



STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
22ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



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For Immediate Release

**Contact: James (Dan) Wallis
Trial Court Administrator
Phone (815) 334-4385**

Email: courtadmin@co.mchenry.il.us

**22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County Awarded
\$1.6 Million for Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program**

WOODSTOCK, IL — The 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County is proud to announce the receipt of a significant grant totaling \$1,640,615 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This grant, to be disbursed over the next four years, is for the purpose of implementing an Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) in McHenry County to support adults with serious mental illness (SMI) who meet state-specific criteria for AOT. AOT is also known as involuntary outpatient commitment.

“Our team continues to excel in pitching programs for funding from sources outside McHenry County, to facilitate the efforts of our County Board in responsibly managing the financial resources of taxpayers,” explains Chief Judge Michael Chmiel. “These programs support collective efforts to make the County the great place it is.”

The implementation of this program includes establishing a multi-disciplinary AOT program which includes the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County, the McHenry County State’s Attorney’s Office, the McHenry County Mental Health Board, community partners, and other entities, to support community-based treatment for adults, reduce psychiatric hospitalizations and incarcerations, and address homelessness. Implementation strategies encompass community education, stakeholder coordination, and the development of comprehensive policies and protocols to protect participants' civil and privacy rights.

Key components of the program include extensive training for stakeholders, ongoing evaluation to monitor participant progress, and inclusion of individuals with experience in the planning and evaluation processes. By promoting community well-being, reducing barriers to care,

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Michael J. Sullivan Judicial Center
2200 North Seminary Avenue, Woodstock IL 60098
Office: 815/334-4385 Fax: 815/338-0248

and fostering collaboration among local agencies, the AOT program endeavors to enhance mental health services and improve outcomes for individuals with SMI in McHenry County, ultimately contributing to a safer and healthier community.

“This initiative reflects McHenry County’s commitment to serving our community members,” explains Kelly Scimeca, Director of Office of Special Projects for the Circuit. “We aim to ease the challenges faced by families caring for loved ones with serious mental illness. By providing support, we hope to reduce the strain on vital community resources, including emergency calls, hospital visits, and crisis interventions.”

“Over the course of this past fiscal year, through the diligence of our Office of Special Projects and Court Administration, we have been able to realize each of four grants which have been sought, which enhances our abilities to meet mandates and deliver services,’ says Chmiel. “All bodes well for our Circuit and County.”

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