

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County Receives Grant to Launch ROAD Court to Address DUIs

Missoula County will launch a DUI treatment court to reduce the number of repeat DUIs in the county, thanks to an \$87,000 federal grant awarded through the Montana Department of Transportation.

Justice of the Peace Landee Holloway and Montana Chief Deputy Attorney General Jon Bennion will hold a media event at **11:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 13**, to provide an overview of the ROAD Court program and answer questions. The event will take place in Justice Courtroom 2 in the Missoula County Courthouse.

Judge Holloway, supported by a team of professionals from the legal, law enforcement, treatment and social science communities, oversees ROAD Court, which stands for Responsibility, Opportunities and Accountability for Drivers and constitutes a specialized docket within Justice Court. The grant provides funding for the court to screen and accept repeat DUI /high BAC DUI offenders to the program, serving up to 20 participants the first year.

In 2017, Montana experienced 1,995 crashes involving impaired drivers, which included 102 fatalities. Missoula County consistently lands in the top three counties in the state for the number of crashes involving impaired drivers. In 2017 alone, there were 87 people convicted of repeat second and third DUIs and first, second and third aggravated DUIs in Missoula County Justice Court. That number does not include first-time DUIs or felony DUIs (fourth or subsequent).

“Research has shown that taking a holistic approach to impaired drivers and getting to the root cause of repeat DUIs make our roads safer and saves lives,” Holloway said. “Addressing addiction and mental health issues, along with providing a high level of accountability, is effective in changing attitudes and reducing recidivism in high-risk DUI offenders. This grant will provide the tools and training necessary for the court to produce those outcomes.”

The grant will fund the hiring of a treatment court coordinator, staff training and a contract with a private provider for aftercare services. It also will pay for data collection software, program evaluation materials, and testing and supplies for participants in the program, which uses evidence-based practices to help repeat DUI offenders with substance abuse issues become healthy and productive community residents.

More details on the program will be provided at Thursday’s media event.

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