



Outcome-Driven Metrics Handbook for Specialty Court Impact

Specialty courts play a vital role in transforming lives and improving public safety. To measure success and refine programs, tracking outcome-based metrics is critical. These metrics provide actionable insights into participant progress, program effectiveness, and overall impact, enabling courts to make data-driven decisions.

This handbook offers a concise guide to key outcome-based metrics, explaining why they matter and how to track them effectively.

Key Outcome Metrics

Metric	Why It's Important	How to Track It
Recidivism Rates	Provides evidence of a program's success in decreasing reoffending behaviors.	Observe trends in recidivism over time and see if recidivism is going up or down
Housing at Program Discharge	Stable housing is critical for long-term success and reduced reoffense rates.	Record the time participants take to achieve stable housing during the program and its effect on long term recidivism.
Relapse Reduction Rate	Reflects program effectiveness in sustaining sobriety, a key factor in preventing recidivism.	Monitor number of days sober milestones during the program and correlate with recidivism trends.
Employment Rate	Reflects program effectiveness in helping people with stable employment	Monitor number of people entering and exiting the program with stable employment
Cost Per Participant	Highlights program efficiency and value in reducing recidivism compared to incarceration.	Calculate program cost per participant and correlate with recidivism reduction

Outcome-based metrics are essential for measuring the true impact of specialty court programs. By focusing on participant success, program efficiency, and broader societal benefits, courts can create data-driven strategies that lead to sustainable improvements. Tracking these metrics ensures programs remain aligned with participant needs, stakeholder expectations, and community goals.