

Time spent in Drug Court for Subgroups By Counties

NW HIDTA/DASA Drug Court Evaluation Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute University of Washington

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Issue

This analysis looks at the amount of time offenders in different subgroups spend in the drug court program, where time in program is defined as the lapsed time between referral to and discharge from the program. Some differences between subgroups should be as expected: Graduates longest, Ineligibles and Opt-Outs shortest. Differences among courts could reflect different policies or practices.

This updates a report submitted in February, 2000, adding more subjects and a longer follow-up period. There are no changes in the results since that time.

Drug Court Outcome Groups.

Subjects are grouped as follows: **Ineligibles** are persons who passed an initial legal screen and were referred to the court, but on closer examination were found to be ineligible on either legal or clinical grounds. **Opt Outs** are persons who met all criteria, and were offered entry to the court, but who personally declined to participate. **Graduates** are individuals who graduated from a drug court. **Did Not Finish (DNF)** are individuals who had been admitted to a drug court program and either failed or dropped out. **Active** cases are not included in this analysis.

Method

For each drug court episode (i.e., referral to drug court and related action), the length of time between entry and exit was calculated, and the lengths of episodes tallied. In the table, the vertical axis shows the cumulative percent of cases in each subgroup that has been discharged by or before the length of episode (in weeks) listed on the horizontal axis. Because a small number of offenders have multiple episodes (referrals to drug court), a few persons are counted more than once.

These curves include all episodes that had a beginning and end date for the episode (i.e., currently active participants are excluded) at the time on the analysis.

Results

A graph is provided for each county, but the groups sizes are very small in Thurston, Skagit and Kitsap counties, and therefore are not stable or reliable.

¹ This report includes exactly the same content as the one dated December 22, 2000; it differs only in that a table of sample sizes has been included, the graphics have been reformatted and repositioned, and both the table and the graphs are now incorporated in the Word document computer file.

In general the shapes of the curves for the counties are similar, but King County shows two major differences (these have not changed from the February report) in comparison with Pierce and Spokane counties.

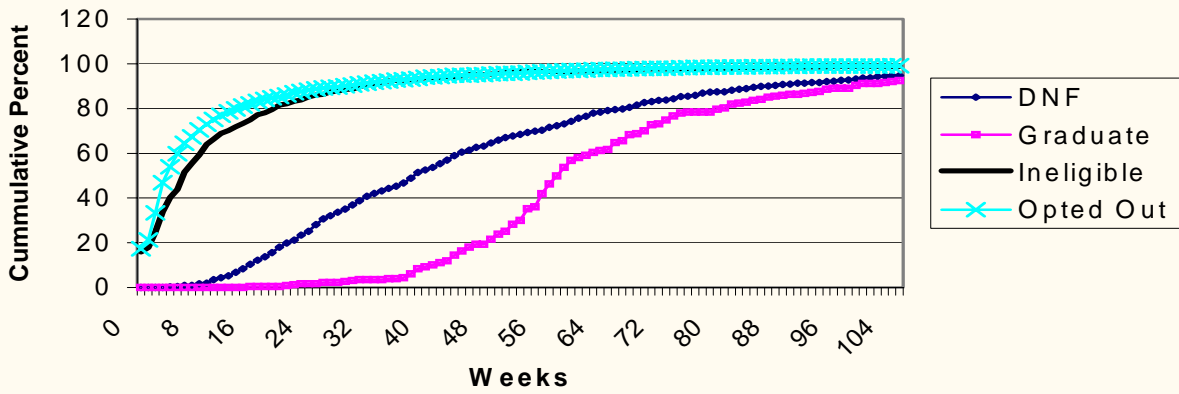
First, our data show that King County begins graduating participants after as little as six months of participation. By one year of drug court, King has graduated over 20% of their graduates. Pierce and Spokane, by contrast, graduate very few participants prior to 12 months, and then only shortly before. Subsequent portions of the curves are similar, i.e., all three counties graduate 80% of their cases by 18 months, and 95% to 96% by two years. We wondered whether King's short stay Graduates might have been from earlier in the court's history, but on checking we found that it is an ongoing occurrence.

Second, King County curves show that Opt Out and Ineligible offenders remain in drug court for longer times than the other counties. Possible reasons for this include a longer retention in the program for those on bench warrants, or a different set of practices for dating program entries and exits.

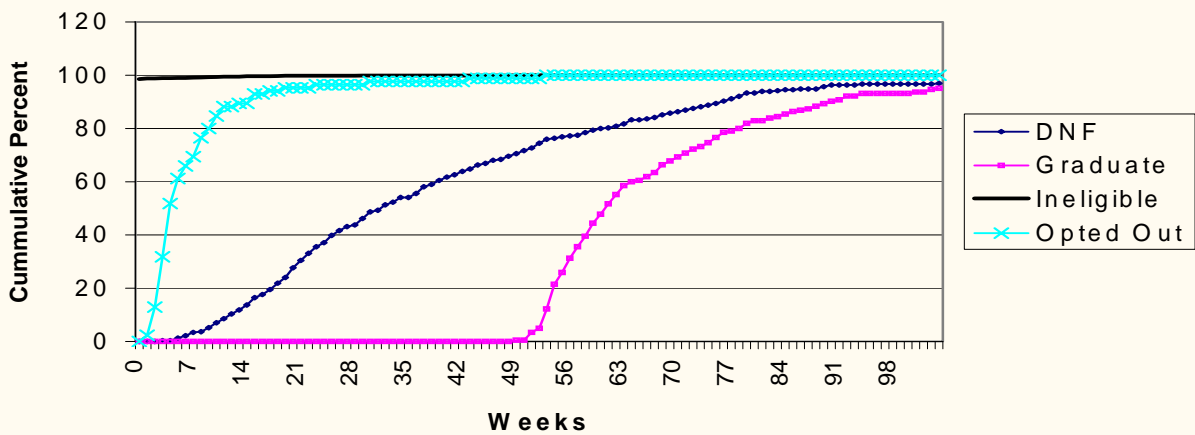
Numbers of Offenders in Each Outcome Group
By Counties

COUNTIES	OFFENDER OUTCOME GROUP			
	Ineligibles	Opt Outs	Did Not Finish	Graduate
King	351	2005	684	227
Pierce	1120	85	329	205
Spokane	1482	404	97	64
Thurston	35	253	81	19
Skagit			18	15
Kitsap	3	20	6	

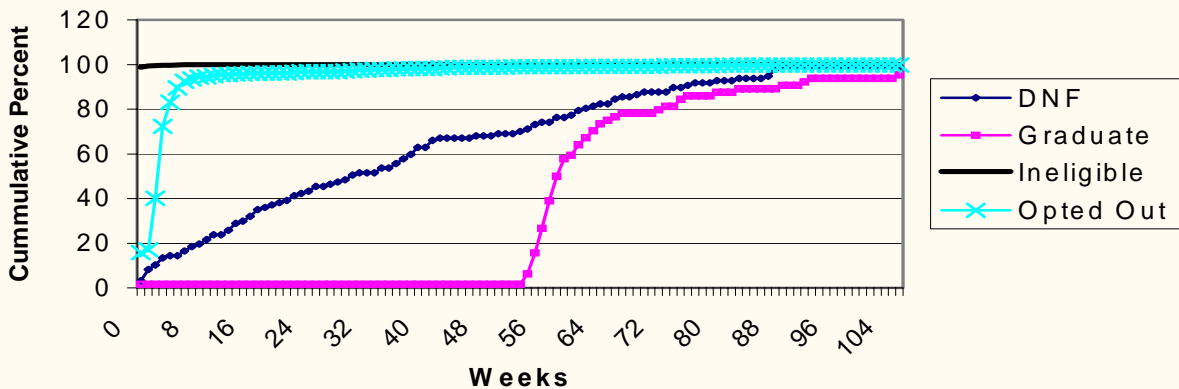
Length of Time in Drug Court King County



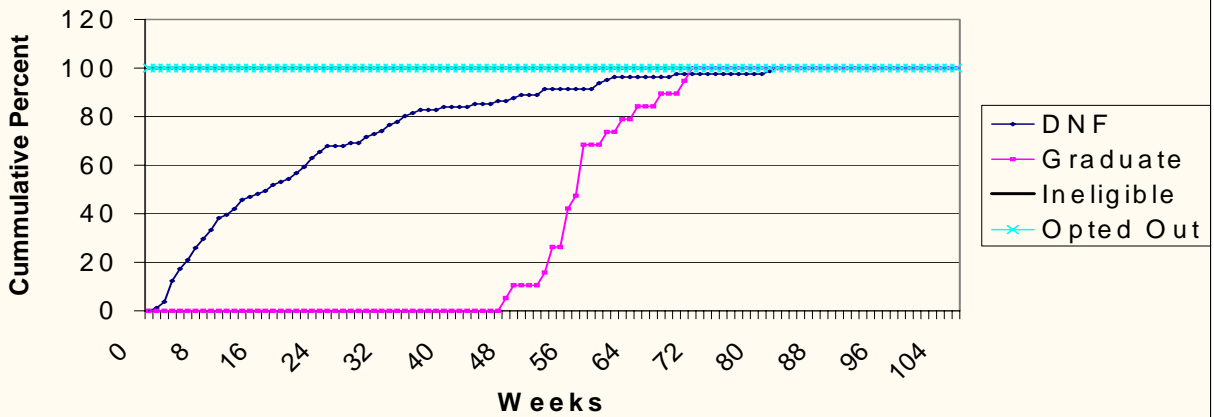
Length of Time in Drug Court Pierce County



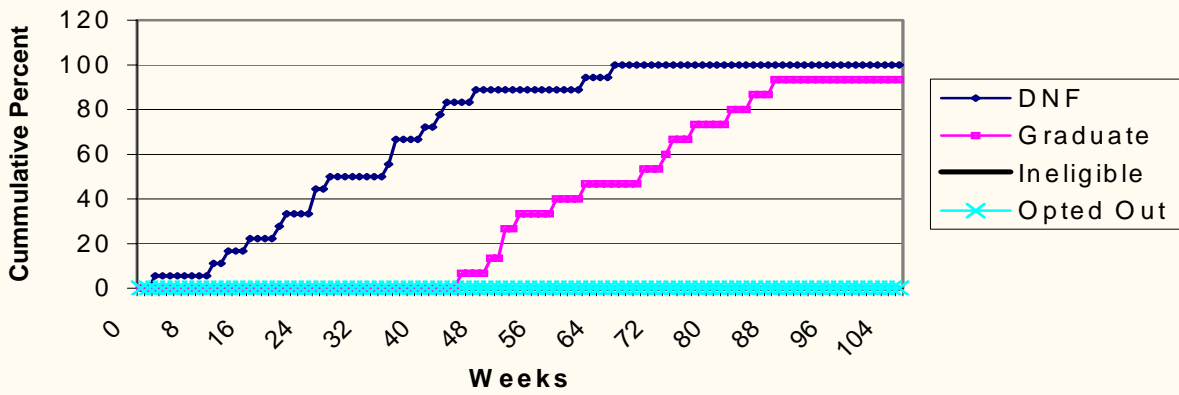
Length of Time in Drug Court Spokane County



Length of Time in Drug Court Thurston County



Length of Time in Drug Court Skagit County



Length of Time in Drug Court Kitsap County

