



Vermont Statewide Evaluation of Treatment Courts

Chittenden County Mental Health Court Key Findings Report

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December 2023

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This project was supported by Grant No. 2019-DC-BX-0066 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance to the Vermont Judiciary, Court Administrator's Office. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Evaluation Background

Treatment courts provide integrated substance use disorder treatment, behavioral health services, and intensive judicial supervision as an alternative to incarceration. The ultimate goals of these courts are to reduce rearrests, increase public safety, and provide treatment and other recovery support services to justice-involved individuals with substance use or mental health disorders to promote long-term recovery and enhance the quality of life for participants and their families.

Many studies have demonstrated that treatment courts effectively reduce recidivism, including fewer rearrests and less time incarcerated.¹ These positive outcomes for treatment court participants in turn reduce taxpayer costs with substantial returns on investments. For example, Bhati and colleagues found a cost-benefit ratio of 1:2.2 (that is, for every dollar invested in the program, there is a return of \$2.20),² while Carey et al. found a cost-benefit ratio of 1:4.6 (for every \$1 spent there was a return of \$4.60).³

This report provides the findings of the outcome and cost evaluation for the Chittenden County Mental Health Court (CCMHC). In 2021 and 2022, the Vermont Judiciary initiated a statewide process, outcome and cost evaluation of its adult treatment courts: CCMHC, Chittenden County Treatment Court (CCTC), Washington County Treatment Court (WCTC), Rutland County Treatment Court (RCTC), and the Southeast Regional DUI Treatment Docket (SERDTD). Process evaluation reports were completed in September 2022 that assessed program alignment with best practices.

The outcome evaluation was planned to measure whether the program achieved intended participant outcomes and goals, including reduced recidivism and successful program completion, as well as whether the program delivered treatment and other services as intended. The economic impact of Vermont's treatment courts was evaluated through a detailed cost analysis. A cost evaluation calculates the cost of the program and the outcomes, resulting in a cost-benefit ratio.

Data were analyzed from several administrative data sources, including program databases, court records, incarceration and probation records, as well as data from local treatment providers. Notably, service and treatment data were found to be incomplete and are therefore not included in this report. *Detailed methodology and data sources are in a separate Methods Appendix provided with this report.*

Findings are presented along with information about the context affecting participant outcomes including program practices, state and local policies, and resources (or lack of).

1. For example, see Carey, S. M., Mackin, J. R., & Finigan, M. W. (2012). What Works? The 10 Key Components of Drug Court: Research Based Best Practices. *Drug Court Review*, 8(1), 6–42.

2. Bhati, A. S., Roman, J. K., & Chalfin, A. (2008). To treat or not to treat: Evidence on the prospects of expanding treatment to drug-involved offenders. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

3. Carey, S. M., & Finigan, M. W. (2004). A Detailed Cost Analysis in a Mature Drug Court Setting: A Cost-Benefit Evaluation of the Multnomah County Drug Court. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*. 20(3) 292-338.

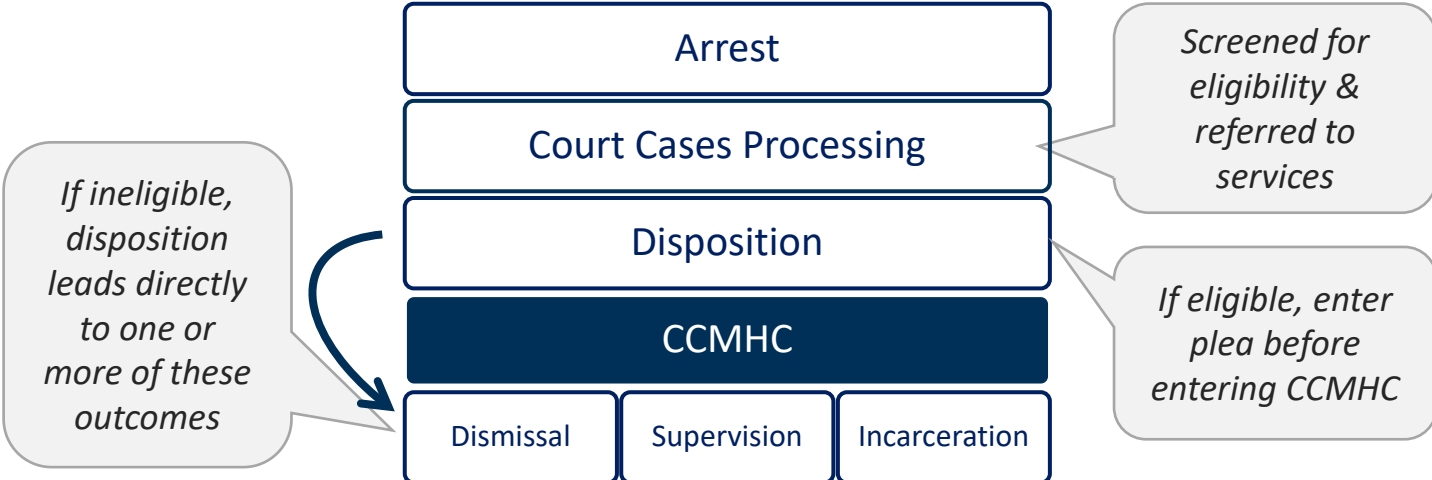
Chittenden County Mental Health Court (CCMHC)

Program and Participant Overview



CCMHC: Participant Identification and Path

The graphic below illustrates how and at what point in the court case individuals are identified and referred to treatment court, as well as the alternatives if they are found ineligible. While charges identified as eligible for CCTC most commonly include **drug** and **property** related offenses, CCMHC participants also enter with **misdemeanor person** related offense.



Entering the program requires **entering a plea**, often with maximum jail caps and the intention of dismissing jail time upon successful completion. Those not entering the program continue through the court system and have a variety of outcomes, including jail, prison, probation, or case dismissal.

This evaluation analyzes participant data at each point in the system. State and local policies, as well as program practices all impact participant outcomes, as do the resources (or lack thereof) available in these communities.

Factors Affecting Participant Outcomes



Often out of the program’s control, the referral timeline, funding, and treatment reimbursements all are affected by **state and local policies**, some of which have shifted dramatically over the years.



Program practices have changed from 2015 to 2019, when the participants evaluated in this report entered the program. Major shifts that may affect participant outcomes are noted in this report.



A lack of **resources**, in addition to treatment, but most notably housing and transportation, can reduce the likelihood of participant success, regardless of program and state policies.

CCMHC: Participant Overview

The sample of individuals used in this evaluation were all participants who entered the CCMHC between 2015 and 2019.

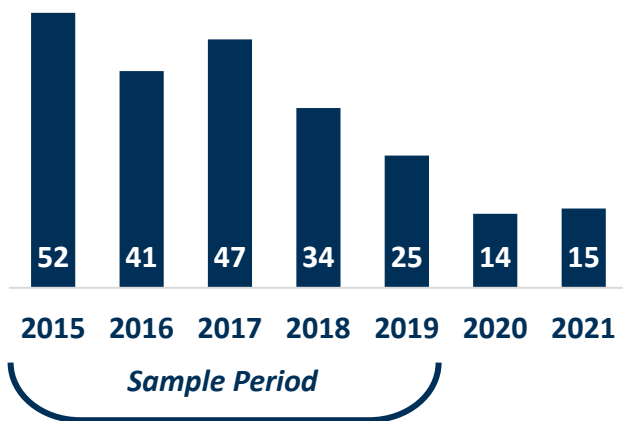
Why use this sample?

Evaluating participants who entered in 2015-2019 provides at least 2 years of recidivism data. Participants who entered more recently have not had enough time pass to adequately assess their long-term recidivism. This also allows sufficient time for participants to enter and complete the program based on the average time to complete (~12 months). In addition, having several years of participant data allows a large enough sample size for valid analyses.

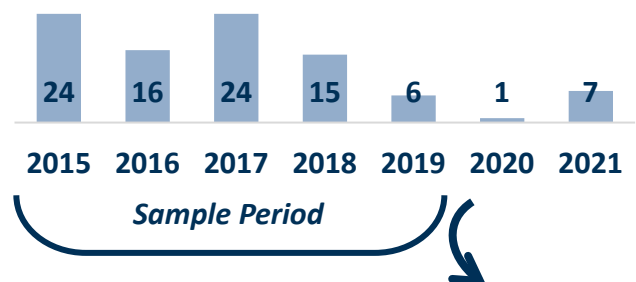
Keep in mind:

- Participant outcomes reflect treatment court practices during this time period. Process changes and improvements have been made since then.
- Because recidivism is measured 2 years after program entry, results include both in-program and post-exit recidivism.

On average, CCMHC served a census of 40 individuals each year from 2015 to 2019



There were 17 new program entries each year on average from 2015 to 2019

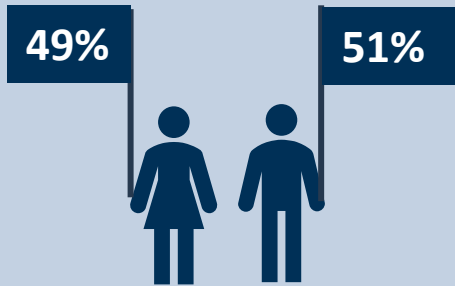


2020's dip in entries is likely related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

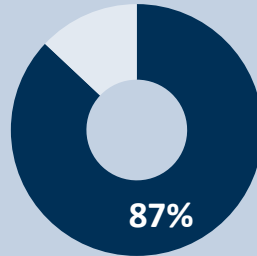
CCMHC: Participant Overview

2015 to 2019 Entries

Who Entered?



Men and women entered the program at similar rates



Roughly 9 out of 10 program participants were white

Average age at entry

35

years old

CCMHC participants appear to be very high risk, averaging nearly 5 arrests in the 2 years prior to program entry

Most offenses were property related (almost 2 per person on average) and misdemeanors (over 4). Participants averaged about 1 felony, 1 person charge, and less than 1 each for drug and DUI charges.

Typically, high risk participants in other programs across the country average 2-3 arrests in the 2 years prior to entry, indicating that CCMHC participants have exceptionally high numbers of priors.



State & Local Policy: Criminal justice reform in VT, including Act 61 (2017), the Youthful Offender Statute (2017), and the Justice Reinvestment Act (2019), altered eligibility requirements and additional diversion opportunities.



Program Practices: CCMHC has assessed for and accepted high risk individuals into the program, which follows best practice.



Resources: Increased risk is associated with greater service needs, which requires resources. Shortages and lack of funding in treatment services create challenges to meet the treatment needs of participants, including limitations in mental health services and residential treatment. Without extensive resources available in the community, successfully meeting the needs of the population can be challenging.



Outcomes

Pre-Post Design

For the other treatment courts in the Vermont statewide evaluation, recidivism and cost outcomes were measured against a matched comparison group of individuals who were arrested and charged with a treatment court eligible arrest in the same counties but did not enter the treatment court. The comparison groups were matched to the participants on age, gender, race, and arrest history.

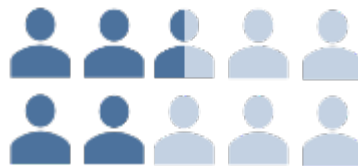
NPC also attempted to create a matched comparison group of individuals who were eligible for CCMHC but did not participate based on prior charge patterns, but because there were no data on mental health status for comparison group members, creating a valid matched comparison group was not possible. Lacking an indicator of mental health diagnosis in the comparison group prevented confirmation that the comparison individuals were a true match to the CCMHC participants, all of whom had been diagnosed with mental health conditions. Because recidivism and other outcomes may be influenced by group differences in mental health status, it was decided (with input from the CCMHC team) that the best option was to compare participants to themselves in a pre-post design looking at arrests in the two years pre and post CCMHC entry.

Data Limitations

The lack of available statewide data on mental health conditions required the evaluators to use a study design that is less rigorous than a formal comparison group and prevented the ability to conduct a thorough cost-benefit analysis.

CCMHC Outcomes: Graduation Rate

45% of the exited participants successfully graduated from the CCMHC program.



National MHC average = **57%**

Graduates stayed in the program for 50% longer than non-graduates

Graduate average time: 15 months



Non-grad average time: 10 months



While 15 months is not a long participation time to successfully complete the program, those who did graduate were lower risk (as noted below) than those who did not. Non-graduates exited the program fairly quickly, especially considering their complex mental health needs.

White participants were more likely to successfully graduate



46% of white participants graduate



36% of non-white participants graduate

The subsample size is small for non-white participants (n=11).

Non-graduates averaged twice as many arrests 2 years before entering CCMHC

Prior Arrests

3 Graduate vs. **6** Non-grad

Graduation rates did not differ by gender or age.



Program Practices: While the graduation rate is lower than the national average, the risk level of participants is very high (with an average of nearly 5 arrests in the 2 years prior to entry). The graduation rate likely reflects this challenging population with complex needs. Participants with higher risk (more arrests prior to program entry) were also less likely to graduate. CCMHC serves as a final effort to avoid long-term incarceration. Culturally responsive treatment options are needed to address racial disparities in graduation status.

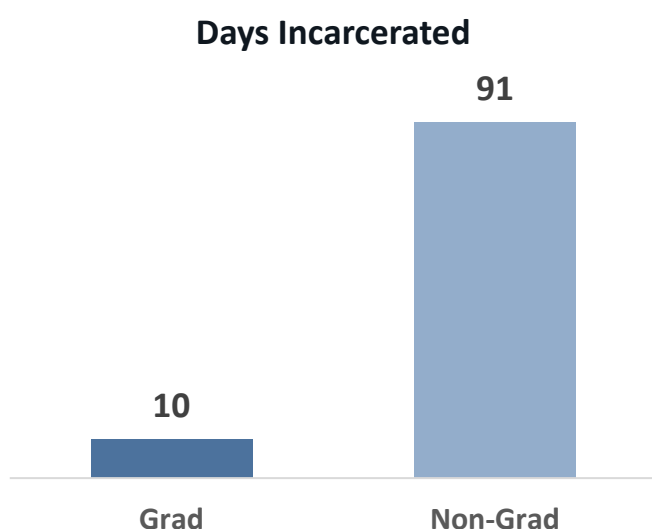


Resources: Resource shortages in VT may hinder graduation. Given the high risk level, participants may not get the intensity of services to meet their assessed needs. The scarcity of housing, transportation, health care, and social services means that participants' basic human needs are often not being met, which detracts from their focus on recovery. A lack of resources may also contribute to some participants exiting the program unsuccessfully within a short period of time.

* Exited participants do not include the 1% who died or transferred to another program during participation. The graduation rate excludes the 5% of participants in the sample who were still active at the time of data export.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Incarceration & Supervision

The average number of days incarcerated 2 years post program entry was more than 9 times higher for those who *did not graduate* from the program compared to graduates. CCMHC non-graduates had a higher average number of days incarcerated than the other VT treatment courts except for the CCTC, which averaged 113 days for non-graduates.



VT Department of Corrections (DOC) data capture incarceration from any source, such as a new arrest or jail sanctions imposed by CCMHC. The DOC database was used to calculate time incarcerated. During the 1-year period after program entry, **93% of the non-graduates** had at least one episode of incarceration while in the program, compared to just **18% of graduates**. The CCMHC database shows that **62% of the non-graduates** received a jail sanction during their first year of program participation - a high rate of incarceration – compared to **18% of graduates**.

Incarceration tends to lead to higher recidivism. Lengthy incarceration and high rates of incarceration likely increase the recidivism of non-graduates. Incarceration also likely reduces the graduation rate.



State & Local Policy: Participants on furlough may be under DOC jurisdiction. Incarceration may be outside of the program’s control, especially when those individuals are rearrested while in the program.



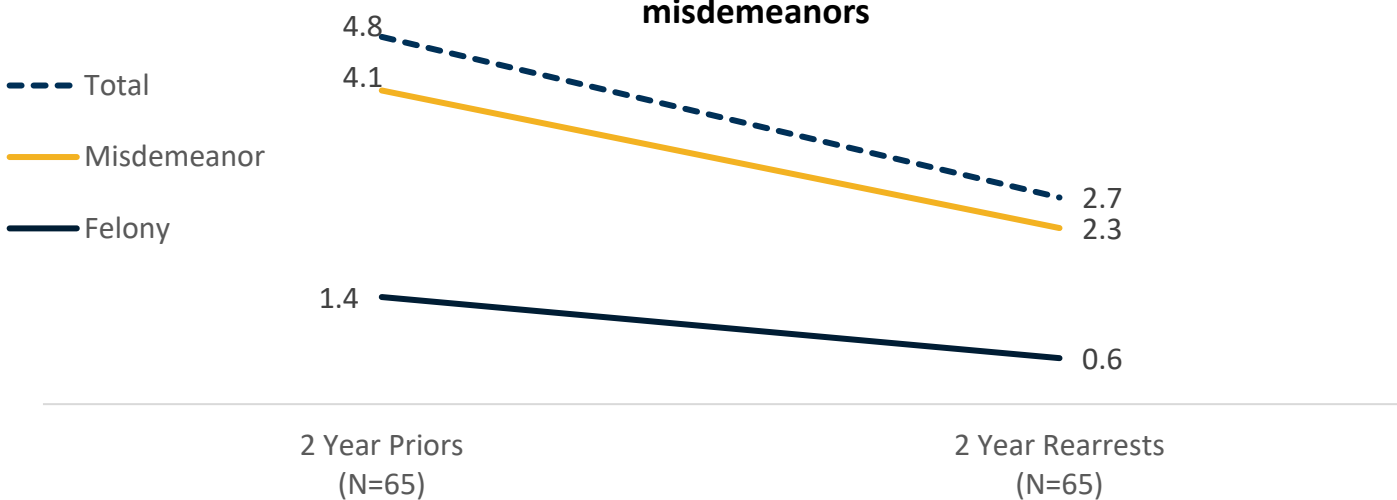
Program Practices: The CCMHC program database revealed a high rate of jail sanctions for non-graduates, with 62% of non-graduates receiving a jail sanction in their first year of the program, which likely contributed to increased recidivism in the evaluation sample and to the lower graduation rate. Notably, the CCMHC has reported rarely using jail sanctions now in alignment with newer research and recommendations to use jail sparingly.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

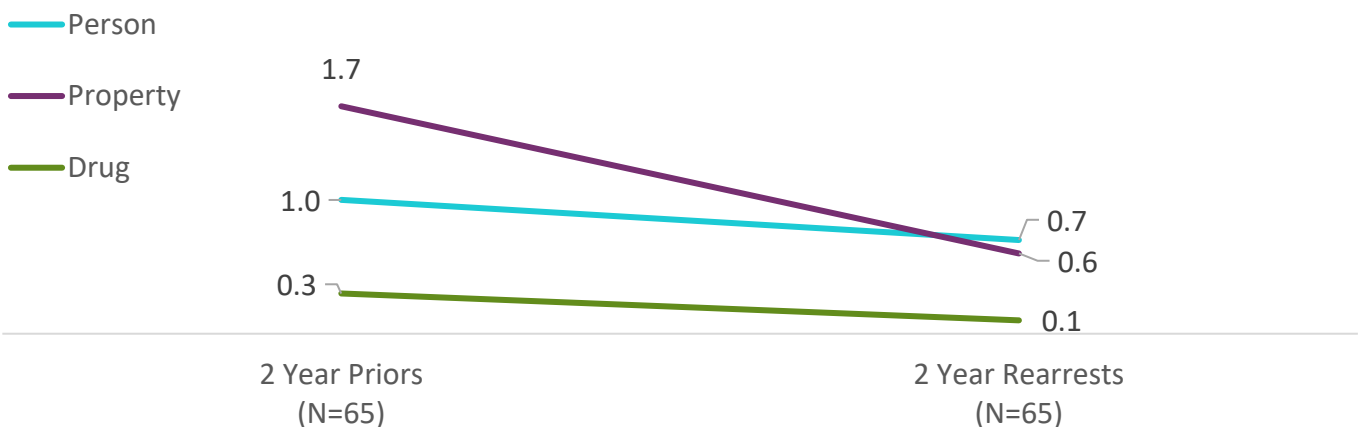
The number of arrests for CCMHC participants* decreased 2 years after program entry compared to 2 years prior

Recidivism outcomes are presented as rearrests. Arrests are used as a measure of recidivism because they are an indication of engagement in criminal activity at the time an incident occurs in contrast to using measures such as convictions, which may not occur for several months to years after an incident (or a conviction may not occur at all).

The number of arrests for participants* decreased from 2 years before to 2 years after program entry for total rearrests, including felonies and misdemeanors



The number of arrests for participants* also decreased for person, property and drug charges



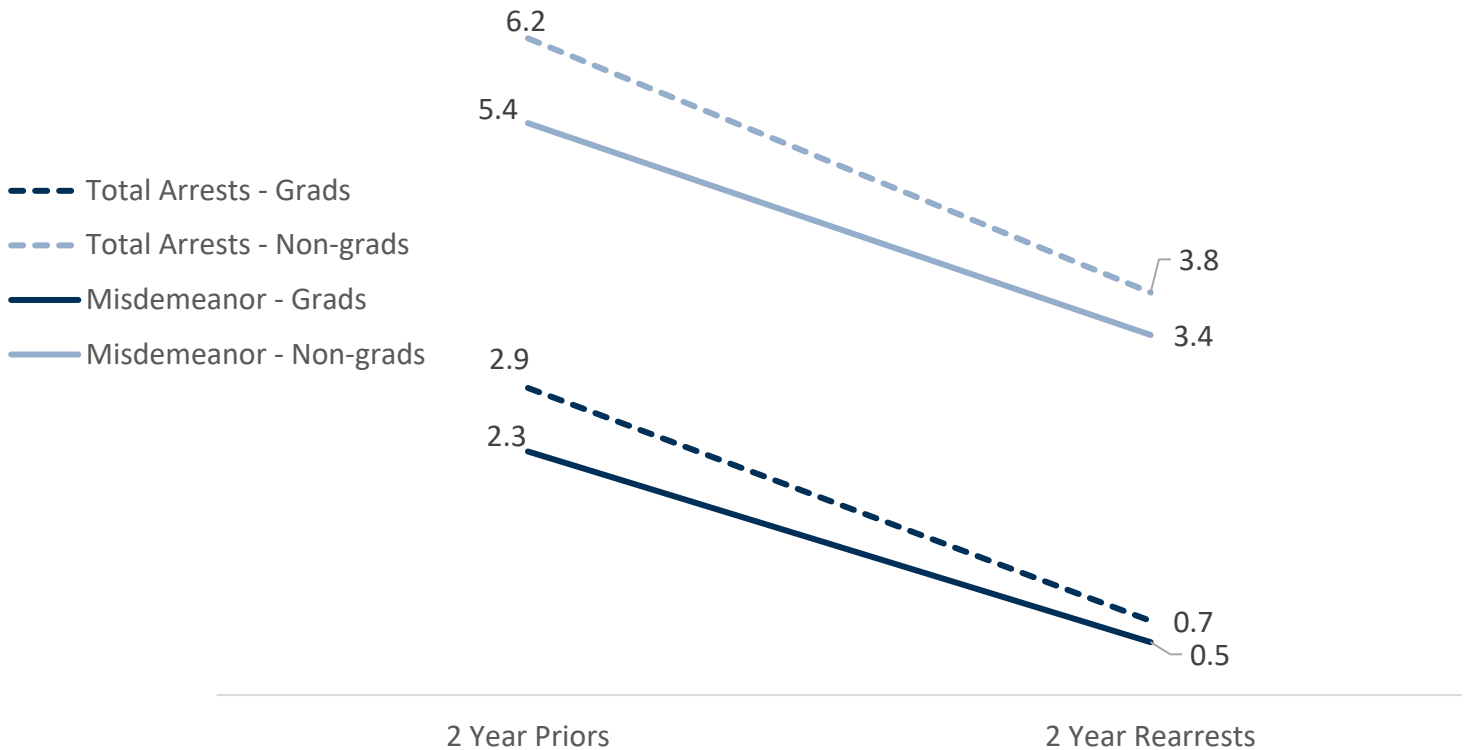
Overall, the pre-post analysis results suggest that the CCMHC may help participants reduce criminal recidivism. However, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of the pre-post design. In general, recidivism declines as people age, with the sharpest decrease happening after age 30, so the reductions in rearrests may reflect participants aging out of recidivism.

* Findings presented here are for all participants, including graduates, non-graduates, and active participants. There were 27 graduates and 33 non-graduates.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

The number of arrests for CCMHC participants decreased similarly for graduates and non-graduates

Graduates and non-graduates experienced similar trends for reductions in the number of arrests from 2 years before to 2 years after program entry



The results are presented above for total arrests and misdemeanors, but there are equivalent trends across all charge types and levels.

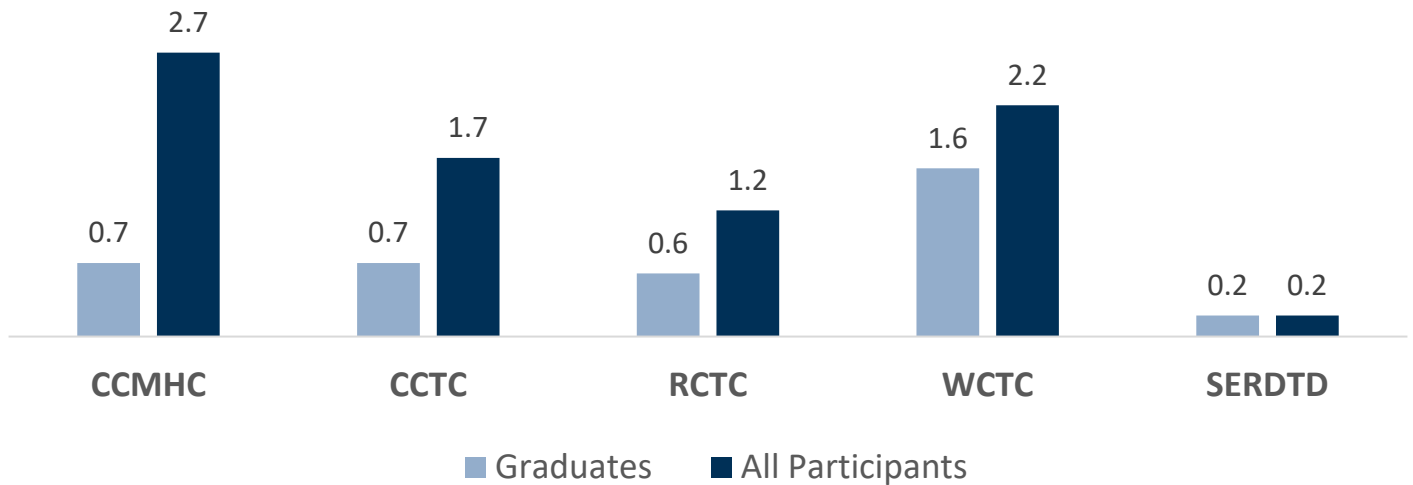
While this may suggest that the CCMHC is equally successful at reducing recidivism regardless of graduation status, it may also reflect the general population trend of reduced recidivism that coincides with increased age.

Note: There were 27 graduates and 33 non-graduates.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

In the Vermont statewide context, CCMHC participants are still displaying a relatively high number of rearrests 2 years after entering the program

CCMHC participants had a higher average number of rearrests at 2 years post program entry than the other VT treatment courts



CCMHC participants are rearrested fewer times post program entry than prior to program entry, but they have a relatively high average number of rearrests in the 2 years after program entry compared to the other Vermont treatment courts. This may be due to the combination of extremely high risk (as measured by prior arrests) and high level of need due to mental health disorders in the CCMHC population compared to the other treatment courts in Vermont.

Three times as many non-graduates were rearrested in the two years after CCMHC entry compared to graduates

26% Graduate vs. **79%** Non-grad

To address the high number of rearrests for CCMHC participants, and the high recidivism rate (particularly for non-graduates), it is important that the program continue to find ways to work with the community and state to build service capacity to meet high participant needs. In addition, the CCMHC should develop individualized and integrated case plans specific to the needs of each participant. Integrated case plans that coordinate program, probation and treatment requirements and adjust expectations for each participants' capacity are particularly important when working with high risk individuals with mental health disorders.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

What contributed to high recidivism among participants?

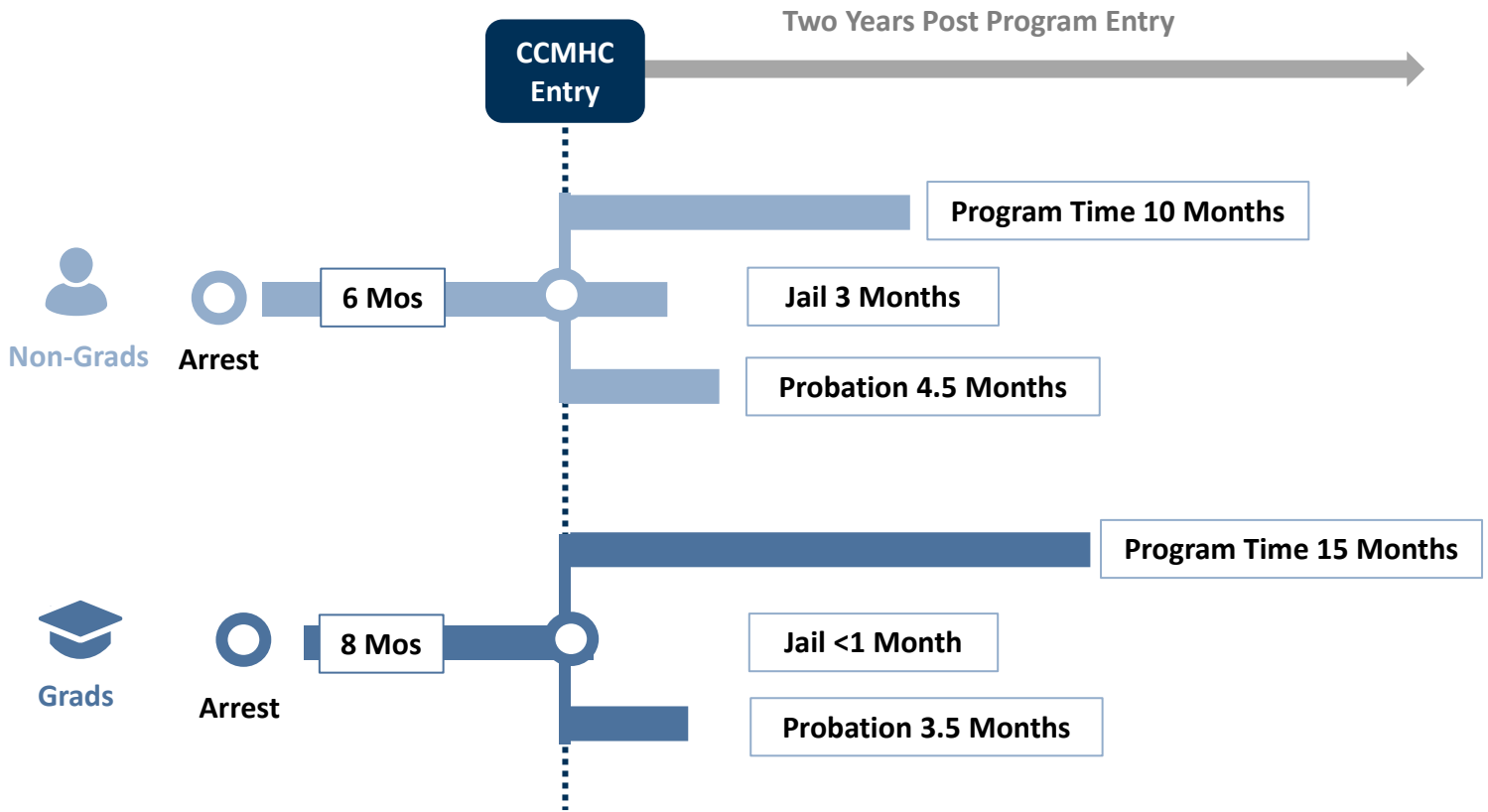
The factors contributing to high recidivism for participants span and intersect across policies, program practices and resources.

- **Extensive time incarcerated.** Time spent incarcerated means participants are unable to participate in the program activities and services intended to support their recovery, and incarceration tends to lead to higher recidivism. Non-graduates spent extensive time incarcerated, including incarceration from sources outside of the program. There are no state-level formal agreements with partner agencies, such as the DOC, and the resulting lack of a coordinated response may contribute to high levels of incarceration. Furthermore, research shows that the incarcerated population has a disproportionate amount of people with mental health disorders and that police may be called to respond to mental health crises, which can result in incarceration.¹ As such, CCMHC participants may be at increased risk of incarceration due to their mental health disorders.
- **Judicial rotations.** Treatment courts have better outcomes when the judge has *at least* 2 years of treatment court experience. Judges tend to be least effective in their first year on the treatment court bench, with outcomes improving in the second year and thereafter. Judicial turnover exacerbates the instability in participants' lives. This is evident in Vermont in the results from the 2017 evaluation of the CCTC where recidivism increased in the years after a new judge rotates into the program. Vermont's current 2-year judicial rotations mean that judges rotate just when they reach the threshold for improved participant outcomes.
- **Increased surveillance.** High recidivism rates may be a byproduct of the "surveillance effect" in which participants are more likely to be arrested simply because they are surveilled and caught more frequently. This may be particularly true in Vermont communities where law enforcement may have repeat offenders and unsuccessful participants on their radars.
- **Inadequate treatment.** Treatment agencies and the CCMHC were under-resourced due to staffing vacancies, high turnover, and low reimbursement rates, and may not have had the ability to provide the type or dosage of treatment required to support long-term recovery.
- **Structural and resource limitations hampered the ability to follow best practices.** The CCMHC did not have all the resources and staff necessary to follow evidence based best practices during the study period (2015-2019), and there was high turnover among team members. The CCMHC staff did the best they could within their circumstances during this period. In fact, the 2022 process evaluation found that a strength of Chittenden County is its multidisciplinary team with strong communication.

1. See https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/mental_health/

Justice Involved Outcomes: Incarceration & Supervision

CCMHC non-graduates exit sooner and spend more time incarcerated and on probation than graduates



Program Practices: Graduates spend 5 months longer in the program than non-graduates, suggesting that the CCMHC may want to attempt to retain struggling participants longer. Individualized and integrated case plans (case plans that are designed to meet the specific needs of each participant, and that combine all program, treatment and probation requirements into a simplified plan) may help with this.



Resources: Participants may be struggling to get adequate treatment for their mental health condition or substance use disorder due to a lack of state funding for treatment. Policy changes have now reduced residential treatment to 14 days, while most residential programs are 60, 90, and even 120 days long.



Costs

For the other Vermont treatment courts, cost outcomes were calculated using the same participant and comparison groups as their outcome evaluations. The cost evaluation was conducted using the transactional and institutional cost analysis (TICA) approach by analyzing the costs of program activities (the investment cost) as well as the costs of outcomes (including arrests, new court cases, time in jail or prison, and time on probation or parole) to measure whether there was a cost offset, or savings, due to more positive participant outcomes.

Due to the lack of a valid comparison group, a cost-benefit analysis could not be completed for CCMHC. However, investment costs and participant outcome costs could be calculated. See the Appendix in this report for more detailed results, and see the separate Methods Appendix provided as a companion to this report for more methodology details.

CCMHC INVESTMENT COSTS

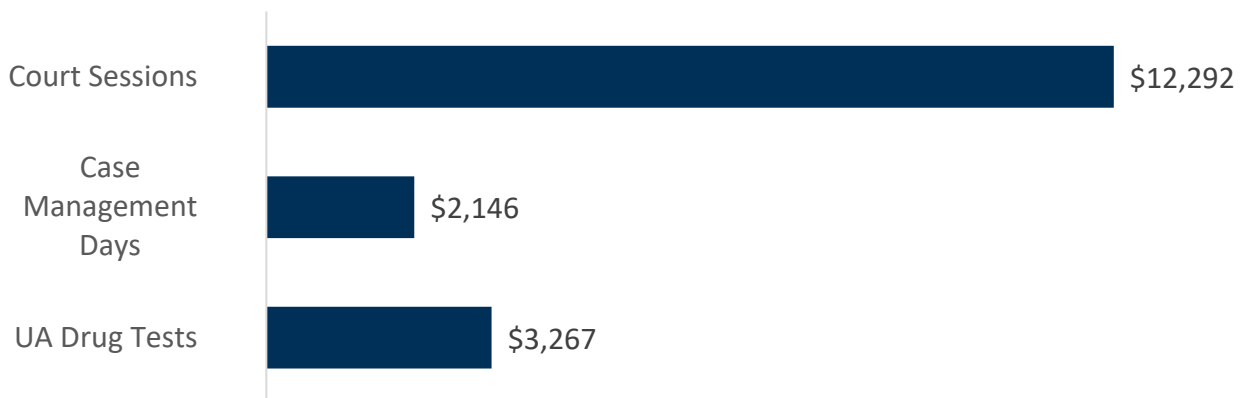
CCMHC Program Investment Costs = \$17,705 Per Participant

CCMHC program costs, also called investment costs, were calculated for each event (or “transaction”) experienced by those participants who exited the CCMHC (N = 59).¹ Based on program data, the following transactions resulted in an overall cost of \$17,705 per participant from entry to exit.² This is in the typical range of treatment court program costs based on cost studies performed by NPC in treatment courts across the United States (roughly \$4,000 to \$30,000 per participant) although the CCMHC total investment cost does not include treatment costs (more on this in the “important note” below).³

An examination of cost by transaction shows that:

- **Court sessions represented the greatest cost.**
- **Drug testing represented the second largest cost.**
- **Case management represented the third largest cost.**

CCMHC Total Cost = \$17,705 Per Participant



IMPORTANT NOTE: The total cost of the program provided above does not include substance use disorder (SUD) or mental health treatment services, which are an integral part of the program. Site-specific substance abuse treatment data were not complete and so could not be included in this cost analysis. Treatment costs from other treatment courts from NPC studies nationwide averaged \$10,688 and ranged from \$639 to \$35,743 per participant. These primarily reflect SUD treatment services but also include mental health treatment services when provided.

1 Active participants were still incurring program costs so are not included in investment cost calculations.

2 More detailed cost results are provided in the Appendix.

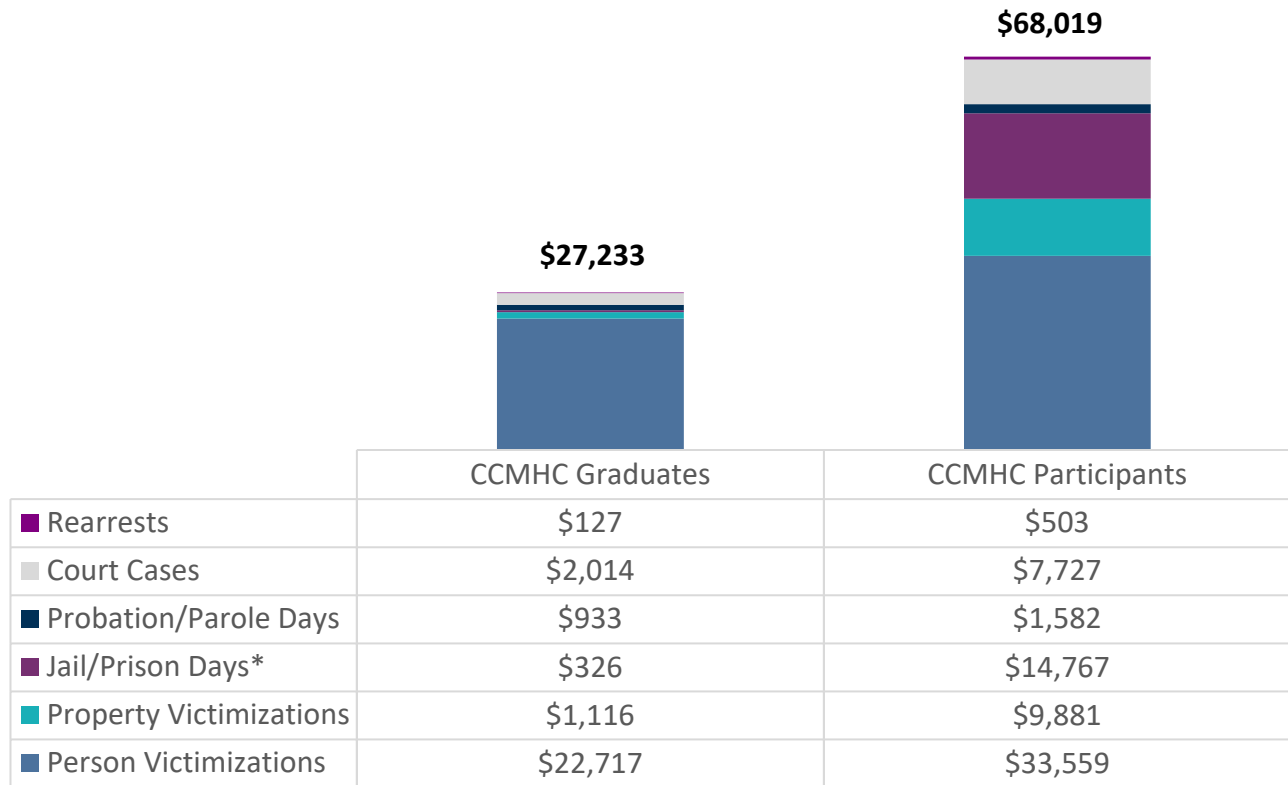
3 Program costs range from \$4,035 to \$30,624 based on treatment court cost evaluations conducted by NPC in California, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York and Oregon. The average program cost across all these programs is \$11,683 (see reports and publications at www.npcresearch.com).

CCMHC OUTCOME COSTS

The 2-year outcome costs for all CCMHC participants and CCMHC graduates are shown below. Due to a lack of a valid comparison group, no cost-benefit analysis could be performed. The figure below shows all costs that were related to, and available for, the outcomes reviewed across groups.

Costs per participant were much lower for CCMHC graduates than for all CCMHC participants. Unsurprisingly, due to lower recidivism for graduates in general, CCMHC graduates had fewer of every outcome transaction when compared to all CCMHC participants (which includes both graduates and non-graduates).

CCMHC Outcome Costs Per Participant Over 2 Years





Key Recommendations



Key Recommendations

Notably, many challenges to program effectiveness are occurring on the state level and reflect state and local policies, as well as resource limitations. These statewide challenges include the lack of a statewide infrastructure needed for treatment court success, judicial rotation requirements, no requirements for state-level formal agreements with partner agencies, underfunding from the state and low state leadership buy-in. These factors are largely outside of the influence of the CCMHC. See the statewide report for recommendations to address these larger statewide issues that are barriers to treatment court success in Vermont.

CCMHC can continue to work on process improvement to promote positive outcomes for participants.

- **Ensure adherence to best practice standards.** Vermont now has a statewide Policy and Procedure Manual based on the best practice standards. Work with the Programs Manager to ensure CCMHC is in compliance with all best practice standards.
- **Continue efforts on the process improvement plan (PIP) based on the process evaluation results.** Treatment courts that monitor and evaluate their programs and make changes based on the feedback have significantly better outcomes, including twice the reduction in recidivism rates and over twice the cost savings.
- **Retain participants longer and avoid discharging too soon.** Studies demonstrate that treatment courts where participants spend at least 12 months in the program have lower recidivism. However, the length of time needed to succeed in treatment courts varies based on individual participant needs. Given that the graduation rate in this program is lower than the national average, and non-graduates exit the program much sooner than graduates, it is possible that the non-graduates were discharged before they received the appropriate dosage of treatment and other services they needed. It is important for the program to learn about the barriers that have prevented participants from successfully completing and find ways to address those barriers. It may be helpful to review the resources on avoiding termination provided in the following link ([“What have you done to avoid termination”](#)).
- **Add law enforcement to the team.** A key recommendation from the process evaluation was to add law enforcement representation to the Chittenden County team, which has been shown to reduce participant recidivism.
- **Minimize jail sanctions.** In accordance with newer guidance to use jail sanctions sparingly, CCMHC reported reducing the use of jail sanctions for participants in recent years. Minimize jail sanctions as much as possible since incarceration tends to increase recidivism.
- **Prioritize working with a local advisory committee.** These committees can build community support for the program, address participant needs in the community (e.g., housing and transportation), review program performance, advocate for funding, and help with acquiring resources. This is particularly important given the scarcity of community resources in Vermont. The process evaluation included a recommendation to establish this committee. If not already established, prioritize building this committee. If a committee has since been established, prioritize building an effective and high-impact partnership.

Appendix: Detailed Cost Evaluation Results

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APPENDIX: DETAILED COST EVALUATION RESULTS

Detailed cost methodology can be found in the separate Methods Appendix provided as a companion to this report.

Program Costs

Program transactions for which costs were calculated include CCMHC court sessions (including team meetings), case management, substance use disorder treatment, drug testing, and jail sanctions. Obtaining the cost of CCMHC transactions for court sessions and case management involved asking each CCMHC team member for the average amount of time they spend on these activities (including any time needed to prepare for these activities), observing their activities on a site visit and obtaining each CCMHC team member's annual salary and benefits from a supervisor or financial officer at each agency involved in the program. As this is typically public information, some of the salaries were found online, but detailed benefits information often came from the agency's financial officer or human resources department. In addition to salary and benefits, the indirect support rate and jurisdictional overhead rate were used in a calculation that results in a fully loaded cost per participant. The indirect support rates and overhead rates for each agency involved in the program were obtained from agency budgets that were found online or by contacting the agencies directly. All cost results provided in this report are based on fiscal year 2023 dollars or were updated to fiscal year 2023 using the Consumer Price Index.

Court Sessions. Court sessions are typically one of the most staff and resource intensive program transactions. These sessions include representatives from the following agencies:

- Vermont Judiciary
- Vermont State's Attorney's Office
- Vermont Office of the Defender General
- Vermont Department of Corrections- Probation and Parole
- City of Burlington Police Department
- Howard Center

NPC based the cost of a court session (the time during a session when a single program participant interacts with the judge) on the average amount of court time (in minutes) each participant interacts with the judge during the court session. This included the direct costs for the time spent for each CCMHC team member present, the time team members spend preparing for the session or in team meetings, the agency support costs, and jurisdictional overhead costs. NPC calculated the cost for a single CCMHC court appearance at \$495.45 per participant.

Case Management is based on the amount of staff time dedicated to case management activities during a regular work week and is then translated into a total cost for case management per participant per day (taking staff salaries and benefits, and support and overhead costs into account).¹ The daily cost of case management was calculated to be \$5.33 per participant.

¹ Case management included meeting with participants, evaluations, phone calls, referring out for other help, answering questions, reviewing referrals, consulting, making community service connections, documentation, file maintenance, and referrals.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment and Mental Health Treatment for CCMHC participants were provided by the Howard Center as well as other area providers. CCMHC staff estimated that 100% of program participants use public funds for their treatment services. NPC obtained treatment costs from the State of Vermont Medicaid billing rates (\$122.48 per encounter or \$30.62 per 15 minutes); however, the treatment data NPC obtained were not usable for this cost analysis. In lieu of site-specific treatment data, the costs from other treatment court cost analyses that NPC has conducted nationwide over the past 8 years are listed here to provide the average and range of costs that would be expected to apply in Vermont for treatment services. The nationwide treatment costs averaged \$10,688 and ranged from \$639 to \$35,743 per participant. These primarily reflect SUD treatment services but also include mental health treatment services when provided. These costs are shown for informational purposes, but they were not included in the program costs because they are not specific to the site being analyzed.

Drug Testing was managed by the Howard Center and are generally billed to health insurance. The court mainly uses urinalysis (UA) tests. The Howard Center bills at \$35.00 per test.

Jail Sanction costs are provided by the Vermont Department of Corrections. Using budget and average daily population information from Vermont Department of Corrections Budget documents, the cost per person of jail was calculated to be \$220.60 per day.²

Program Cost Results by Transaction

Exhibit B1 displays the unit cost per program related event (or “transaction”), the number of events and the average cost *per individual* for each of the CCMHC events for all participants who exited the program³ and for graduates. The sum of these events or transactions is the total per participant cost of the CCMHC program. The Exhibit includes the average number of events and costs for all CCMHC participants regardless of completion status (*N* = 59) and for CCMHC graduates (*N* = 27). Treatment and jail sanction data were not usable for this cost analysis, so total program costs per participant are incomplete.

Exhibit B1. CCMHC Program Costs per Participant by Transaction

Transaction	Unit Cost	CCMHC Graduates		All CCMHC Participants	
		Avg. # of Events per Graduate	Avg. Cost per Graduate	Avg. # of Events per Person	Avg. Cost per Person
Court Sessions	\$495.45	27.63	\$13,689	24.81	\$12,292
UA Drug Tests	\$35.00	101.13	\$3,540	93.33	\$3,267
Case Management Days	\$5.33	456.52	\$2,433	402.68	\$2,146
Jail Sanction Days ²	\$220.60	0.92	N/A	3.57	N/A
Total			\$19,662		\$17,705

² Jail sanction days are included in the table but are not included in the costs as the jail sanction data was an estimate from the program. All jail time is included in the outcome costs, and to avoid any double counting of jail time, it was omitted from program costs.

³ Program participants included in the program cost analysis are those who had sufficient time to complete the program and who exited the program either through graduation or termination. Active participants were not included in the analysis as they were still using program services so did not represent the cost of the full program from entry to exit.

The unit cost multiplied by the number of events per person results in the cost per person for each transaction during the course of the program. When the costs of the transactions were summed, the result was a total CCMHC program cost per participant of \$17,705. The largest contributor to the cost of the program was court sessions (a total of \$12,292), followed by drug testing (\$3,267), and case management (\$2,146). However, due to the lack of usable treatment data and jail sanction data, costs are higher than the estimate of the total costs provided in the table.

Program Cost Results per Agency

Another useful way to examine program costs is by agency to further understand which agencies are contributing resources and overall resource allocation. Exhibit B2 shows that the taxpayer costs accruing to the Howard Center (for court sessions, case management, and drug testing) account for 40% of the total program cost per participant. The next largest cost (30%) was to Vermont Judiciary for court sessions, followed by the Vermont Office of the Defender General (13%) for court sessions and case management.

Exhibit B2. CCMHC Program Costs per Participant by Agency

Agency	Avg. Cost per Person for CCMHC Graduates	Avg. Cost per Person for all CCMHC Participants
Howard Center	\$7,815	\$7,083
Vermont Judiciary	\$5,916	\$5,313
Vermont Office of the Defender General	\$2,570	\$2,293
Vermont State’s Attorney’s Office	\$1,352	\$1,214
Vermont Department of Corrections- Probation and Parole	\$1,108	\$995
City of Burlington Police Department	\$901	\$807
Total	\$19,662	\$17,705

Program Cost Summary

The total taxpayer cost for the CCMHC program was estimated at \$17,705 per participant and \$19,662 per graduate. Note that these totals do not include any substance use disorder treatment, mental health treatment, or jail sanction costs, as those data were not usable for the cost analysis. Overall, the largest portion of CCMHC costs was due to resources put into court sessions (an average of \$12,292, or 69% of total costs), followed by drug testing (\$3,267, or 18%), and case management (an average of \$2,146, or 12% of total costs). When program costs were evaluated by agency, the largest portion of costs accrued to the Howard Center (\$7,083, or 40% of total costs), followed by Vermont Judiciary (\$5,313, or 30%), and the Vermont Office of the Defender General (\$2,293, or 13%).

CCMHC Outcome Costs

Outcome costs include any events (transactions) that occur after program entry that were not related to program activities. For this study, criminal justice system related events and life events were included in the cost analyses. These events included arrests, court cases, days in jail/prison, time on probation/parole, and victimizations (person and property crimes).

The cost per **Arrest** incorporated the time of the law enforcement positions involved in making an arrest, the salaries and benefits for those positions, support costs and overhead costs. Information about which law enforcement agencies typically conduct arrests was obtained by talking with program staff along with web searches. The cost of an arrest used in this analysis was the average cost of an arrest by the Burlington Police Department, Essex Police Department, and Chittenden County Sheriff's Office. NPC contacted staff at these law enforcement agencies to obtain time and cost information, but some cost information was obtained online from agency budgets or pay scales. NPC used that information to calculate the cost of an average arrest episode. The average cost of a single arrest was \$189.63.

Court Cases include those criminal cases that were dismissed as well as those cases that resulted in conviction. Because they were the main agencies involved, court case costs in this analysis were shared among the Vermont Judiciary, Vermont State's Attorney's Office, and Vermont Office of the Defender General. Using budget and caseload information from each agency, the cost of a Court Case was calculated to be \$3,006.69.

Jail and Prison were provided by the Vermont Department of Corrections. Using budget and average daily population information from Vermont Department of Corrections Budget documents, the cost per person of jail/prison was calculated to be \$220.60 per day.

Probation and Parole costs were calculated using online information on the Department of Corrections- Field Services Division's budget and caseload. The average cost of probation and parole was \$11.76 per person per day.

Victimization costs were calculated from the National Institute of Justice's *Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look (1996)*.⁴ The costs were updated to fiscal 2023 dollars using the Consumer Price Index. Property crimes were \$15,937.43 per event and person crimes were \$51,629.54 per event.

The outcome cost analyses were based on a cohort of individuals who participated in the CCMHC program. The same program group used for the outcome evaluation was used for the cost analyses. These individuals were followed through administrative data for 2 years post program entry. This study

⁴ The costs for victimizations were based on the National Institute of Justice's *Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look (1996)*. This study documents estimates of costs and consequences of personal crimes and documents losses per criminal victimization, including attempts, in a number of categories, including fatal crimes, child abuse, rape and sexual assault, other assaults, robbery, drunk driving, arson, larceny, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. The reported costs include lost productivity, medical care, mental health care, police and fire services, victim services, property loss and damage, and quality of life. In our study, arrest charges were categorized as violent or property crimes, and therefore costs from the victimization study were averaged for rape and sexual assault, other assaults, and robbery and attempted robbery to create an estimated cost for violent crimes, arson, larceny and attempted larceny, burglary and attempted burglary, and motor vehicle theft for an estimated property crime cost. All costs were updated to fiscal 2023 dollars using the consumer price index (CPI).

looked at recidivism and other outcome costs for the group over that 2-year period by transaction, as well as the outcome costs by agency.

The outcome costs discussed below do not represent the entire cost to the criminal justice system or other public systems. Rather, the outcome costs include the transactions for which NPC’s research team was able to obtain data and cost information on the CCMHC. **Note that some possible costs or cost savings related to the program were not considered in this study. These include health care expenses and CCMHC participants legally employed and paying taxes. The gathering of this kind of information is generally quite difficult due to HIPAA confidentiality laws and due to the fact that much of the data related to this information are not collected in any one place, or are not collected at all. Although NPC examined the possibility of obtaining this kind of data, it was not feasible within the time frame or budget for this study.**

Outcome Cost Results by Transaction

Exhibit B3 shows the average number of recidivism-related events per individual for all CCMHC participants over 2 years. These events were counted from the time of program entry. Exhibit B3 also shows the average number of recidivism-related events per individual for CCMHC graduates.

Exhibit B3. Average Number of Events per Person over 2 Years from CCMHC Entry

Outcome Events	CCMHC Graduates (N = 27)	All CCMHC Participants (N = 65)
Probation/Parole Days	79.3	134.49
Jail/Prison Days	1.48	66.94
Rearrests	0.67	2.65
Court Cases	0.67	2.57
Person Victimizations	0.44	0.65
Property Victimizations	0.07	0.62

As would be expected, overall, as demonstrated in Exhibit B3, CCMHC participants had more of every outcome transaction than graduates, especially jail/prison days, probation/parole days, and property victimizations.

Exhibit B4 displays the costs of outcomes by transaction that occurred in the 2 years after program entry for all CCMHC participants, and also the costs of outcomes for CCMHC graduates. Exhibit B4 shows the costs of both taxpayer funded systems and non-taxpayer funded societal outcomes (specifically, victimizations). The first subtotal displays the costs associated with *taxpayer funded* criminal justice outcomes that occurred in the 2 years after program entry, and the second subtotal displays the costs associated with *societal* outcomes (victimizations) that occurred in the 2 years after program entry, followed by the grand total that sums the criminal justice and societal outcomes.

Exhibit B4. Taxpayer and Societal Outcome Costs per Person over 2 Years from CCMHC Entry

Outcome Events	Unit Cost	CCMHC Graduates (N = 27)	All CCMHC Participants (N = 65)
Jail/Prison Days	\$220.60	\$326	\$14,767
Court Cases	\$3,006.69	\$2,014	\$7,727
Probation/Parole Days	\$11.76	\$933	\$1,582
Rearrests	\$189.63	\$127	\$503
Subtotal for Criminal Justice Recidivism		\$3,400	\$24,579
Person Victimizations	\$51,629.54	\$22,717	\$33,559
Property Victimizations	\$15,937.43	\$1,116	\$9,881
Subtotal for Other Societal Costs		\$23,833	\$43,440
Total		\$27,233	\$68,019

Exhibit B4 shows that the 2-year outcome cost for all CCMHC participants was \$24,579 per participant and \$3,400 per graduate (graduates spend less time incarcerated and on probation/parole, and have fewer court cases). When societal costs were included, the outcome cost for all CCMHC participants was \$68,019 per participant and \$27,233 per graduate. The cost associated with graduate outcomes is less than the cost of outcomes for all participants (which includes non-graduates who have higher recidivism costs).

Outcome Cost Results per Agency

The taxpayer funded outcome costs were also examined by agency to determine the relative cost to each agency that contributed taxpayer resources to the CCMHC program. The transactions shown in the previous Exhibit were provided by one or more agencies. If one specific agency provides a service or transaction (for example, the Vermont Department of Corrections provided all probation days), all costs for that transaction accrued to that specific agency. If several agencies all participate in providing a service or transaction (for example, the Vermont Judiciary, Vermont State’s Attorney’s Office, and Vermont Office of the Defender General were all involved in court cases), costs were split proportionately amongst the agencies involved based on their level of participation. Exhibit B5 provides the publicly funded cost for each agency per CCMHC participant and per CCMHC graduate.

**Exhibit B5. Outcome Costs per Person by Agency over 2 Years
from CCMHC Entry**

Agency	Outcome Costs per CCMHC Graduate	Outcome Costs per CCMHC Participant
Victimizations	\$23,833	\$43,440
Vermont Department of Corrections	\$326	\$14,767
Vermont State’s Attorney’s Office	\$723	\$2,772
Vermont Office of the Defender General	\$694	\$2,665
Vermont Judiciary	\$597	\$2,290
Vermont Department of Corrections- Field Services Division	\$933	\$1,582
Law Enforcement	\$127	\$503
Total	\$27,233	\$68,019

As demonstrated in Exhibit B5, the total outcome cost over 2 years from program entry for the CCMHC per participant was \$68,019, while the cost per CCMHC graduate was \$27,233.



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