

Alcohol Education Program



The Pretrial Alcohol Education (AE) Program is available for certain defendants who are charged with driving a motor vehicle or a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The AE program gives eligible defendants the chance to get alcohol education or substance abuse treatment instead of going to trial. Defendants who want to take part in the AE program must meet the eligibility requirements in section 54-56g of the Connecticut General Statutes and must submit an application to the court.

When a defendant applies for the AE program, the court file is sealed. If there are any victims who sustained a serious physical injury because of the defendant's motor vehicle or boating violation, the court will require the defendant to send the victims a certain court form that tells the victims that the defendant is applying for the AE program. Before the court will decide if the defendant can take part in the AE program, any victims will have the chance to give the court their opinion about whether the defendant should be allowed to take part in the AE program.

The court will also send the defendant to the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) for an assessment and an evaluation. During the assessment, CSSD will figure out whether the defendant is eligible for the AE program. During the evaluation, DMHAS will figure out which program the defendant should be in. DMHAS will recommend to the court that the defendant take part in either a 10-week educational program, a 15-week educational program, or a substance abuse treatment program.

If the court grants the defendant's application for the AE program, the defendant will be required to agree to the tolling of the statute of limitations (to give the state more time to prosecute the case if the defendant does not successfully finish the program), to waive (give up) the right to a speedy trial, to take part in whichever program the court orders, and to start the program within 90 days unless the court gives the defendant more time to start the program. The defendant must also agree to accept more treatment if CSSD thinks that it is necessary. The court may also order the defendant to take part in a victim impact panel. If the defendant finishes the assigned AE program and any additional treatment recommended by CSSD successfully, the charges against the defendant will be dismissed by the court.

Any defendants who want to apply for the AE program must pay an application fee of \$100, a nonrefundable evaluation fee of \$100, and a nonrefundable program fee. The program fee is \$350 if the court orders the defendant to take part in the 10-week educational program, or \$500 if the court orders the defendant to take part in the 15-week educational program. If the court orders the defendant to take part in a substance abuse treatment program, the defendant must pay the cost of that program to the treatment provider. The court may decide that the defendant does not have to pay some or all of those fees, though, if the court finds that the defendant is unable to pay or is indigent.



The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact your Probation Officer or an ADA contact person listed at www.jud.ct.gov/ADA/.

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