



**CLARK COUNTY COURTS
EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
LAS VEGAS TOWNSHIP JUSTICE COURT**

REGIONAL JUSTICE CENTER
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COURT INFORMATION

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NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JUDGE JENNIFER ELLIOTT SELECTED TO SERVE AS DRUG COURT JUDGE

LAS VEGAS - A therapist and judge will soon provide therapeutic justice to individuals in the Drug Courts of the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Chief Judge Kathy A. Hardcastle has assigned Family Court Judge Jennifer Elliott to serve as the Eighth Judicial District Court's Adult Drug Court Judge, effective Nov. 12. In addition to her Family Court responsibilities, Elliott will preside over the Adult Criminal Drug Court, the Prison Re-entry Drug Court and the Dependency Mother's Drug Court.

Judge Hardcastle indicated that placing a sitting judge and preparing for expansion in drug court has been a priority for the court. "Expanding the use of the Drug Courts is good public policy," Hardcastle said.

Judge Elliott has been a licensed attorney in Nevada since 1986, and was a licensed marriage and family therapist in Nevada, graduating from University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1998 with a masters of science in counseling, before taking the bench in 2002.

"I am honored that Chief Judge Hardcastle and Chief-Elect Art Ritchie have the confidence in me and my judicial record to place me in charge of Drug Court, which has over 600 participants," said Judge Elliott. "There were less than five drug courts when Judge Jack Lehman pioneered Clark County's first Drug Court in the early 1990's, and now there are over 2,700 drug courts nationwide. This is because drug courts work to reduce the number of days in jail and reduce state and county costs through a reduction in the drug seeking behavior and related crimes of drug abuse."

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The District Court's Adult Drug Court program is available as a sentencing option to defendants with a drug addiction. The court program mandates sobriety and advocates treatment over incarceration for those willing to change. Individuals accepted into the program must abstain from all drugs, including alcohol, and attend counseling sessions and weekly court sessions for at least one year.

Currently more than 600 individuals are enrolled in the Adult Criminal Drug Court, which has expanded to three days a week at the Regional Justice Center. In order to share courtrooms, Judge Elliott will conduct in-custody drug court hearings via video conference.

"We'll do whatever we can to get our work done with the courtrooms we have," stated Chief Judge-Elect Art Ritchie.

The Eighth Judicial District's Drug Courts are considered models for other courts across the nation. Since September 1992, the Adult Criminal Drug Court has served more than 9,000 people and more than over 3,900 have graduated from the program.

The District Court operates an Adult Criminal Drug Court, a Prison Re-entry Drug Court, a Juvenile Drug Court, a Dependency Drug Court, a Dependency Mother's Drug Court, and a Child Support Drug Court.

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