

VETS Court Veteran Mentor Job Description

Job Title: VETS Court Veteran Mentor

VETS Court Description:

The mission of the Bozeman Veteran Eligible Treatment Services (V.E.T.S.) Court is to reduce crime, enhance public safety, save taxpayer costs, and enrich lives by facilitating sobriety, treating mental health conditions, improving social relationships, and promoting lifelong stability for veteran offenders in our community.

The VETS Court is a municipal treatment court that recognizes that those who have served in the US Armed Forces often struggle to transition from an intense, dangerous environment back to a life of civility, which may result in contact with the criminal justice system. A disproportionate number of these justice system-involved veterans suffer from substance abuse issues, mental illnesses like PTSD, and physical trauma like traumatic brain injuries. The Bozeman VETS Court is a specialized treatment court docket that offers an alternative to standard sentencing for the carefully vetted veterans selected to participate. Designed specifically for the unique issues faced by veterans, the Court combines a rigorous 12-18 month treatment program for substance use and mental health disorders with careful monitoring and supervision, mentorship from other veterans, and connection to additional veteran-focused benefits and services that may aid in recovery.

The veteran treatment court model has been shown to reduce recidivism among veteran offenders, ultimately bettering the local communities where the courts operate by reducing the effects of criminal behaviors. Veteran treatment courts have also been shown to save taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars that would have otherwise been spent on incarceration. After completing the program offered by the Bozeman VETS Court, veteran graduates are prepared to be good citizens, better able to contribute to the local economy while also acting as role models for other local veterans struggling to cope with and recover from the many stressors faced by those serving our country.

Veteran Mentor Program Description:

A key component of the VETS Court treatment model is the veteran mentor program where participants are assigned a volunteer veteran mentor from the community to support their efforts to create a better life. Veterans function best in treatment courts when surrounded by other former service members who understand military experience and military culture. Mentors offer new outlets to form supportive relationships with other veterans. The hope is that these relationships increase the likelihood that participants remain in treatment, attain and maintain sobriety, and participate in law-abiding civilian culture. Mentors are matched to participants by the Mentor Coordinator with input from the treatment team. The role of the veteran mentor is to have the participants' back, to act as a coach, guide, role model, advocate, "battle buddy" and support person for the individual veteran participants with whom they are working. Mentors understand the roles of other support team members and "fill the gap" to help keep participants moving successfully toward completing the V.E.T.S. program. Their mission is to ensure that every participating veteran receives the services they require by helping them navigate the system.

General Statement of Duties: The mentors act as a mentor, advocate, and ally for participating veterans in the VETS Court treatment program. They will connect with their mentee on a weekly basis and build a

meaningful and supportive relationship. They must be invested in the VETS Court treatment model, involved in Bozeman-area veteran communities, and effective liaisons between veteran mentors and the VETS Court treatment team.

Essential Functions of the Position:

- Connect with veteran mentee weekly (can be over phone or text) and twice monthly in person
- Report in-person meetings to veteran mentor coordinator
- Support the challenges faced by your veteran mentee through listening, problem solving, and advocacy.
- Complete mentor training (~2 hours).
- Understand the role, boundaries, and importance of the veteran mentor-mentee relationship.
- Meet with the veteran mentor coordinator and other veteran mentors once per month (may be attended virtually).
- Occasionally attend VETS Court sessions (2nd and 4th Tuesdays 9-10 am, Bozeman Public Safety Center, Courtroom B) and graduations when available (not required).
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Required competencies:

- A United States military veteran: Army, Marine Corp, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, or their respective Reserve or National Guard branches and have served honorably.
- Willing to participate in the screening and vetting process (interviews, criminal records check, fingerprinting).
- Be a law-abiding citizen (no criminal charges within the last 3 years)
- Willing to commit to program participation for at least one year
- Familiar with and eager to support the VETS court program and its justice-involved veterans
- Effective communicator over email, text, and phone
- Willing and able to commit ~2-4 hours/month to this position's responsibilities

Onboarding process – 3-4 hours:

Submit application - 15 minutes

Complete and return background check form (must be notarized) – 15 minutes

Attend onboarding meeting with Case Manager and Mentor Coordinator – 30 minutes

Complete online trainings – 102 minutes

Attend Court session (2nd or 4th Tuesday @ 9 am) – 30-60 minutes

Match with mentee!