



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Otsego County Opioid Court
197 Main Street
Cooperstown, NY 13326
(607) 240-5823**

**Hon. Eugene D. Faughnan
Sixth Judicial District
Administrative Judge**

**Hon. Brian D. Burns
Otsego County Court**

Date: January 8, 2020

Otsego County Starts Specialized Courts to Combat Opioid Addiction and Domestic Violence

As part of the statewide effort by the Unified Court System to address the opioid crisis and family violence, Otsego County has launched two specialized Courts designed to address the unique challenges presented by Opioid addiction and by family violence.

The County-wide opioid prevention court is a part of the county's long running Drug Treatment Court. The new court will accept both felony and misdemeanor cases from Otsego County Court, and any Town or Village Court in Otsego County; as well as referrals from local attorneys, police agencies, first responders, probation officers and any other agencies working with at-risk opioid users.

The Opioid court is a judicially supervised rapid integration program where participants are immediately assessed for their necessary level of care to include medically assisted treatment and substance abuse treatment. The Opioid Court incorporates the Ten Essential Elements of Opioid Intervention Courts as promulgated by the Center for Court Intervention. The Opioid Court is designed to function within current funding and staffing levels of the County's long running Drug Court Program which was started in 1999 under the Hon. Michael V. Coccoma. Otsego County Judge Brian D. Burns now runs both the Drug Treatment Court as well as the Opioid Treatment Court. Otsego County's treatment Courts partner with the OASAS certified outpatient program Otsego County Addiction Recovery Services.

The mission of the new Opioid Court is to save and rebuild lives by providing immediate treatment and services to reduce the number of overdose related deaths in Otsego County and the break the cycle of addiction and criminal activity while simultaneously providing safety in the community. Pending criminal cases can be suspended while a participant is stabilized in treatment. Those that are eligible can then participate the Otsego County Opioid Treatment Court. Participants must complete intake interviews, evaluations as well as appropriate treatment and drug court sessions. They are subject to random drug screening and Probation Supervision to assist and guide them in their recovery. Those who are not interested or are not eligible to participate or those who fail to satisfy all agreed-upon conditions will have the case transferred to the appropriate court criminal calendar for recommencement of the criminal action.

The Otsego County Treatment Court will be presided over by the Hon. Brian D. Burns and managed by the Chief Court Clerk Michael McGovern and Court Resource Coordinator, Samantha Manee.

Otsego County Integrated Domestic Violence Court is designed to address those circumstances where multiple courts would otherwise be making decisions regarding questions of criminal prosecution, child custody and possession of marital property such as homes and vehicles. Conventional Courts can often require perpetrators and victims of family violence to attend one court to decide issues of criminal prosecution and another court to decide questions of child custody and visitation. A third court may have jurisdiction over questions of divorce, spousal support and jointly owned property. The Otsego County Integrated Domestic Violence Court will allow a single Judge to oversee all aspects of the criminal prosecution, child custody as well as the possession of marital property. The opening of the IDV Court will allow Judge Brian D. Burns to hear all aspects of the case and provide supervision and guidance for the duration of court intervention.

The Court will work closely with District Attorney John Muehl and Public Defender Mike Trossett. Services available within the Court include The New York Model Domestic Violence Program for Batterers and The Opportunities for Otsego's Violence Intervention Program.