

District of Utah

Evidence-Based Practices (EBP)

Assisting Reentry to our
Communities (ARC)

Orientation to EBP/ARC Programs

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Introduction to Evidence-Based Practices (EBP)

Within the probation system, evidence-based practices or evidence-based probation is a behavior change model where the interaction between the probation officer and the defendant/offender becomes the primary factor in facilitating behavior change.

There are a number of programs which have been implemented by the U.S. Probation Office and the U.S. District Court, in the District of Utah, which incorporate the principles of evidence-based practices or evidence-based-probation. EBP in the District of Utah is now known as Assisting Reentry to our Communities (ARC). The following pages provide a description of each program. Along with the description of the program is contact information for future reference. Some programs have an activity, which can be completed in order to have a better understanding of that respective program.

The first section (Pretrial Risk Assessment and Post Conviction Risk Assessment) covers risk assessment tools used by United States Pretrial Services and Probation Officers to determine risk of non-appearance, violating conditions of release, violating conditions of supervision, re-offending, and in determining criminogenic needs. The second section (Pretrial Pathways, STARR, Why Try, Moral Reconciliation Therapy, and Defendant/Offender Workforce Development) covers informative programs and motivational interviewing tools used by officers in dealing with defendants/offenders or clients. The third section (RISE Mental Health Court, RISE Drug Court, and VA Court) entails information regarding specific specialized, reentry courts in the District of Utah.

Federal Pretrial Risk Assessment (PTRA)

PTRA is a tool developed by the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services (OPPS) staff, specifically Dr. Christopher Lowenkamp, using data collected through the PACTS system and initially analyzed as part of a larger project. The PTRA is an objective, quantifiable instrument that provides a consistent and valid method of predicting risk of failure-to-appear, new criminal arrest, and technical violations while on pretrial release. The instrument is comprised of ten scored and two unscored items that are divided into two domains or categories: criminal history and other.

Point of contact for PTRA is U.S. Pretrial Services Officer Ben Graham, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2725 or Ben_Graham@utp.uscourts.gov.

Federal Post Conviction Risk Assessment (PCRA)

PCRA is a tool developed by the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services (OPPS) staff, specifically Dr. Christopher Lowenkamp, using data collected through the PACTS system and initially analyzed as part of a larger project. It was several years in the making, and measures offender risk and dynamic risk factors. The instrument is based exclusively on empirical data from federal probation clients nationwide, and has been successfully validated. The PCRA consists of two parts, which include officer input and offender self-report. Items scored by the officer include criminal history, education/employment, substance abuse, social networks, and cognition. The instrument is recalculated on a yearly basis so that dynamic risk factors can be identified and tabulated. The offender self-report is completed by the offender, also on a yearly basis. The offender self-report was developed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and measures criminal thinking and elevated thinking styles.

The PCRA identifies dynamic risk factors or aspects of an offender's personality and lifestyle that can be changed through appropriate intervention strategies. Because the risk factors are dynamic, as opposed to static, the offender can be a reduced risk or an increased risk over time. The offender self-report identifies general criminal thinking, proactive versus reactive thinking styles, and specifically identifies elevated offender thinking styles. Elevated thinking styles identify several categories, which include: mollification/making excuses, cutoff/ignoring responsible action, entitlement/feeling above the law, power orientation/asserting power over others, sentimentality/self serving acts of kindness, super optimism/getting away with anything, cognitive indolence/lazy thinking, and discontinuity/getting sidetracked. Again, once thinking patterns are correctly identified, appropriate intervention techniques can be implemented.

In summary, the PCRA is an empirically based assessment and needs tool that can correctly identify areas where interventions can be utilized to reduce offender risk.

Point of contact for PCRA is Supervisory U.S. Probation Officer Eric Anderson, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2755 or Eric_Anderson@utp.uscourts.gov.

Pretrial Pathways

The U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office within the District of Utah presents a quarterly orientation for defendants and their family members. The vision is to educate and familiarize defendants and their family members with the process of pretrial supervision and beyond. This quarterly, offered educational course aims to provide defendants and their family members with the opportunity to receive information about the federal judicial processes, including but not limited to: pretrial supervision, the sentencing process, and incarceration. Our mission is to reduce fear, anxiety, and stress through information and education. A panel consisting of a pretrial officer, presentence officer, Bureau of Prisons (BOP) representative, as well as an offender who has recently been released from BOP custody, provide education and information on the defendant's anticipated journey through the federal system.

- Attend a Pretrial Pathways session, which is held quarterly on a Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

Point of contact for Pretrial Pathways is U.S. Probation Officer Greg Petersen, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2778 or Greg_Petersen@utp.uscourts.gov.

STARR

STARR is the acronym for Staff Training Aimed at Reducing Re-Arrest. STARR is a set of supervision techniques for officers to use in their daily interactions with defendants/offenders. The techniques and training are based on existing behavioral change strategies found to be effective with offending populations. The STARR curriculum was developed by Administrative Office staff with input from existing research and experts in the field of community supervision and correctional interventions. STARR represents a series of skills that officers use to supervise offenders. These skills include active listening, giving effective feedback, role clarification, reinforcement, disapproval, effective use of authority, punishment, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and problem-solving skills.

- Attend a monthly STARR booster meeting.

Point of contact for STARR is U.S. Probation Officer Meggen Van Sciver, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2749 or Meggen_Vansciver@utp.uscourts.gov.

Why Try

The Why Try program provides a common framework or language for all who work with offenders. Why Try employs ten pictures (visual analogies) which each teach a discrete principle, such as resisting peer-pressure, obeying laws and rules, and that decisions have consequences. The visual components are then reinforced by music and physical activities. The major learning styles—visual, auditory, and body-kinesthetic—are all addressed. The program improves the quality of services provided and improve outcomes for offenders under the supervision of U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services in Utah.

The Why Try Program uses cognitive restructuring to help offenders overcome their challenges and improve life outcomes. It is a manualized, strength-based approach based on sound, empirical principles, and accepted theories of adult learning.

- Become familiar with the Why Try website, www.whytry.org.

Point of contact for Why Try is U.S. Probation Officer Hugh Watt, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2792 or Hugh_Watt@utp.uscourts.gov.

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT)

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) is the premiere cognitive-behavioral program for substance abuse treatment and for criminal justice offenders. Developed in 1985 by Gregory Little, Ed.D., and Kenneth Robinson, Ed.D., more than 120 published reports have documented that MRT-treated offenders show significantly lower recidivism for periods as long as 20 years after treatment. Studies show MRT-treated offenders have re-arrest and re-incarceration rates 25% to 75% lower than expected.

MRT is a cognitive-behavioral counseling program that combines education, group and individual counseling, and structured exercises designed to foster moral development in treatment-resistant clients. As long as clients' judgments about right and wrong are made from low levels of moral reasoning, counseling them, training them in job skills, and even punishing them will have little long-lasting impact on their behavior. They must be confronted with the consequences of their behavior and the effect that it has had on their family, friends and community. Poor moral reasoning is common within at-risk populations.

MRT addresses beliefs and reasoning. It is a systematic, step-by-step group counseling treatment approach for treatment-resistant clients. The program is designed to alter how clients think and make judgments about what is right and wrong.

- Become familiar with the Moral Reconciliation Therapy website, <https://www.ccimrt.com/mrt>

Point of contact for STARR is U.S. Probation Officer Meggen Van Sciver, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2749 or Meggen_Vansciver@utp.uscourts.gov.

Defendant/Offender Workforce Development (DOWD)

DOWD is a program for U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officers to utilize with all unemployed and underemployed defendants/offenders to assist them in securing meaningful employment and/or pursuing further educational opportunities. The goals of the program are to increase community awareness regarding defendant/offender employment, educating potential employers regarding the economic benefit of hiring a defendant/offender, and to provide standardized job readiness courses as well as case management to defendants/offenders in need of assistance.

Currently, U.S. Probation has representatives who serves as members of the Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development Task Force (UDOWD). The purpose is to unite to facilitate collaboration between Federal, State, County, and Local Agencies in an effort to eliminate commonly perceived historical information and procedural barriers between agencies. The primary task force goal is to assist ex-offenders in seeking, obtaining, and maintaining gainful employment in order to reduce recidivism.

- Watch the UDOWD DVD titled, “A Working Partnership: UDOWD”
- Become familiar with the UDOWD website hosted by Utah Department of Corrections

Point of contact for DOWD is U.S. Probation Officer Annie Carr, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2807 or [Annie Carr@utp.uscourts.gov](mailto:Annie_Carr@utp.uscourts.gov).

RISE Courts (Mental Health Court and Drug Court)

RISE Mental Health Court

The purpose of the RISE Mental Health Court Program is to promote Reentry Independence through Sustainable Efforts that improve health and increase public safety. Such efforts support effective symptom management of serious mental illness, sobriety (for individuals with coexisting substance abuse/dependence), activities for daily living, and social/leisure activities for defendants and offenders serving a term of supervision. In addition, participants are assisted with applications for local, state, and federal benefits such as Medicaid, Social Security, and housing.

These sustainable efforts promote personal responsibility, monitor risk factors, and assist participants to develop and maintain a healthy, law-abiding lifestyle, resulting in cost-savings to taxpayers by reducing the frequency and/or duration of detention or re-incarceration.

The key to success in continuity of care is our collaborative partnership among stakeholders, allied agencies, and community organizations. For example, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), provides free educational classes on mental illness for participants and their families as well as support groups and social activities.

Administration and Collaborative Management

The RISE Mental Health Court Program has been approved and supported by the U.S. District and Magistrate Court Judges. Once accepted for participation, cases are referred by the Judges to the U.S. Magistrate Judge that presides over the RISE Program.

Under the direction of the presiding U.S. Magistrate Judge, the RISE Mental Health Court Program is an interdisciplinary and collaborative effort by a team of partner and cooperating agencies. Partner agencies include the:

- Clerk of the Court (Clerk's Office)
- U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO)
- Federal Defender's Office (FDO)
- U.S. Probation Office (USPO)
- U.S. Marshals Service (USMS)
- Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)

The RISE Team operates with a non-adversarial philosophy, with the overall health and stability of the participant as well as public safety in mind. Incentives, rewards, and sanctions are used to support constructive behavior change.

Eligibility

Candidates for the Mental Health Court Program may be identified at any phase of the pretrial or post conviction supervision process including defendants under conditional release. Individuals referred to the Mental Health Court Program need to be competent enough to participate in and understand the court process as well as meet one of the following eligibility criteria:

- An individual who has a documented Axis I diagnosis (as defined in the DSM-IV-TR)
- An individual who has a documented Axis I diagnosis (as defined in the DSM-IV-TR) and a documented co-occurring substance abuse diagnosis
- An individual who has a documented cognitive impairment, including a pervasive developmental disorder (e.g., Autism, Asperger's Syndrome), dementia, and/or traumatic brain injury (determined on a case by case basis by the screening committee)

Candidates meeting the above criteria may be referred to the Mental Health Court Program. Candidates are accepted by a consensus of all team members. Participation in the program is voluntary.

- Attend RISE Mental Health Court, which is held every Monday at 11:00 a.m.

Point of contact for RISE Mental Health Court is U.S. Probation Officer Meriska Holt, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2817 or Meriska_Holt@utp.uscourts.gov.

RISE Drug Court

The purpose of the RISE Drug Court Program is to promote Reentry Independence through Sustainable Efforts that increase public safety by supporting sobriety and law-abiding behavior through reducing relapse and recidivism for moderate and high risk individuals. These sustainable efforts by the participant and the RISE Team support personal responsibility, alternatives to incarceration, and recovery from alcohol and/or drug addiction, all of which result in significant cost-savings to taxpayers.

Administration and Collaborative Management

The RISE Drug Court Program has been approved and supported by the U.S. District and Magistrate Court Judges. Once accepted for participation, cases are referred by the Judges to the U.S. Magistrate Judge that presides over the RISE Program.

Under the direction of the presiding U.S. Magistrate Judge, the RISE Drug Court Program is an interdisciplinary and collaborative effort by a team of partner and cooperating agencies. Partner agencies include the:

- Clerk of the Court (Clerk's Office)
- U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO)
- Federal Defender's Office (FDO)
- U.S. Probation Office (USPO)
- U.S. Marshals Service (USMS)
- Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)

Structure and Philosophy

The RISE Drug Court Program is structured with the 10 Key Components of drug court models identified by the National Drug Court Institute as well as supervision policies and court-ordered conditions that support evidence based practices in recovery, personal accountability, alternatives to incarceration, and public safety. Participants are required to comply with the Participant Rules and sign a Waiver of Confidentiality and Agreement after consulting with legal counsel.

RISE Drug Court Program Team Roles

The Judge

The Judge presides over the RISE Drug Court and participates in the collaborative evaluation of the program. The Judge receives updates and recommendations regarding each participant's progress during case staffing meetings with the RISE Team. The Judge reviews the weekly

progress with each participant appearing in Court. When participants are in compliance with the program and conditions of supervision, the Judge provides praise encouragement and grants rewards/incentives. When participants are in violation, the Judge imposes various sanctions which may include, removal from the program, or an order that the participant serve a term of custody.

United States Attorney's Office

The U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) provides an Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) and other staff and resources to represent the government. Due to the non-adversarial structure of the program, the AUSA also considers the participant's interests. The AUSA serves on the screening committee. The AUSA and associated staff participate in the collaborative evaluation of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

Federal Defenders Office

The Federal Defenders Office (FDO) provides an Assistant Federal Defender (AFD) and associated staff to represent and assist participants throughout the program. Due to the nonadversarial structure of the program, the attorney/client relationship involves non-traditional approaches to representation, including a waiver of confidentiality. The AFD serves on the screening committee and explains the modified attorney/client relationship with the participant. The AFD and associated staff participate in the collaborative evaluation of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

The United States Probation Office

U.S. Probation Officers

The U.S. Probation Officer (USPO) provides supervision and case management services to encourage the participant's compliance with the RISE Program and conditions of supervision. The USPO makes treatment referrals based on the needs of the participant, provides weekly progress reports to the Court, and works with respective counsels to respond quickly to serious violations. The USPO participates in the collaborative evaluation of the program.

Management

A supervising probation officer and/or senior manager serves on the screening committee and participates in the management of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

Treatment Service Providers

The supervising probation officer and/or senior manager work with the contracting officer to facilitate contract treatment services. Contract treatment providers are required to provide evidence based therapy and case management services to participants as well as progress reports. In addition, non-contract treatment providers who provide similar services are utilized when available. The USPO works with each treatment provider to ensure effective communication, which may include the providers' participation in case staffing meetings, court hearings, and program evaluation meetings.

Program Coordinator

The Coordinator directs and coordinates the dynamic work flow of the RISE Program in collaboration with partner agencies to support evidence based practices that reduce recidivism. The Coordinator participates in training, conferences, meetings, and committees as well as facilitates outreach efforts, develops community resources, and maintains cooperative relationships with partner agencies, treatment providers, government agencies, and community organizations. The Coordinator plans, implements, administers, coordinates, and monitors the work of the RISE Program in collaboration with partner agencies, including referral screening, program evaluation meetings, case staffing meetings, and dissemination of program and educational information. The Coordinator works closely with the program evaluator and RISE Team to facilitate data collection, evaluation, and process improvement of the program.

United States Clerk of the Court

The Clerk of the Court assigns court clerks to provide case docketing, tracking, and scheduling of court appearances. The clerks also take minutes at meetings. The clerks participate in the collaborative evaluation of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

United States Marshals Service

The United States Marshals Service (USMS) provides security services for members and employees of the judiciary as well as visitors to the U.S. Courthouse. The USMS works closely with the Judge and partner agencies to carry out court orders if a sanction or a term of custody is ordered. The USMS may assist with field visits and searches at the request of the USPO. If an arrest/bench warrant is issued, the USMS will actively pursue and arrest the named defendant. If a participant is remanded to USMS custody, the USMS will provide secure transportation to the detention facility. A RISE Deputy U.S. Marshal serves on the screening committee and participates in the collaborative evaluation of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

Federal Bureau of Prisons

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contracts for residential services with the residential reentry center (RRC) and facilitates the review and approval of referrals for those participants considered for placement at the RRC. In addition, they coordinate services for the reentry of inmates who are on prerelease status at the RRC. The BOP participates in the collaborative evaluation of the program including case staffing meetings, court hearings, program evaluation meetings, and related program tasks/projects.

- Attend RISE Drug Court, which is held every Tuesday at noon

Point of contact for RISE Drug Court is U.S. Probation Officer Meggen Van Sciver, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2749 or Meggen_Vansciver@utp.uscourts.gov.

VA Court

The purpose of the Veterans Court Program is to provide a non-adversarial supervision and treatment regimen for veterans currently involved in the Federal Criminal Justice System. These veterans suffer from a range of mental health disorders, including: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and/or substance dependence as a result of having served in the Armed Forces. The veterans team combines efforts with both the RISE Drug and Mental Health Courts by supporting personal responsibility, providing alternatives to incarceration, recovery from alcohol and drug addiction, and assistance in applying for all local, state, federal and veteran benefits that they are entitled to and for which they qualify.

- Attend VA Court, which is held the last Wednesday of every month at 2:00 p.m.

Point of contact for VA Court is U.S. Probation Officer Kelly Copley, who can be contacted at (801) 535-2714 or Kelly_Copley@utp.uscourts.gov.

Appendix A

Training Activities and Training Credit

EBP/ARC ACTIVITY	WHEN OFFERED	TRAINING CREDIT
Pretrial Pathways - Attend a session	Quarterly on a Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.	1.5 hours
STARR - Attend a booster meeting	Monthly	1 hour
DOWD - Watch the DVD series	On website -	
RISE Mental Health - Attend RISE MH Court	Every Monday at 11:00 a.m.	1 hour
RISE Drug Court - Attend RISE Drug Court	Every Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.	1 hour
VA Court - Attend VA Court	Last Wednesday of every month at 2:00 p.m.	1 hour

Program/Training Evaluation Form

Immediately following the training/program, please fill out this form and return it.

Name (Optional): _____

Program Title: _____

Program Presenter: _____

Date of Training/Program: _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The length of the training was appropriate.	1	2	3	4
The presenters were knowledgeable.	1	2	3	4
The content was practical and current.	1	2	3	4
The presenters managed questions from the field appropriately.	1	2	3	4
The information presented is applicable to my job.	1	2	3	4

What did you like BEST about this training/program, and why? _____

What did you like LEAST about this training/program, and why? _____

What suggestions, if any, do you have to improve this specific training/program? _____

Would you recommend this training/program to others? YES NO

Additional Comments: _____
