

# Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board

## DACC Service and Data Overview

Board Packet – March 22, 2024

### Community Services

- **Community Services Program (CS)** – Participants fulfill community service hour requirements through public space cleaning, beautification projects, graffiti abatement, and working at DACC’s Edgar Fincher III Program Garden, which donates all food and eggs to local providers who feed the homeless community.
  - **Number of Community Services Requests Completed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023-Feb. 2024): 439
  - **Acreage of Work Completed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 15.99
- **Violet KeepSafe Storage Program (VKS)** – Free storage located downtown with secure bins to store vital documents, family memories, clothing, bedding, and more. Operates 7:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-7:00pm, seven days a week. Program employs people with lived experience to improve service experience and create workforce opportunities.
  - **Number of Interactions with VKS Participants**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 438
  - **Number of Active VKS Participants**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 10,470

### Court Services

- **Restorative justice and problem-solving court** – Fine-only court with emphasis on alternative resolutions, and provides an immediate connection to onsite case managers, basic needs, and social service resources. DACC resolves Class C criminal offenses in catchment area, and Proposition B and State camping ban cases citywide.
  - **Number of Cases Filed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 837
  - **Number of Cases Docketed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 1,932
- **Clinical Diversion Program (CDP)** – Dedicated case managers serve people engaging in Court Services to improve connection to case management and social services, while also improving appearance and case completion rates.
  - **Number of CDP Clients:**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 96
  - **Number of Cases Resolved through Participation in CDP:**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 173
- **DACC Mobile Court Pilot** – This Pilot, initiated by Council Resolution 20230816-016, is intended to connect people in the community with solutions for resolving cases while providing immediate connection to services and resource navigation through case managers onsite.
  - **Warrants Cleared during Mobile Court:**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 49
  - **Cases Docketed during Mobile Court:**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 73

## **Homeless Services**

- **Walk-in Case Management** – Provides assistance obtaining identification documents and signing up for public benefits, access to basic needs, and linkages to mental health, physical health, and substance misuse services.
  - **Number of Walk-in Case Management Interactions**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 6,540
  - **Average Daily Walk-in Case Management Interactions**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 63
- **Intensive Case Management** – Person-centered, housing-focused services with low caseloads and wrap around supports. DACC's Intensive Case Management and Walk-in Case Management programs both serve as a diversion from criminal justice involvement by meeting people's needs before situations escalate to involve law enforcement.
  - **Number of Clients Connected to Housing**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 25\*
      - \*Includes 3 people housed through ESG RRH Program

**Support Services** - Responsible for special projects and support for all DACC units, administration for the department, internal and external communications, community engagement, support for the DACC Advisory Board and the Austin Homelessness Advisory Council, and social service contracting.

- **DACC-funded social service contracts** –Long- and short-term housing solutions, SOAR application assistance and representative payee services, and substance misuse, mental health, and peer support services for clients served directly by DACC. Also includes contracts that serve the Austin Community such as the Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) and funding six Integral Care mental health and peer support staff that serve on the Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST).
  - **Number of Social Service Contract Payments Processed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 41
  - **Amount of Social Service Contract Payments Processed**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): \$2,111,475
- **Austin Homelessness Advisory Council (AHAC)** – Approximately 15 people with lived experience meet biweekly to provide input on policies, programs, and practices impacting people experiencing homelessness. DACC provides facilitative and administrative support to ensure AHAC can continue to serve as a vital and ongoing resource for City departments and the community.
  - **Hours of Input Gathered from Austin Homelessness Advisory Council Members**
    - FY 2024 (Oct. 2023- Feb. 2024): 189



# COMMUNITY COURT NEWS

A newsletter brought to you by DACC's Communications

Top stories in this newsletter

1.30.2024



DACC Selected as Mentor Court



Calling for New Equity Team Members



Upgrades at Violet KeepSafe Storage



DACC's Numbers

## DACC Selected as Mentor Court

The **Center for Justice Innovation (CJI)**, through the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Community Courts Initiative (CCI) Mentor Court program, has selected DACC as a mentor court for the 2023 grantee cohort. CJI cited DACC's excellence and dedication to community justice aligning perfectly with the goals of the CCI program. As a selected mentor court, DACC's invaluable expertise and proven success in community court operations will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of community court programs.

As a mentor court, we'll provide support to a cohort of community courts over a two-year period that are assigned to DACC. Beginning in April, we will meet with them quarterly to help address challenges, share resources and best practices, and provide guidance. We will also be hosting a site visit to showcase our successful practices and facilitate relationship-building and peer-to-peer exchanges. As we know more details, we will share that information with DACC's team.



## Upgrades at Violet KeepSafe Storage

DACC is working on a phased in approach to create more dignified storage solutions for Violet KeepSafe Storage participants. Some individuals will now have the option to use up to four stackable storage crates, giving more flexibility and easier access to belongings. Based on financial resources, and the desire to phase in this new option, the stackable bins will be limited for the time being. If a good response is received from participants using the new bins, and financial resources are identified to purchase more bins, we'll phase in more of these storage crates. Some portion of the original storage bins will stay as options for participants who prefer that type of storage.



more of these storage crates. Some portion of the original storage bins will stay as options for participants who prefer that type of storage.

## Calling for New Equity Team Members

DACC's Equity Team meets monthly with DACC's Leadership Team to implement recommendations included in DACC's Equity Assessment process, and to provide guidance on equity issues for the department as a whole. The Equity Team has directly impacted DACC operations, including the creation of a paid Clinical Case Manager position that we recently filled. Equity Team members have the opportunity to collaborate with staff across all units and leadership to use their voices to make a difference in DACC's equity practices.



The Equity Team is seeking volunteers to help lead DACC's equity efforts and all are encouraged to volunteer if interested. Depending on the level of interest and pool of applicants, all volunteers may not be able to serve during this phase of the equity process. The intention is for this group to help facilitate a process that's inclusive of all voices, so there will be opportunities for everyone that is interested to participate in the process.

A formal email to sign up will go out after an announcement at the next midday mixer in February, but please feel free to reach out to Laura Williamson if you know you're interested in volunteering, or if you have questions about the process or time commitment.

## Jury Trials Resume at DACC



La'Mont Pearce and the Court Services team developed a process for jury trials at One Texas Center, which is in place for the first time since we've transitioned to

OTC. This required collaboration with Austin Municipal Court, and developing protocols that work with our location. We successfully summoned potential jurors, and have a process in place that will set us up for success for future jury trial needs. Thanks so much to La'Mont and the Court Services team for their work on this!

## Cold Weather Shelter

Thanks to all of the staff that have made DACC's role in Cold Weather Shelter operations as the embarkation hub a success. There's no doubt that this service saves lives, and DACC leadership is grateful so many have been available to help



A record number of people experiencing homelessness were helped during the recent arctic storm, which brought multiple days of below-freezing temperatures to Austin. The City's teams

quickly repurposed public facilities for use as temporary overnight shelters. From January 13 through January 17, we sheltered and fed 209, 404, 659, 590 and 405 people per night.

Please sign up for future CWS embarkation hub shifts here: <https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/axovX5Ee/vote>. We still have a lot of dates in February and March that need additional staff, and we'd like to have these lined up in advance to ensure smooth operations. If you can any questions about the process, please reach out to Chris Anderson.

## Staff Updates



**Rachel Butler** (pronouns: they/them/theirs) transitioned from their role as the ESG Rapid Rehousing Case Manager to serving as full-time for walk-in case management as of December 31. Rachel is excited to work closely with DACC's many walk-in clients to help address barriers toward their long-term goals. Rachel loves resource navigating and helping clients problem solve, which is an essential part of walk-in or "triage" case management. Rachel has been a part of the DACC team since April 2022 and is excited to be part of the changes to the walk-in case management team and services. Rachel has a master's degree in Social Work and a bachelor's in Psychology. Prior to DACC, Rachel served as a Conservatorship Specialist for Child Protective Services at the height of the pandemic and has worked with several local Austin non-profits throughout the years including Planned Parenthood Texas Votes, Out Youth, Texas Council on Family Violence, Austin Partners in Education and Center for Child Protection. Rachel is glad to be part of the DACC team and to continue to be a friendly face to not only clients but their coworkers.

**Lori Burnett** joined DACC as a new Clinical Case Manager. Lori earned her bachelor's in therapeutic recreation and a master's in social work from Texas State University. She has had the fortunate opportunity to work in a variety of settings with different populations ranging from those living with differing ability levels, the youth and aging populations, to those living with mental health, substance use, and/or dual diagnosis. For the last 10 years, Lori's passion has been working with individuals transitioning into housing from homelessness, starting as a PSH Case Manager with Caritas of Austin and the last 8 years as a Program Manager with Foundation Communities' Supportive Services Programs/Single Resident Occupancy communities. Lori strongly believes in supporting individuals with respect and dignity while providing a safe and judgement-free space for healing and growth. She is very excited to continue to learn and grow in this work at DACC!

**Eliot Pozehl** joined DACC as a Clinical Case Manager on January 2nd. Eliot is originally from Seward, Nebraska and earned his master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of Nebraska-Omaha. He has worked in a variety of settings such as, Outpatient behavioral health, Outpatient mental health, IOP, PHP, and residential treatment. He also has experience with Douglas County Nebraska's Re-entry assistance program where he helped with intakes and individual therapy. He has also been a case manager for Douglas County Adult Drug Court. Eliot is passionate about helping clients achieve success and does this using an integrative approach, leaning on Motivational interviewing, REBT, and solution-focused based approaches. During his graduate program he enjoyed researching preventative measures to help reduce mental health and substance use issues. He is excited to join DACC and is eager to serve those experiencing homelessness.

**Maggie Findell** joined DACC as a Clinical Case Manager Intern on January 16th. Maggie is a post Bachelor of Social Work Master of Social Work student at the University of Texas at Austin. Maggie is from Austin and was raised here. She is excited to get more clinical experience by working directly with clients through a solution-focused lens.



## DACC's Numbers



This section is intended to show a small snapshot of the great work being done across our department. We'll continue to update

the information shared here as DACC's data practices are enhanced through the Data Maximization Project.

**All the numbers below are fiscal year to date.**

### Community Services:

- Community Services Requests Completed: **314**
- Acreage of Work Completed: **5.86**
- Active Violet KeepSafe Storage (VKS) Participants: **433**
- Interactions with VKS Participants: **8,594**

### Court Services:

- Cases Filed: **598**
- Cases Docketed: **1,490**
- Clinical Diversion Program (CDP) Clients: **62**
- Cases resolved through participation in CDP: **142**
- Court case checks during Mobile Court: **329**
- Cases docketed during Mobile Court: **53**
- Warrants cleared during Mobile Court: **35**

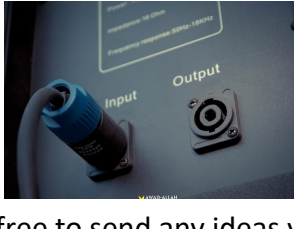
### Homeless Services:

- Walk-In Case Management Interactions: **4,690**
- Average Daily Walk-in Case Management Interactions: **63**
- Clients Connected to Housing: **28**

### Support Services:

- Social Service Contract Payments Processed: **30**
- Social Service Contract Payments Processed: **\$1,017,949**
- Hours of Input Gathered from Austin Homelessness Advisory Council Members: **163**

## Opportunities for Input



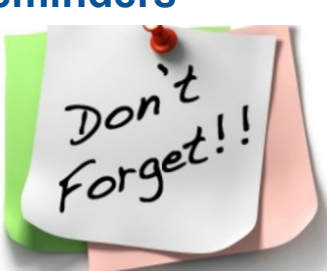
**Suggest an activity** - The Celebrations and Activities Committee is planning our monthly DACC team activities and other events. Please feel

free to send any ideas you have for group activities to Robert Kingham.

### Submit topics for staff email updates and/or annual report

- Staff email updates** - We want staff across all DACC Units to know about the good and significant work happening across our department. If you have significant program changes or any small or big success stories, please send them to Laura Williamson to be included in these email updates
- Annual Report** - We're looking to expand and redesign how we report about our work annually. There's flexibility on both format and content. Laura Williamson is working on meeting with all the units to share more about these efforts; please send any formatting or subject ideas you have directly to her. This report is something we can share with all stakeholders to educate about and celebrate DACC's work.

## Reminders



**Nominate a colleague for Employee of the Quarter** - Please take a moment and recognize one of your colleagues for the standout job they are doing by

submitting your nomination for Employee of the Quarter. By recommendation from the Celebrations and Activities Committee, nominations for EOQ will now be open year-round, and your nomination will be included in the voting process of the quarter in which it was submitted. The link for the nomination form is available at: <https://forms.office.com/g/5RmWWfSZLV>

**Annual Staff Training Budget and Resources** - Every DACC employee has access to up to \$400 annually for professional development which may include online and in person classes, professional association memberships, certifications, liability insurance, conferences, and license renewals.

- For planning purposes, staff must have used or designated how and when funding will be used by the end of the second quarter (March 2024). Funds can be spent through the end of the fourth quarter (September 2024) as long as it was designated by the end of the second quarter.
- Funding can be used broadly to develop any skills that will help employees in their work, such as OSHA trainings, computer skills training, etc. Please ask your supervisor if you need help with ideas or want more information.

## Upcoming Events

### February DACC Midday Mixer

**What:** Monthly staff gathering, please plan to attend in person.

**When:** Tuesday, February 20th, 1:30p-2:30p

**Where:** DACC Training Room

### 2024 City Holidays:

- Presidents' Day** - Monday, February 19
- Memorial Day** - Monday, May 27
- Juneteenth** - Wednesday, June 19
- Independence Day** - Thursday July 4
- Labor Day** - Monday, September 2
- Veterans Day** - Monday, November 11
- Thanksgiving Day** - Thursday, November 28
- Thanksgiving Friday** - Friday, November 29
- Christmas Eve** - Tuesday, December 24
- Christmas Day** - Wednesday, December 25





# COMMUNITY COURT NEWS

A newsletter brought to you by DACC's Communications Team

Top stories in this newsletter

2.29.2024



DACC Mobile Court Pilot



Calling for New Equity Team Members



Mental Health Diversion Pilot



DACC's Numbers

## DACC Mobile Court Pilot

This effort has had a meaningful impact for the people we served. DACC leadership wants to deeply thank all of the staff who helped out with this effort, which extends to every staff that worked at Mobile Court, provided onsite support at DACC for Mobile Court efforts, or who took on extra load to help ensure operations could continue while your teammates were helping with Mobile Court. Special thanks to Sarah Rodriguez, who came on to help shepherd this process, from operational and onsite support to developing new processes and innovative approaches to data collection that greatly improved Mobile Court throughout the process.



**Data:** During the period of October 18, 2023, through February 5, 2024:

- 383 individuals had their court case status checked by DACC.
- 125 individuals had an open case.
- 35 individuals participated in a DACC Mobile Court hearing.
- 69 cases were docketed cases.
- 48 warrants were cleared.
- 8 individuals were enrolled into the DACC Clinical Diversion Program (CDP) for ongoing case management.
- 100% of surveyed Pilot site participants reported satisfaction in the program.
- 100% of surveyed Pilot site partners reported the program to be a benefit to clients and would be interested in further DACC Mobile Court collaboration.

### Next Steps:

DACC partnered with Sultan Justice Consulting to conduct a third-party analysis and create a report to memorialize planning and operational efforts and develop recommendations for potential options for the future of Mobile Court. DACC plans to share this report with staff and the DACC Advisory Board in March, and will be providing a memo update to the City Council in the coming days.

Given the value provided to the community through the Pilot, DACC will continue to engage with stakeholders across the community and to offer limited Mobile Court services, as staffing resources allow. This will likely be limited to approximately 2 Mobile Court days per month.



## Mental Health Diversion Pilot

The Mental Health Diversion Pilot (Pilot) is a collaboration between Travis County, Central Health, Integral Care, and DACC. The Pilot will leverage existing programs and facilities to expand community services to immediately address unmet deflection and diversion needs and provide members of the community experiencing behavioral health crises with access to services.

On February 15, 2024, the City Council authorized DACC to begin the negotiation process for an interlocal agreement with Integral Care to

provide services funded through the City for the Therapeutic Respite Center portion of the Diversion Pilot. City funds will be used for services consistent with our current investments, including housing-focused case management, peer support, and operational expenses. DACC will bring another item to Council to authorize execution of the agreement once negotiated later this spring.

An update to the Public Health Committee is tentatively scheduled for April 3, 2024, which is likely to include all partners.

## REMINDER: Please consider applying to be DACC Equity Team Member

DACC's Equity Team meets monthly with DACC's Leadership Team to implement recommendations included in DACC's Equity Assessment process, and to provide guidance on equity issues for the department as a whole. The Equity Team has directly impacted DACC operations, including the creation of a paid Case Manager intern position that we recently filled. Equity Team members have the opportunity to collaborate with staff across all units and leadership to use their voices to make a difference in DACC's equity practices.



Please reply to the email Laura Williamson sent on February 20th no later than March 1, 2024 to let us know your interest in being part of this process. Thanks to everyone who has already responded!



## Message from the Court Administrator

As we continue to strive towards our shared goals of serving our community effectively, I wanted to keep you all informed that we are in the final stages of updating our mission statement.

A mission statement serves as a guiding light for our organization, providing a clear and concise statement of our values and goals. It helps align our efforts, is inspirational, and communicates our commitment to the community we serve. As we continue to serve our community with dedication and compassion, having a clear and well-defined mission statement will also help guide us in fulfilling our responsibilities effectively.

Thank you to all who have participated and provided input to develop a revised mission statement that succinctly and wholly encompasses DACC. Your input has been invaluable in developing an updated mission statement. I'll be sending out an email soon soliciting your assistance in finalizing DACC's mission statement based on feedback that has been received throughout this process. When you receive this email, please take a moment to help establish this core organizational element.

Thank you for your dedication and contributions to our organization. Together, we can make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve through the work we do each day.

## Staff Updates



**Evelyn Acosta** joined DACC on January 29, 2024 as a temporary, part-time Court Clerk Assistant. She will be assigned to the Court

Services Team and will help process and enter new cases that will be processed as a result of DACC's expanded jurisdiction. Prior to coming to DACC, Evelyn worked for 20 years at Central Booking and retired from Austin Municipal Court. We are excited and grateful for Evelyn coming back to work with DACC!

## DACC's Numbers



This section is intended to show a small snapshot of the great work being done across our department. We'll continue to update

the information shared here as DACC's data practices are enhanced through the Data Maximization Project.

**All the numbers below are fiscal year to date.**

### Community Services:

- Community Services Requests Completed: **439**
- Acreage of Work Completed: **15.99**
- Active Violet KeepSafe Storage (VKS) Participants: **438**
- Interactions with VKS Participants: **10,470**

### Court Services:

- Cases Filed: **837**
- Cases Docketed: **1,932**
- Clinical Diversion Program (CDP) Clients: **96**
- Cases resolved through participation in CDP: **173**
- Court case checks during Mobile Court: **396**
- Cases docketed during Mobile Court: **73**
- Warrants cleared during Mobile Court: **49**

### Homeless Services:

- Walk-In Case Management Interactions: **6,540**
- Average Daily Walk-in Case Management Interactions: **63**
- Clients Connected to Housing: **25**

### Support Services:

- Social Service Contract Payments Processed: **41**
- Social Service Contract Payments Processed: **\$2,111,475**
- Hours of Input Gathered from Austin Homelessness Advisory Council Members: **189**

## Opportunities for Input



**Suggest an activity** - The Celebrations and Activities Committee is planning our monthly DACC team activities and other events. Please feel

free to send any ideas you have for group activities to Robert Kingham.

### Submit topics for staff email updates and/or annual report

- **Staff email updates** – We want staff across all DACC Units to know about the good and significant work happening across our department. If you have significant program changes or any small or big success stories, please send them to Laura Williamson to be included in these email updates
- **Annual Report** – We're looking to expand and redesign how we report about our work annually. There's flexibility on both format and content. Laura Williamson is working on meeting with all the units to share more about these efforts; please send any formatting or subject ideas you have directly to her. This report is something we can share with all stakeholders to educate about and celebrate DACC's work.

## Reminders



**Nominate a colleague for Employee of the Quarter** - Please take a moment and recognize one of your colleagues for the standout job they are doing by

submitting your nomination for Employee of the Quarter. By recommendation from the Celebrations and Activities Committee, nominations for EOQ will now be open year-round, and your nomination will be included in the voting process of the quarter in which it was submitted. The link for the nomination form is available at: <https://forms.office.com/g/5RmWWfSZLV>

**Annual Staff Training Budget and Resources** – Every DACC employee has access to up to \$400 annually for professional development which may include online and in person classes, professional association memberships, certifications, liability insurance, conferences, and license renewals.

- For planning purposes, staff must have used or designated how and when funding will be used by the end of the second quarter (March 2024). Funds can be spent through the end of the fourth quarter (September 2024) as long as it was designated by the end of the second quarter.
- The end of the second quarter.
- That will help employees in their work, such as OSHA trainings, computer skills training, etc. Please ask your supervisor if you need help with ideas or want more information.

## Upcoming Events

### February DACC Midday Mixer

**What:** Monthly staff gathering, please plan to attend in person.

**When:** Tuesday, March 19th, 1:30p-2:30p

**Where:** DACC Training Room



### 2024 City Holidays:

- **Memorial Day** - Monday, May 27
- **Juneteenth** - Wednesday, June 19
- **Independence Day** - Thursday July 4
- **Labor Day** - Monday, September 2
- **Veterans Day** - Monday, November 11
- **Thanksgiving Day** - Thursday, November 28
- **Thanksgiving Friday** - Friday, November 29
- **Christmas Eve** - Tuesday, December 24
- **Christmas Day** - Wednesday, December 25

