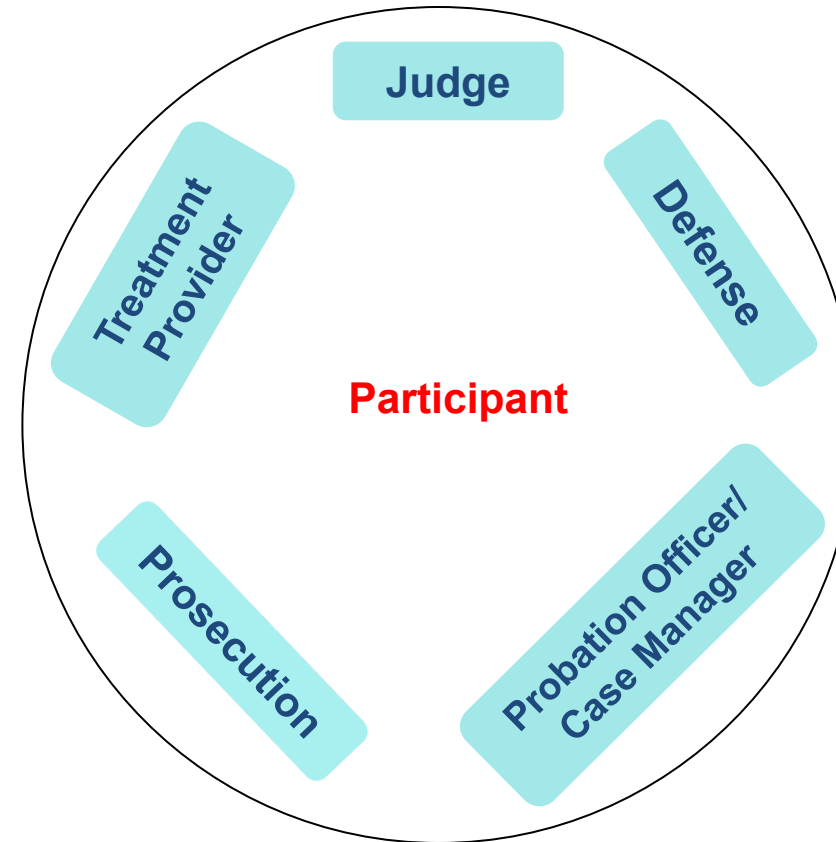


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Traditional Courts

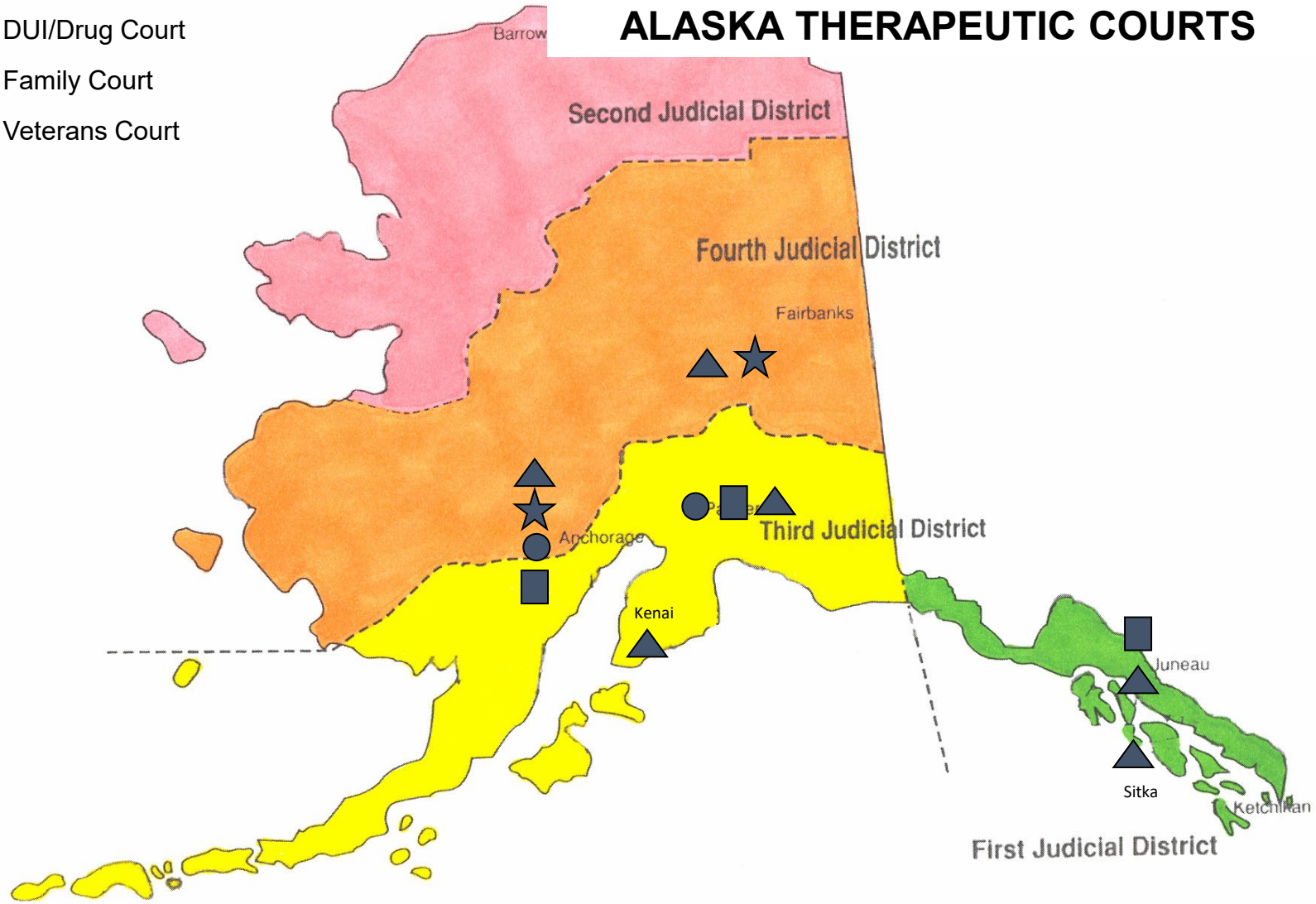


Therapeutic Courts



- Mental Health Court
- ▲ DUI/Drug Court
- Family Court
- ★ Veterans Court

ALASKA THERAPEUTIC COURTS





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Therapeutic Courts Program Requirements



- Participation in substance use treatment and/or mental health treatment/services
- Frequent court hearings to check-in with the Therapeutic Court Judge/Team
- Compliance with Criminal Rule 11 Plea agreement
- Compliance with individual case and treatment plans
- Frequent, random and fully observed alcohol/drug testing
- If indicated, use of an adjunctive medication to assist with substance withdrawals/cravings
- Attendance at recovery meetings and alumni-facilitated process groups
- If indicated, participation in complementary services such as anger management, mental health, grief/loss, parenting, etc.
- Maintain employment or benefits, and safe/sober housing
- If indicated, completion of GED/vocational referrals
- DUI/Drug Courts- Completion of Phase 5 Restorative Justice Project



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Therapeutic Courts– Addiction Courts



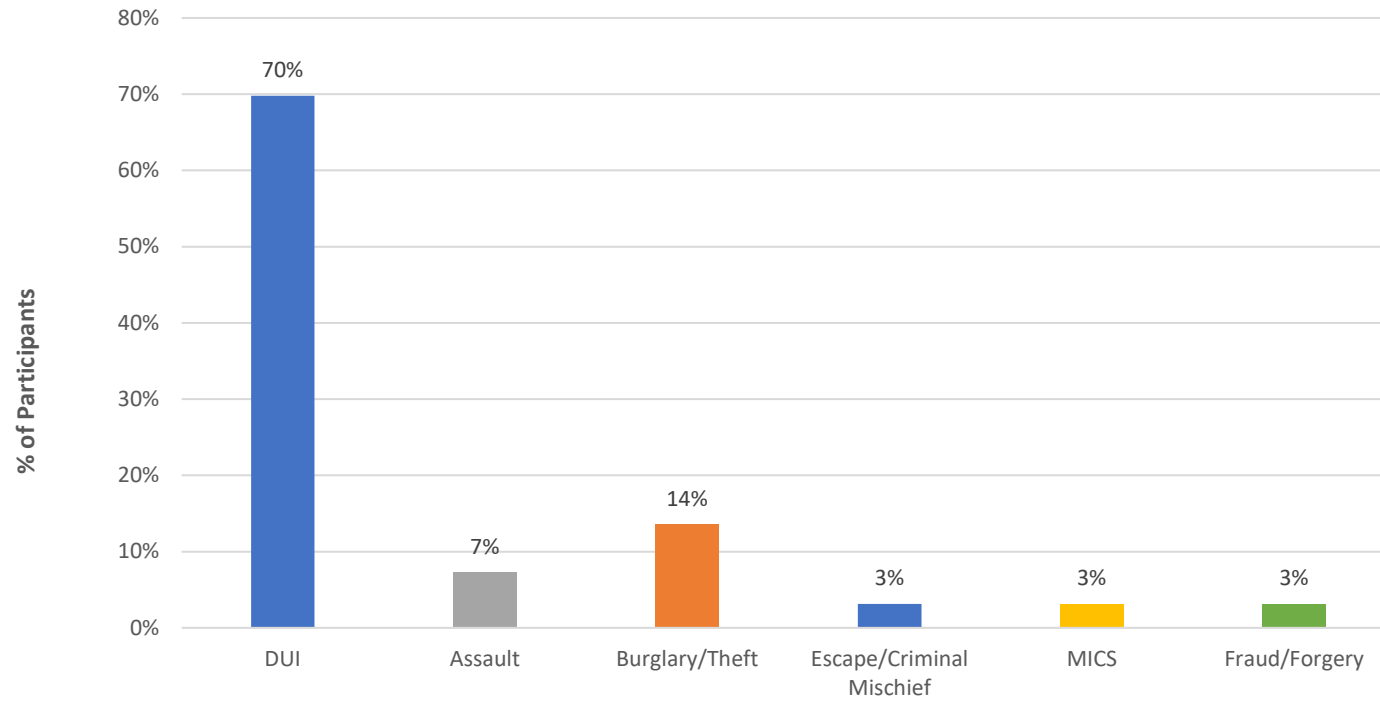
- Nexus of the crime is substance use
- By statute, DUI offenders must complete an 18-month program
- Treatment, community supervision, and drug/alcohol testing
- Depending on offense, possibility of sentence reduction or charge dismissal





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Addiction Courts
Types of Admitting Offenses - 2024
n = 96 Participants



Miscellaneous offense types include: harassment, misconduct w/weapons, failure to stop, trespass, unlawful contact, tampering, criminal mischief, PTRP

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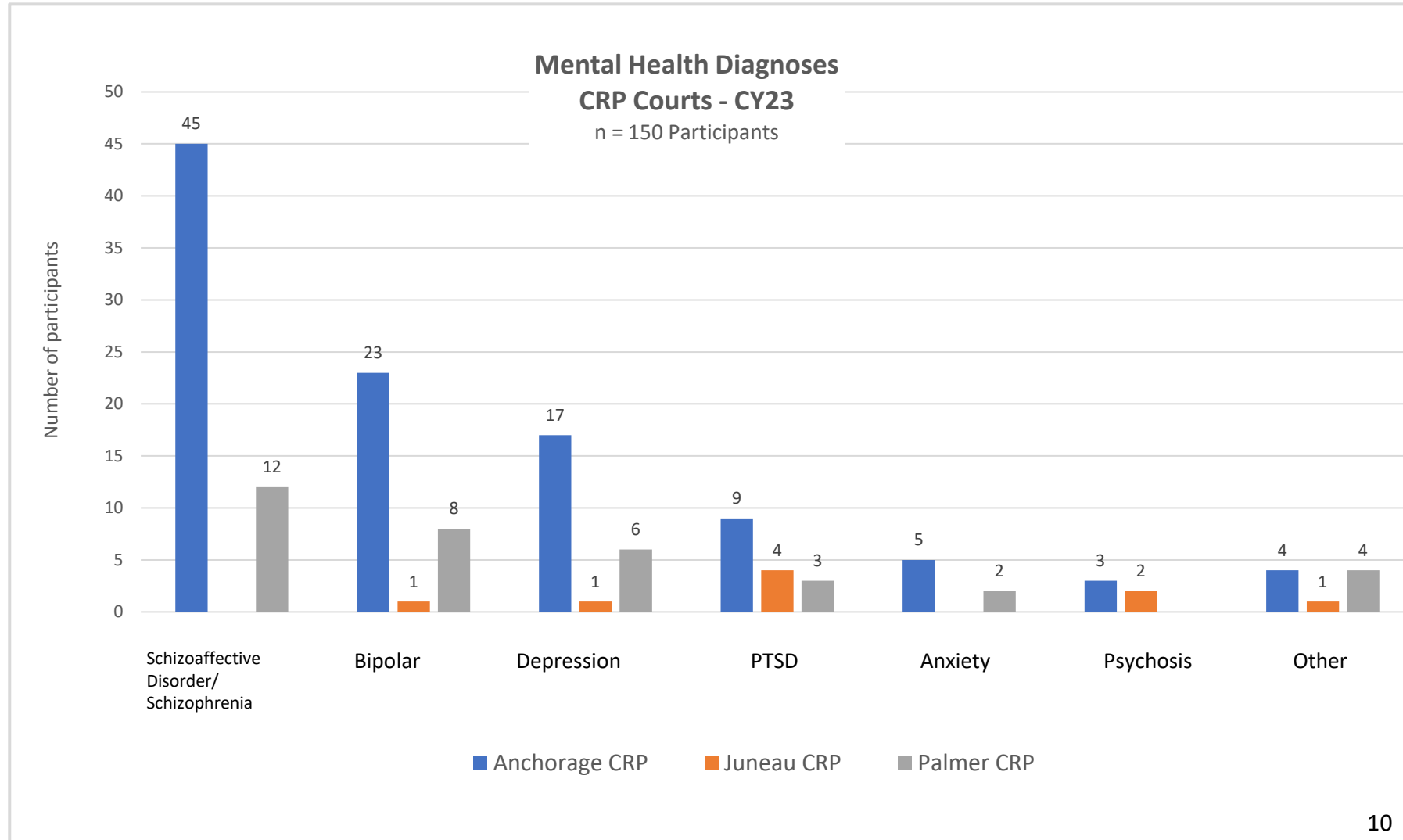
Coordinated Resources Projects – Mental Health Courts



- Beneficiary of the Alaska Mental Health Trust:
 - Mental Illness
 - Chronic Alcohol or Drug Addiction
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Developmental Disability, Including FASD
 - Alzheimer's & Dementia
- Individualized case plan that addresses treatment and public safety
- Depending on offense, possibility of sentence reduction or charge dismissal



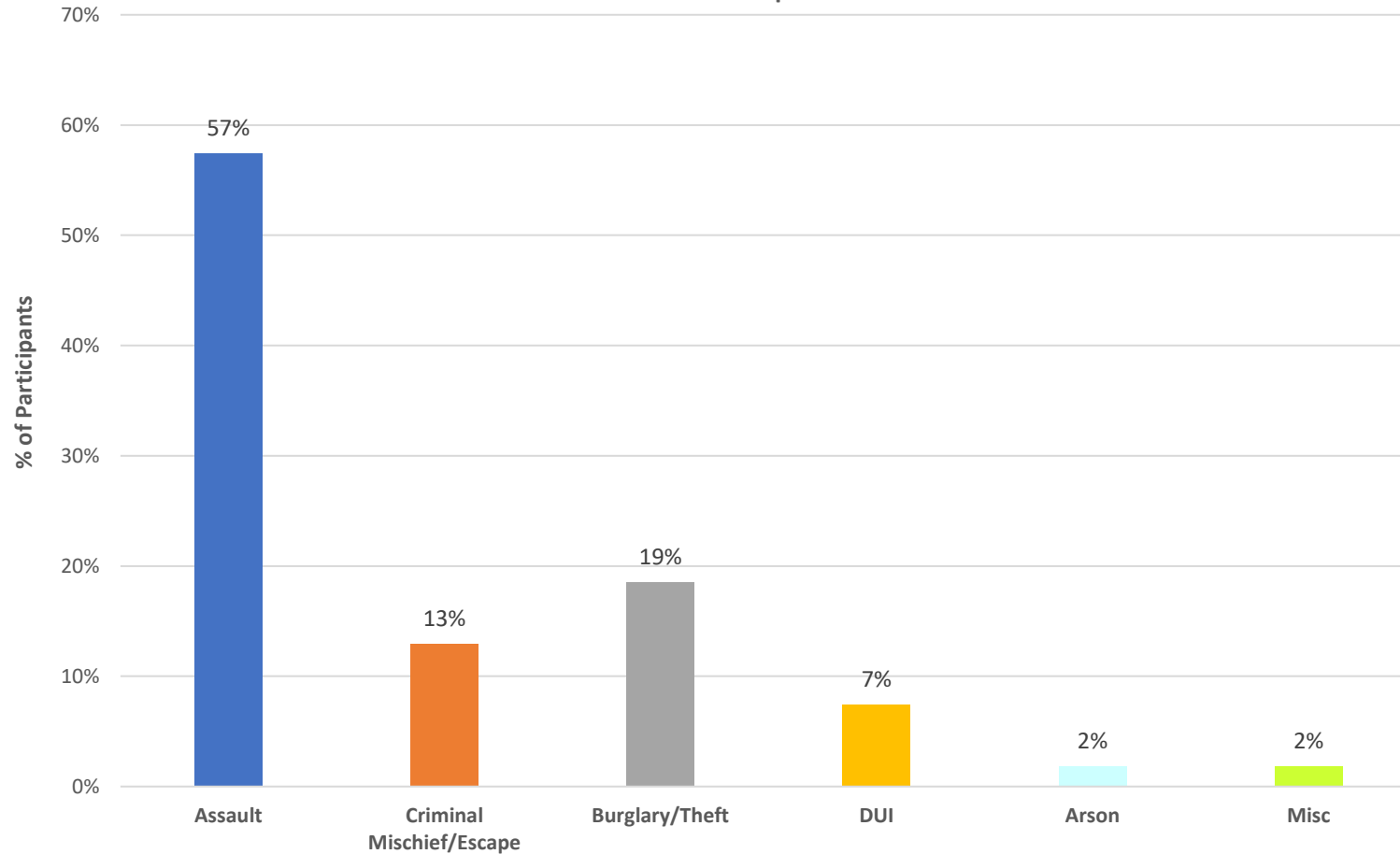
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CRP Courts
Types of Admitting Offenses – 2024
n = 54 Participants



Misc. offenses include: MICS, failure to stop, false report, promote contraband, resisting a Peace Officer, unlawful contact, trespass, indecent exposure



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Therapeutic Courts – Veterans Court

- Anchorage court established in 2004;
Fairbanks court established in 2022
- These courts honor Veterans and their service to the country
- Connects Veteran offenders to services provided by the Veterans Administration for mental health and substance abuse issues, housing, and employment

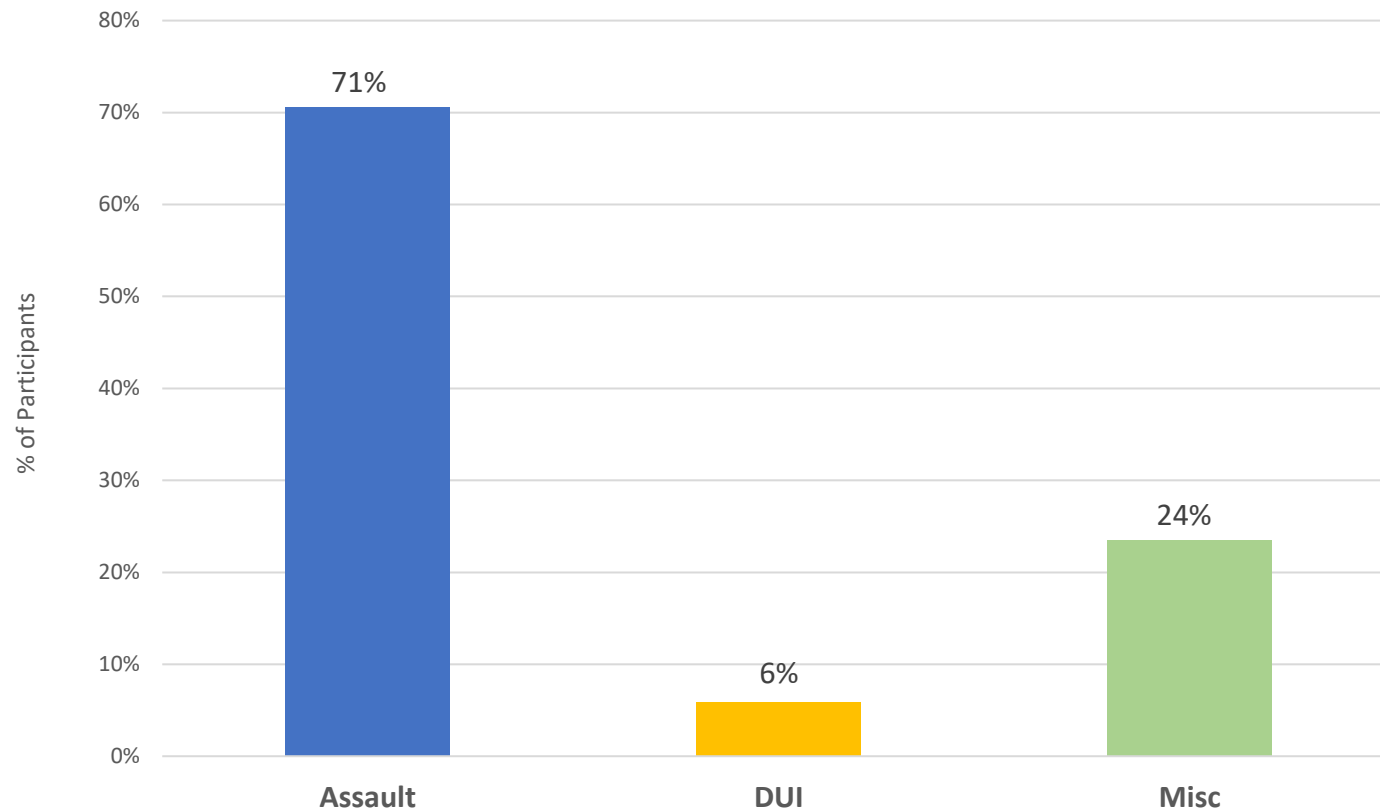




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Anchorage & Fairbanks Veterans Courts Types of Admitting Offenses - 2024

n = 17 Participants

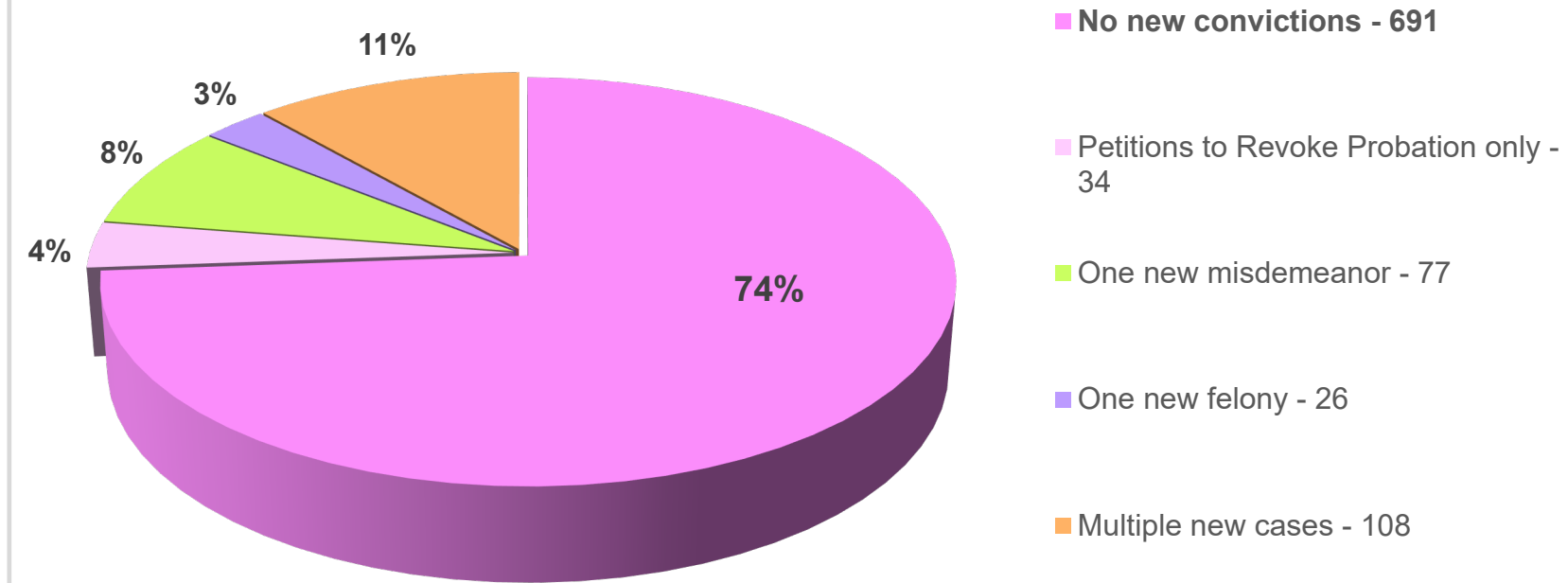


Miscellaneous offense types include: robbery, escape, weapons, MICS



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All Therapeutic Courts Recidivism FY20-24
n = 936





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Estimated Jail Time Saved by FY24 Graduates



- Anchorage Felony DUI/Drug Court – 54 Years
- Fairbanks Wellness Court – 22 Years
- Palmer Wellness Court – 36 Years
- Juneau Therapeutic Court – 6 Years

Estimated total saved = 118 Years @ \$202
Cost/day

\$8,700,140



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Therapeutic Court Drug/Alcohol Free Babies



- In FY24, 7 babies were born drug/alcohol free statewide to therapeutic court participants



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Therapeutic Courts Community Partners



- Department of Law
- Public Defender Agency / Office of Public Advocacy
- Dept. of Health & Social Services Division of Behavioral Health
- Alaska Mental Health Trust
- Office of Children's Services
- Veterans Affairs
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- Partners for Progress
- Alaska Therapeutic Court Alumni

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Current & Upcoming Therapeutic Court Projects/Grants



Current Projects/Grants:

- **BJA Training Grant-** DUI/Drug Court Evaluation (End of March 2025)
- **BJA Infrastructure Grant-** Creation of and convening of a Therapeutic Court DUI/Drug Court Advisory Committee and Evaluation Follow-Up
- **SCIP Grant-** Finding appropriate SUD treatment for participants with violent charges (Trust beneficiaries); pilot project

Upcoming Projects:

- Pre-Evaluations for CRP, CTC, and Vet Courts
- Training, Training, Training - we are always making sure therapeutic court team members are fully training on the best practice standards (All Rise conference & bringing trainers to AK)
- Increase program census in all therapeutic courts (Evaluation & Advisory Committee)



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Thank you!
Next - Alumni (JTC Graduate)