



Vermont Statewide Evaluation of Treatment Courts

Southeast Regional DUI Treatment Docket Key Findings Report

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December 2023

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This project was supported by Grant No. 5H79TI081055-02 awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to the Vermont Judiciary. SAMHSA is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. This report is prepared by NPC Research, the evaluation consultant for the Vermont Judiciary, the grant recipient of SAMHSA Grants to Expand Substance Abuse Treatment Capacity in Adult Treatment Drug Courts (ATDC).

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 Southeast Regional DUI Treatment Docket (SERDTD). In 2021 and 2022, the Vermont Judiciary initiated a statewide process, outcome and cost evaluation of its adult treatment courts: Chittenden County Treatment Court (CCTC), Washington County Treatment Court (WCTC), Rutland County Treatment Court (RCTC), the Chittenden County Mental Health Court (CCMHC), and the 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. The cost evaluation calculated the cost of the program and the cost of participant outcomes.

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.

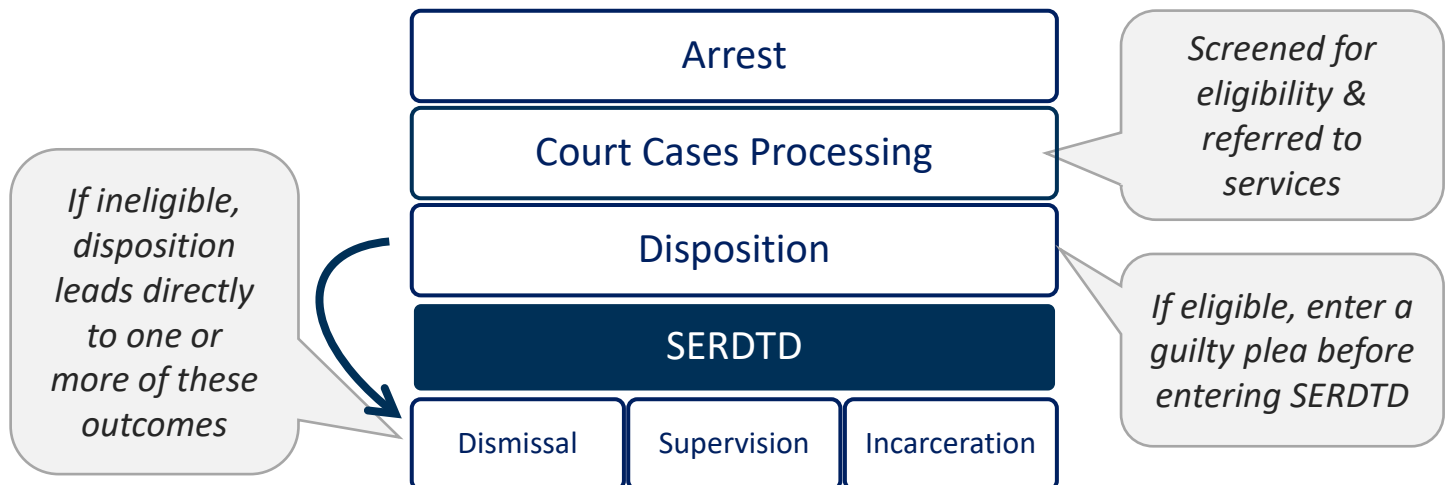
Southeast Regional DUI Treatment Docket (SERDTD)

Program and Participant Overview



SERDTD: 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. Individuals with **DUI** charges are identified as eligible for SERDTD.



To participate, individuals typically **enter a guilty plea and receive a sentence to participate in the SERDTD**, often with maximum jail caps if the participant fails to complete the program and the intention of dismissing the 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 discussed in this report entered. Major shifts that may affect 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.

SERDTD: Participant Overview

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

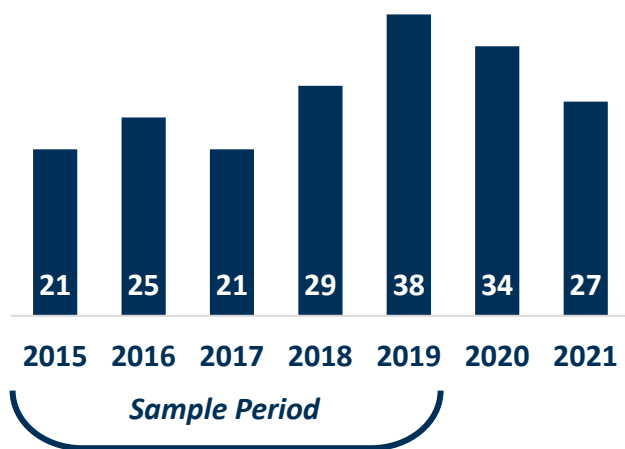
Why use this sample?

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 (~21 months). In addition, having several years of participant data allows a large enough sample size for valid analyses.

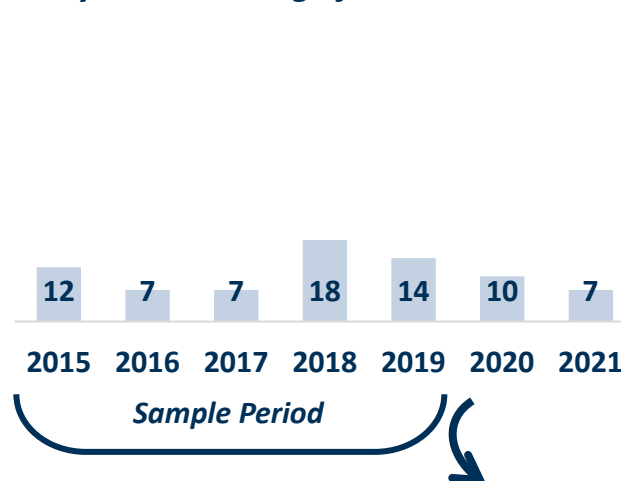
Keep in mind:

- 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, SERDTD served a census of 27 individuals each year from 2015 to 2019



There were 12 new program entries each year on average from 2015 to 2019

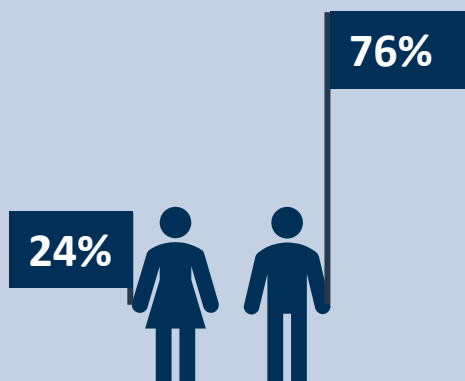


2020's dip in entries is likely related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

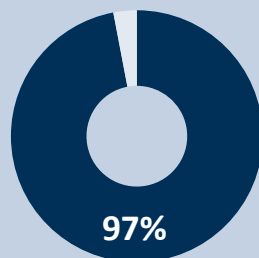
SERDTD: Participant Overview

2015 to 2019 Entries

Who Entered?



Most participants entering the program were men



Nearly all participants in the program were white

Average age at entry

44 years old

Average age increased from 37 years old for participants who entered prior to 2015

SERDTD participants appear to be high risk, averaging roughly 2 arrests in the 2 years prior to program entry

Most prior offenses were DUI related (1.3 per person) and misdemeanors (1.6). Participants averaged less than 1 felony. Typically, high risk participants in other DUI Court programs across the country average 2-3 arrests in the 2 years prior to entry.



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. This may have contributed to the increase in the average age of participants.



Program Practices: SERDTD 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 mental health services and residential treatment. Without extensive resources available in the community, successfully meeting the needs of the population can be challenging.



Outcomes

Recidivism and cost outcomes were measured against a matched comparison group of individuals who were arrested and charged with a treatment court eligible arrest but did not enter the SERDTD. The comparison group was matched to the SERDTD participants on age, gender, race, and arrest history, including county of arrest. The separate Methods Appendix provided with this report gives more details.

Match success!

There were no statistically significant differences between the SERDTD participants and the comparison group on demographics, age, or criminal history indicators.

	SERDTD (N=58) Percent	Comparison (N=58) Percent
Gender		
Male	76%	76%
Female	24%	24%
Race		
White	97%	97%
Non-White	3%	3%

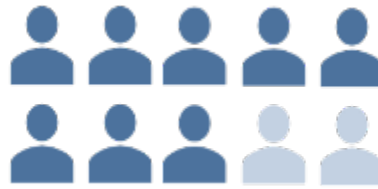
	SERDTD (N=58) Mean	Comparison (N=58) Mean
Age at Program Entry (Years)	44	43
Mean Arrests/Charges: 2 years prior to entry date		
All prior arrests	1.9	1.9
Prior person arrests	0.1	0.1
Prior property arrests	0.1	0.1
Prior drug arrests	0.0	0.3
Prior DUI arrests	1.3	1.1
Severity		
Prior misdemeanor arrests	1.6	1.5
Prior felony arrests	0.9	0.9

SERDTD Outcomes: Graduation Rate



78%

of the exited participants successfully graduated from the SERDTD program.



National Average for DUI Courts = 76%

Graduates' average time in the program was similar to non-graduates

Graduate average time: 21 months

Non-grad average time: 20 months



SERDTD is meeting best practices related to time in the program of at least 12 months.

Men were more likely to successfully graduate



82% of men

successfully graduate



64% of women

successfully graduate

Women had a lower graduation rate than men, although it is a small subsample size ($n=14$).

Additional analyses found that men and women entered SERDTD with a similar average number of arrests (2.0 for men, 1.9 for women) in the 2 years prior to entry and had the same average number of arrests in the 2 years after program entry (0.2). SERDTD appears to effectively reduce recidivism equally for women and men, but men graduate at higher rates.

There were too few non-white participants to assess possible differences by race. There were similar graduation rates by age.

Graduates averaged more prior arrests and DUI arrests before entering SERDTD

All Prior Arrests

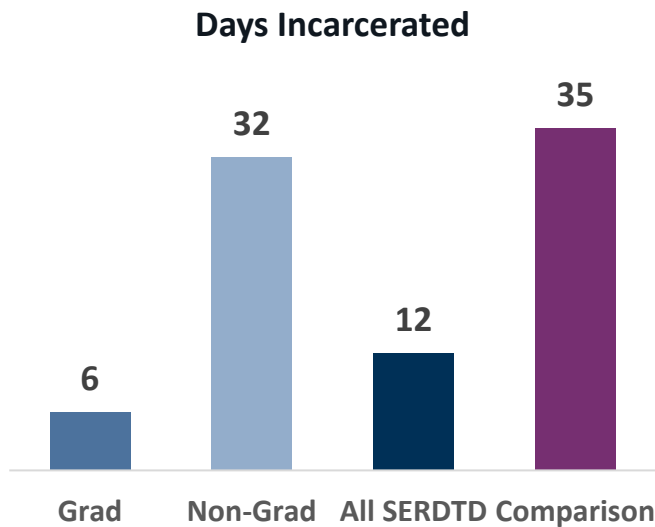
2 vs. **1**
Graduate Non-grad



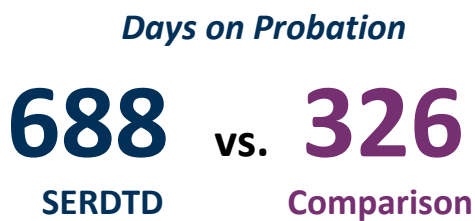
Program Practices: Best practices indicate that treatment courts should serve high risk populations. Higher risk individuals graduated SERDTD at a higher rate than those as moderate risk. SERDTD appears to serve higher risk individuals effectively, but those at lower risk are not successfully completing the program at the same rate.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Incarceration & Supervision

Total days incarcerated within the 2 years post program entry was considerably lower for all SERDTD participants than the comparison group. SERDTD graduates averaged only 6 days of incarceration, whereas non-graduates had an average time incarcerated (32 days) comparable to the comparison group (35 days).



VT Department of Corrections (DOC) data capture incarceration from any source, such as a new arrest or jail sanctions imposed by SERDTD. 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. The SERDTD database shows that **45% of non-graduates** received a jail sanction during their first year of program participation, whereas only **11% of graduates** received a jail sanction during their first year.



Although eligible charges typically result in jail time, it is possible some comparison individuals were offered shorter sentences. Indeed, **SERDTD participants spent more than twice as much time on probation than the matched comparison group at 2 years post program entry.**

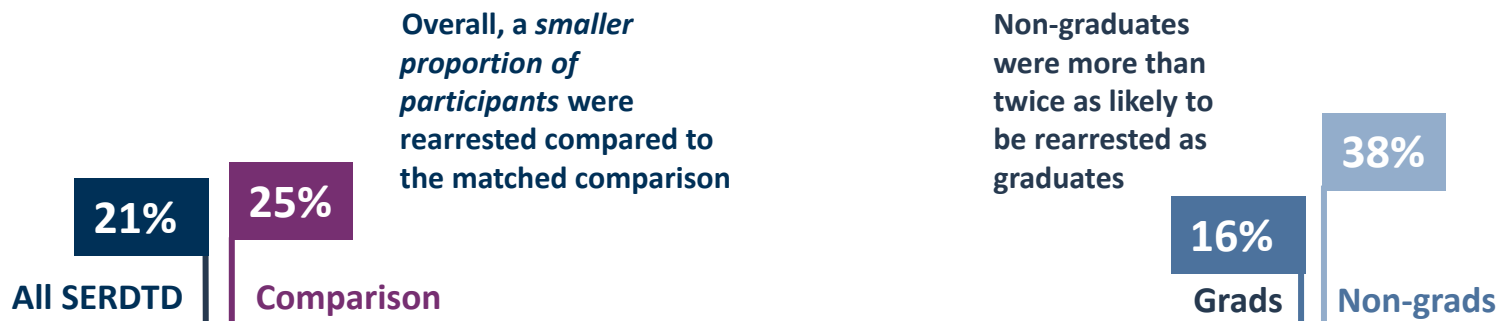


Program Practices: The SERDTD program database revealed a high rate of jail sanctions for non-graduates, with 45% of non-graduates receiving a jail sanction in their first year of the program. This likely contributed to increased recidivism in the evaluation sample, particularly non graduates. Notably, the SERDTD has reported rarely using jail sanctions now in alignment with newer research and recommendations to use jail sparingly.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

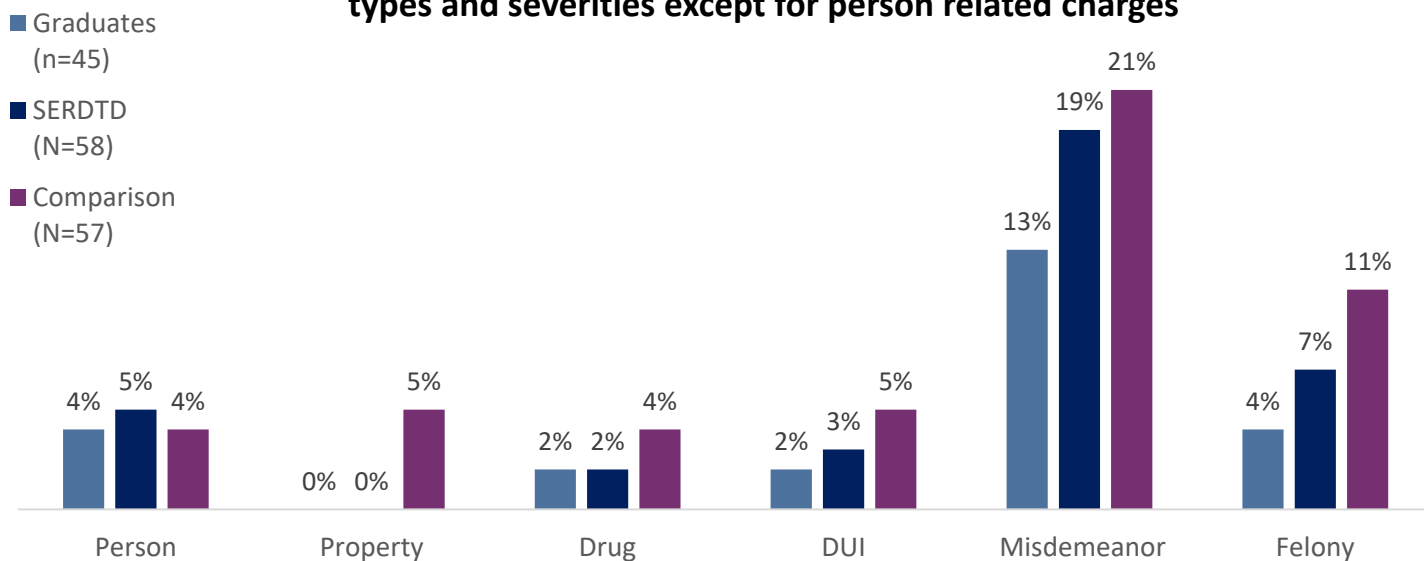


SERDTD participants are rearrested less often than the comparison group 2 years after program entry



Recidivism outcomes are presented as the rearrest rate (the percentages of individuals in the participant and comparison groups that are rearrested). 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).

At 2 years post entry, SERDTD was rearrested at lower rates for all charge types and severities except for person related charges



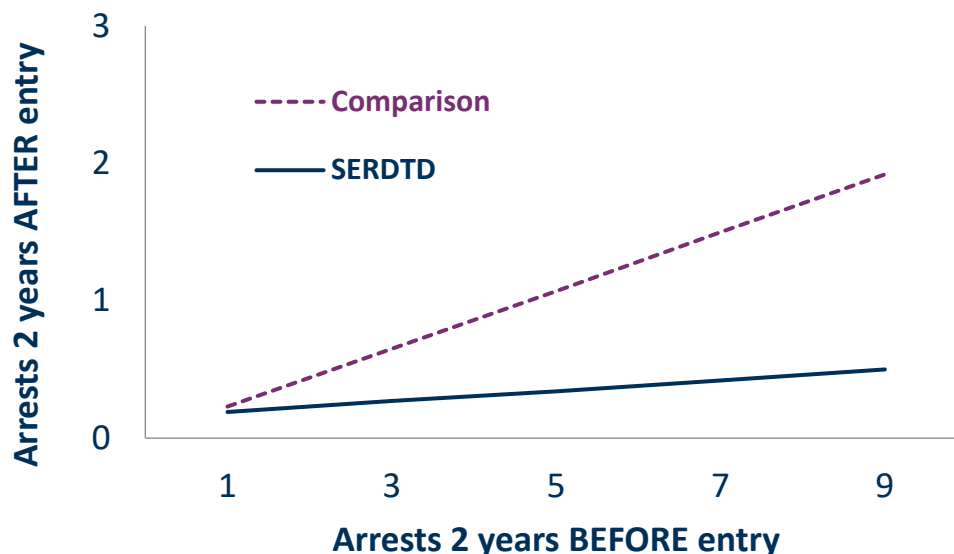
Participants also had a lower average number of rearrests. Participants averaged 0.2 rearrests, while the matched comparison group averaged 0.4 rearrests over the same 2-year period. Numbers of rearrests were lower in the DUI population overall. SERDTD participants had a lower average number of rearrests for all charge types and severities except for person related charges. See Appendix A for more details.

Overall, SERDTD participants have lower recidivism as measured both by the rearrest rate (the percentage of individuals rearrested) and the average number of rearrests per person.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Recidivism

SERDTD participants at higher risk benefit the most from participation

SERDTD participants with higher numbers of prior arrests had better outcomes than the matched comparison group, indicating **those at higher risk are benefitting the most** from the program.



The above graph shows the number of times an individual was arrested in the two years before entering the program (along the bottom axis) in relation to the number of times an individual was rearrested in the two years after program entry (the left axis). The dark blue line shows that the SERDTD participants have lower recidivism than the comparison group members (the purple dotted line) regardless of criminal history. However, as risk level increases (indicated by more prior arrests), program participants show even better outcomes (fewer rearrests) than similar individuals in the comparison group. This indicates that the SERDTD is more effective with higher risk individuals, as expected when following the treatment court model. While the SERDTD program is doing better with the high risk target population than those at lower risk levels, for maximum effectiveness, the program should consider how to adjust services to meet the needs of individual participants based on their specific risks and needs.



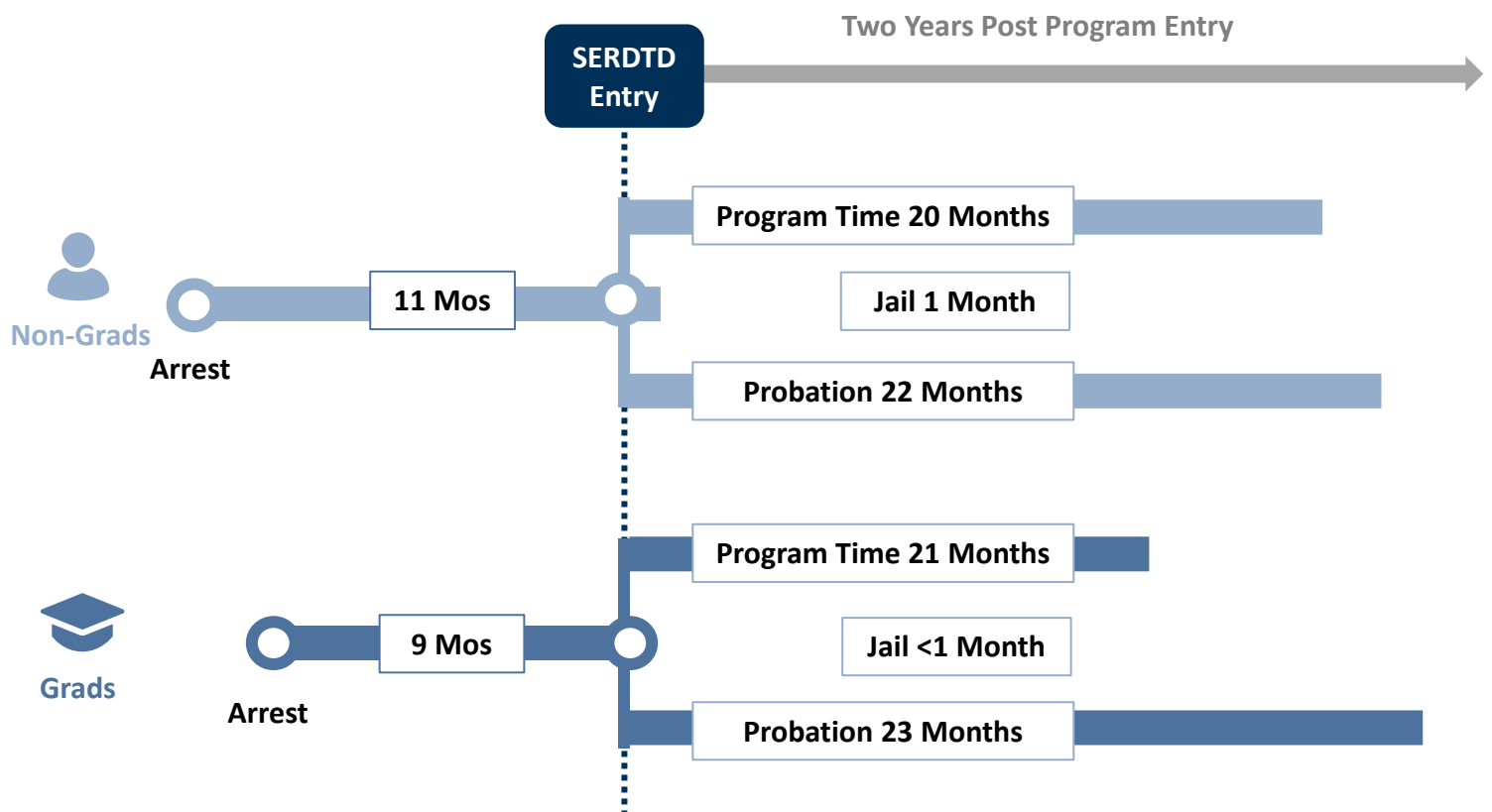
Program Practices: Best practices indicate that treatment courts should serve high risk populations. SERDTD appears to serve these individuals effectively, but those at lower risk are not benefitting as much from program participation.



Resources: Services are not one size fits all. Those at high risk (or need) may have a different set of service requirements and the resources available in the community may not meet the service needs for each participant, regardless of the program's ability to identify a participant's unique service needs.

Justice Involved Outcomes: Timelines

SERDTD participants spend similar time in the program, on probation, and incarcerated – regardless of exit status



Program Practices and State and Local Policy: In the sentencing and conditions of probation, all SERDTD participants are on probation while in the program. Participants may get an additional 6 months of probation or longer after graduation. Because SERDTD covers three counties, there are sometimes differences in sentencing, probation, and charges. Notably, the length of time from arrest to entry is nearly a year for non-graduates. Lengthier time to treatment is associated with poorer outcomes.



Resources: Non-graduates had fewer arrests before program entry and spend nearly as long in the program as graduates. Calibrate resources and services to the assessed needs of participants to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.



Cost Analysis

Cost outcomes were calculated using the same participant and comparison groups as the outcome evaluation. 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. *See Appendix B for more cost results, and the separate Methods Appendix provided with this report for more methodology details.*

SERDTD INVESTMENT COSTS

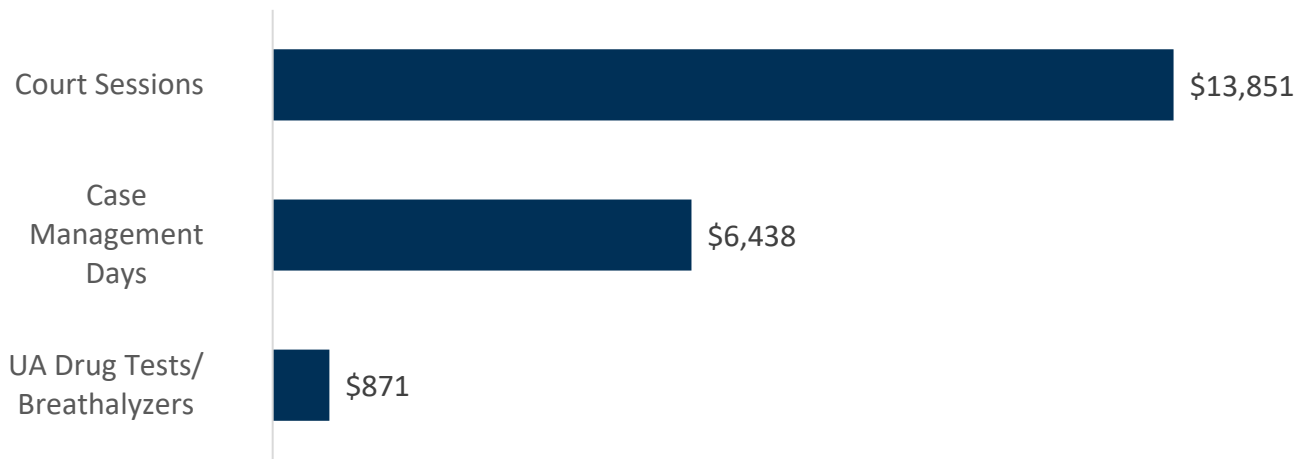
SERDTD Program Investment Costs = \$21,160 Per Participant

SERDTD program costs, also called investment costs, were calculated for each event (or “transaction”) experienced by those participants who exited the SERDTD (N = 58).¹ Based on program data, the following transactions resulted in an overall cost of \$21,160 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 SERDTD total 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.**
- **Case management represented the second largest cost.**
- **A small portion of the overall cost was attributed to drug testing.**

SERDTD Total Cost = \$21,160 Per Participant



IMPORTANT NOTE: The total cost of the program provided above does not include 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. Substance use disorder treatment costs from other treatment courts from NPC studies nationwide averaged \$10,688 and ranged from \$639 to \$35,743 per participant.

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

2 More detailed cost results are provided in Appendix B.

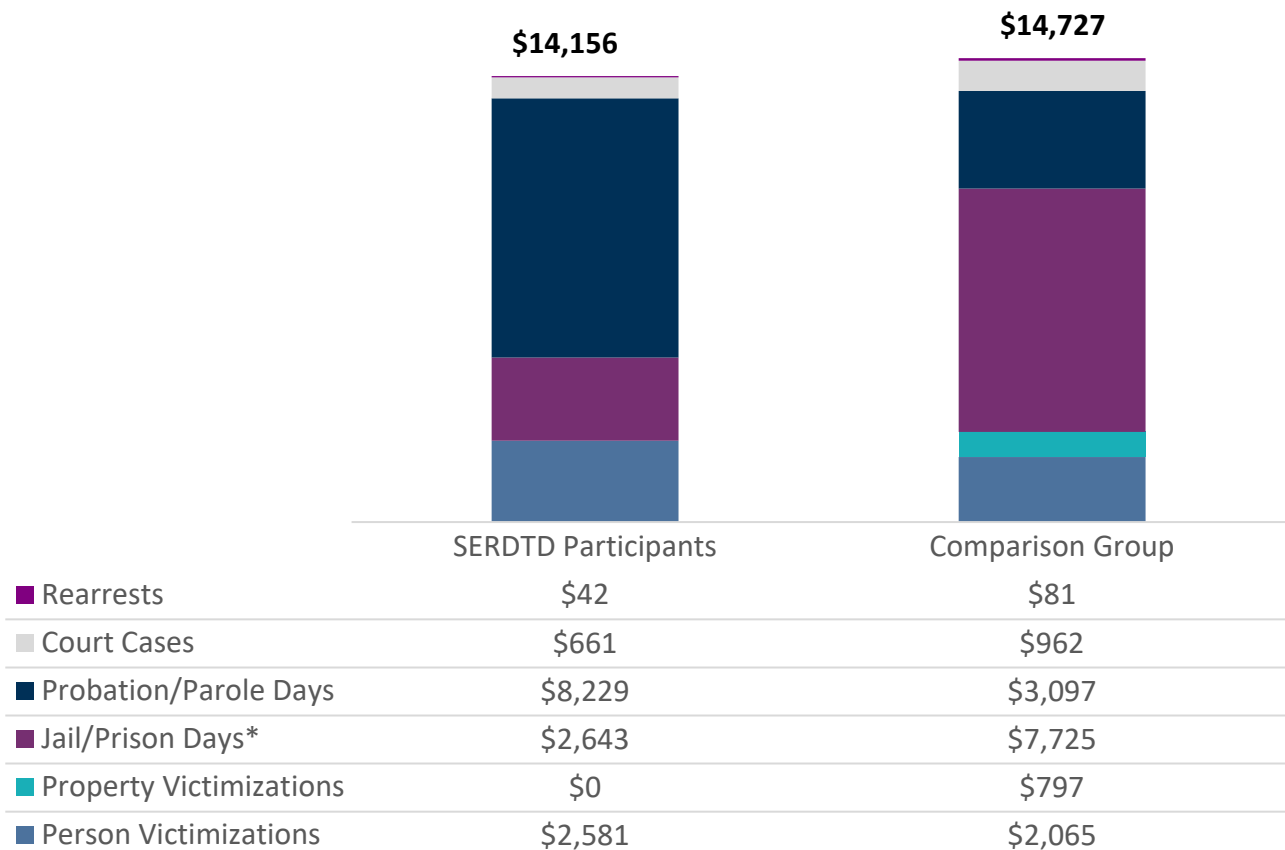
3 Program costs range from \$4,035 to \$30,624 based on treatment court cost evaluations conducted by NPC in California, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York and Oregon. The average program cost across all these programs is \$11,683 (See reports and publications at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

SERDTD OUTCOME COSTS

SERDTD Saves Taxpayer Funds Due to Positive Outcomes

The difference in the 2-year outcome costs between all SERDTD court participants and the comparison group was \$571 *less* per participant. This difference shows that there was a small benefit, or savings, to Vermont taxpayers and to society at large for SERDTD participants, mainly due to fewer court cases, fewer jail/prison days and fewer property victimizations (the societal costs attributed to property crimes with victims). The figure below shows all costs that were related to, and available for, the outcomes reviewed across groups. SERDTD participants had fewer rearrests, court cases, jail/prison days and property victimizations than the comparison group, but more probation/parole days. *More details on the cost analysis results are available in Appendix B. Full cost methods are provided in a separate Methods Appendix.*

SERDTD Outcome Cost Savings Per Participant Over 2 Years = \$571





Key Recommendations



Key Recommendations

While SERDTD performed effectively during the sample period, there are many challenges to treatment court program effectiveness occurring on the state level and reflecting 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 SERDTD. See the statewide report for recommendations to address these larger statewide issues that are barriers to treatment court success in Vermont.

SERDTD should continue working on process improvement to ensure continued positive outcomes or increase effectiveness, particularly since these positive results are for participants who entered 2015-2019. Program practices may have shifted since then.

- **Calibrate services to participants' individually assessed risks and needs.** Higher risk participants graduated at higher rates than moderate risk participants, and higher risk participants benefited more from SERDTD participation based on greater reductions in recidivism relative to their matched comparison individuals. Ensure the SERDTD is effectively targeting the high risk population.
- **Ensure adherence to best practice standards.** Work with the Programs Manager to ensure SERDTD is in compliance with all best practice standards for DUI courts.
- **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.
- **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.

Appendices

Learn
more

A chalkboard with the words "Learn more" written in white chalk, underlined. To the right of the text is a glowing lightbulb.

Appendix A: Additional Recidivism Results



Average Number of Rearrests

In the main report, recidivism was provided as the two-year rearrest *rate* (the number of individuals who were rearrested at least once in the two year period out of the total number of individuals in the group). The table below provides the average number of rearrests per person for the participant group (graduates, non-graduates, and all participants) and the comparison group. The results are similar to the recidivism rate, with SERDTD participants having a lower average number of arrests than the comparison group for all charge types with the exception of person crimes, which are essentially equivalent and there are very few arrests for person crimes in both groups.

Mean Number of Rearrests at 2 Years Post-Entry

Arrest Type	<i>Grads</i> (n=45)	<i>Non-Grads</i> (n=13)	All SERDTD (N=58)	Comparison (N=57)
All Rearrests	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4
Person	0.04	0.08	0.05	0.04
Property	0	0	0	0.05
Drug	0.02	0	0.02	0.04
DUI	0.02	0.08	0.03	0.05
Misdemeanors	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4
Felony	0.04	0.2	0.07	0.1

Appendix B: Detailed Cost Evaluation Results



APPENDIX B: 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 SERDTD court sessions (including team meetings), case management, substance use disorder treatment, drug testing, and jail sanctions. Obtaining the cost of SERDTD transactions for court sessions and case management involved asking each SERDTD 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 SERDTD 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
- Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont

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 SERDTD 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 SERDTD court appearance at \$391.16 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 \$10.13 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 for SERDTD participants was provided by the Clara Martin Center and Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS). SERDTD staff estimated that 60% of program participants use public funds for their treatment services. NPC obtained treatment costs from the State of Vermont Medicaid billing rates (typically billed at \$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 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 Healthcare Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont, but performed by Dominion Diagnostics and generally billed to health insurance. The court mainly uses urinalysis (UA) tests at a cost of \$6.00 per test and breathalyzer tests at a cost of \$1.50 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 SERDTD 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 SERDTD program. The Exhibit includes the average number of events and costs for all SERDTD participants regardless of completion status (*N* = 58) and for SERDTD graduates (*N* = 45).

Exhibit B1. SERDTD Program Costs per Participant by Transaction

Transaction	Unit Cost	SERDTD Graduates		All SERDTD Participants	
		Avg. # of Events per Graduate	Avg. Cost per Graduate	Avg. # of Events per Person	Avg. Cost per Person
Court Sessions	\$391.16	34.80	\$13,612	35.41	\$13,851
Case Management Days	\$10.13	641.40	\$6,497	635.55	\$6,438
UA Drug Tests	\$6.00	139.22	\$835	137.93	\$828
Breathalyzer Tests	\$1.50	29.76	\$45	28.62	\$43
Jail Sanction Days ²	\$220.60	1.24	N/A	1.71	N/A
Total			\$20,989		\$21,160

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 SERDTD program cost per participant of \$21,160. The largest contributor to the cost of the program was court sessions (a total of \$13,851), followed by case management (\$6,438) and drug testing (\$871). Note that total program costs are likely much higher as SUD treatment and jail sanctions are not included in the total.

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 Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont (for court sessions, case management, and drug testing) account for 33% of the total program cost per participant. The next largest cost (29%) was to the Vermont Department of Corrections for court sessions and case management, followed by the Vermont Judiciary (24%) for court sessions and case management.

Exhibit B2. SERDTD Program Costs per Participant by Agency

Agency	Avg. Cost per Person for SERDTD Graduates	Avg. Cost per Person for all SERDTD Participants
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont	\$6,988	\$6,997
Vermont Department of Corrections - Probation and Parole	\$6,093	\$6,135
Vermont Judiciary	\$5,018	\$5,096
Vermont Office of the Defender General	\$2,009	\$2,044
Vermont State’s Attorney’s Office	\$881	\$888
Total	\$20,989	\$21,160

Program Cost Summary

The total taxpayer cost for the SERDTD program was estimated at \$21,160 per participant and \$20,989 per graduate. Note that these totals do not include any SUD treatment or jail sanction costs, as those data were not usable for the cost analysis. Overall, the largest portion of **SERDTD** costs was due to resources put into court sessions (an average of \$13,851, or 66% of total costs), followed by case management (\$6,438, or 30%), and drug testing (an average of \$871, or 4% of total costs). When program costs were evaluated by agency, the largest portion of costs accrued to Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont (\$6,997, or 33% of total costs), followed by the Vermont Department of Corrections (\$6,135, or 29%), and the Vermont Judiciary (\$5,096, or 24%).

SERDTD 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 Hartford Police Department and Brattleboro Police Department. 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 \$191.95.

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 SERDTD program and a matched comparison group of individuals who were eligible for the SERDTD program but who did not attend the program. The same program and comparison groups used for the outcome evaluation were used for the cost analyses. These individuals were followed through administrative data for 2 years post program entry (and a similar time period for the comparison group). 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).

compared recidivism and other outcome costs for the groups 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 both the SERDTD and comparison group from the same sources. **Note that some possible costs or cost savings related to the program were not considered in this study. These include health care expenses and SERDTD 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 SERDTD participants and the comparison group over 2 years. These events were counted from the time of program entry (an estimated “program entry date” was calculated for the comparison group to ensure an equivalent time period between groups). Exhibit B3 also shows the average number of recidivism-related events per individual for SERDTD graduates. The results for graduates are provided to illustrate the outcomes for participants who have successfully met all program requirements and have completed (graduated from) the treatment court program. **However, graduates should not be directly compared to the comparison group. The comparison group is comprised of all individuals who were eligible for entry into the treatment court, which includes people who would have graduated, and also people who may have been terminated. It is not possible to determine who in the comparison group would have graduated and who would not, therefore, it is only valid to compare all treatment court participants (which includes graduates and non-graduates) to the comparison group.**

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

Outcome Events	Average Number of Events (per Person)		
	SERDTD Graduates (N = 45)	All SERDTD Participants (N = 58)	Comparison Group (N = 57)
Probation/Parole Days	681.11	699.78	263.32
Jail/Prison Days	5.67	11.98	35.02
Rearrests	0.18	0.22	0.42
Court Cases	0.18	0.22	0.32
Person Victimizations	0.04	0.05	0.04
Property Victimizations	0	0	0.05

Overall, as demonstrated in Exhibit B3, SERDTD participants had fewer of every outcome transaction than the comparison group, except for probation/parole days and person victimizations. SERDTD graduates also had fewer of every outcome transaction than all SERDTD participants (graduates cannot be fairly compared to the comparison group).

Exhibit B4 displays the costs of outcomes by transaction that occurred in the 2 years after program entry for all SERDTD participants and the comparison group, and also the costs of outcomes for SERDTD graduates. Exhibit B4 shows the costs of both the taxpayer funded systems and non-taxpayer funded societal outcomes (victimizations). The first subtotal displays the costs associated with *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 SERDTD Entry

Outcome Events	Unit Cost	SERDTD Graduates (N = 45)	All SERDTD Participants (N = 58)	Comparison Group (N = 57)
Probation/Parole Days	\$11.76	\$8,010	\$8,229	\$3,097
Jail/Prison Days	\$220.60	\$1,251	\$2,643	\$7,725
Court Cases	\$3,006.69	\$541	\$661	\$962
Rearrests	\$191.95	\$35	\$42	\$81
Subtotal for Criminal Justice Recidivism		\$9,837	\$11,575	\$11,865
Person Victimizations	\$51,629.54	\$2,065	\$2,581	\$2,065
Property Victimizations	\$15,937.43	\$0	\$0	\$797
Subtotal for Other Societal Costs		\$2,065	\$2,581	\$2,862
Total		\$11,902	\$14,156	\$14,727

Exhibit B4 shows that the difference in the 2-year outcome cost between all SERDTD participants and the comparison group was \$290 per participant, indicating that SERDTD participants cost slightly less than the comparison group when only criminal justice specific costs were included (mainly due to graduates spending less time incarcerated). When societal costs were included, the difference in the 2-year outcome cost between all SERDTD participants and the comparison group increased slightly, to \$571 per participant, indicating that **SERDTD participants cost less than the comparison group when both taxpayer funded and societal costs were included.** This difference shows that **there is a small benefit, or savings, to taxpayers, due to less time incarcerated, and a small savings to society at large due to fewer numbers of property victimizations committed by SERDTD participants.**

Outcome Cost Results per Agency

The taxpayer funded outcome costs were also examined by agency to determine the relative benefit to each agency that contributed taxpayer resources to the SERDTD 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 and the difference in cost between the SERDTD participants and the comparison group per person. A positive number in the difference column indicates a cost savings for SERDTD participants.

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

Agency	SERDTD Outcome Costs per Participant	Comparison Outcome Costs per Person	Cost Difference per Person
Vermont Department of Corrections	\$2,643	\$7,725	\$5,082
Victimizations	\$2,581	\$2,862	\$281
Vermont State’s Attorney’s Office	\$237	\$345	\$108
Vermont Office of the Defender General	\$228	\$332	\$104
Vermont Judiciary	\$196	\$285	\$89
Law Enforcement	\$42	\$81	\$39
Vermont Department of Corrections - Field Services Division	\$8,229	\$3,097	(\$5,132)
Total	\$14,156	\$14,727	\$571

Exhibit B5 shows that all of the involved agencies benefitted from savings associated with SERDTD participation, with the exception of the Vermont Department of Corrections - Field Services Division (probation and parole). As demonstrated in Exhibit B5, the total outcome cost over 2 years from program entry for the SERDTD per participant was \$14,156, while the cost per comparison group member was \$14,727. The difference between the SERDTD and comparison group represents a savings of \$571 per participant.

Cost Evaluation: CONCLUSION

Over 2 years, the SERDTD resulted in a small cost savings or return on taxpayer investment in the program. The program investment cost is \$21,160 per SERDTD participant (not including any SUD treatment or jail sanction costs). When the cost difference in taxpayer funded outcomes between SERDTD participants and comparison group members was calculated, the savings due to fewer rearrests, court cases, and jail/prison days for SERDTD participants over the 2 years included in this cost-benefit analysis came to \$290. This amount resulted in a very small return on the taxpayer investment over the 2-year time period. When societal costs (victimizations) were also included, the return after 2 years increased, to \$571 per participant. These were the costs that accrued through only 2 years after program entry. If outcomes continue to improve for participants over time, these cost savings will increase accordingly.



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