



## **Contra Costa County Homeless Court Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **Who is eligible?**

- The client must be currently homeless or have been homeless at the time the citation was issued.
- The client must have been receiving services to help them become self-sufficient (case management at a shelter, substance abuse, transitional living program, independent living skills, etc.) for at least 90 days at the time of the referral.
- A client cannot refer him/herself to Homeless Court.
- Only the agency at which they have been receiving these services may refer the client to Homeless Court.
- If the client was seen at a Homeless Court in another county but still has tickets in Contra Costa County, they may request that county's Homeless Court program to submit an inter-county referral so that their cases can be addressed in this county.
- The court asks that if the client is not clean and sober, please wait to apply to have the fines waived. A person using makes poor choices and that includes driving unsafely.

### **How do I refer my client to Homeless Court?**

1. Fill out a Homeless Court [referral form](#)
2. Gather the appropriate documentation indicated below:
  - a) A letter to the court from the client
    - The letter should explain their circumstances, why they would like their fines deleted and outline what steps they have made to overcome homelessness. This should include whether they have taken any classes, gone through any substance abuse treatment programs, employment readiness programs, parenting or other classes or coaching. If they suffer from mental illness, proof that they are on their psychotropic medications and/or seeing mental health professionals is helpful. If the medical health professionals recommend that the client be licensed to drive, a letter in the client's support would help. If the client volunteers at the shelter, this would be helpful to mention. If they care for a family member, child or parent, or other, please tell the court that also. Also, if they have had several tickets, they can discuss how they will drive differently were they to obtain their license, or why their driving was so frequently in violation of the law.
  - b) A letter to the court from the case manager.
    - This letter should specify how many hours the client has spent working towards overcoming homelessness, including classes, volunteering at the shelter, providing child care, etc. Anything else the case worker can mention about the client's circumstances is helpful.



- c) Copies of all certificates from classes and trainings.
  - d) Anything that will help show the court that the client has undergone a change and/or made efforts to overcome their situation would be helpful.
3. Email [referral form](#) and documents to [homelesscourt@cchealth.org](mailto:homelesscourt@cchealth.org).

**What kinds of tickets will be addressed?**

- Infractions only. No misdemeanors, felonies, parking tickets or DUIs.
- Tickets must originate from Contra Costa County only.

**Why is it taking so long for my client to be scheduled to Homeless Court?**

- Only 50 referrals are submitted per month to the Superior Court and referrals are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Depending on volume of referrals received, the wait list can be anywhere from 1-3 months.

**How will my client be notified that s/he is scheduled for Homeless Court?**

- The Homeless Court Coordinator will notify the case manager (not the client) that their client is scheduled by email (or by telephone if case manager does not have an email address).
- Notification will be given to the case manager at least 2 weeks prior to Homeless Court.
- Case managers are requested, but not required, to appear with their client at Homeless Court.

**Can I just send my client to Homeless Court if I think they are scheduled?**

- NO!
- If the case manager has NOT been notified, the client is NOT scheduled.
- Please do not instruct a client to appear without receiving notification from our office that they are scheduled.

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