

A Comparison of the Costs of the Rapid Interventional Community Court and the Traditional Court System

Abstract: In 2010 the Rapid Intervention Community Court (RICC) was founded as an alternative treatment court in Chittenden County, Vermont. There is no research as to its efficacy, and this study attempts to understand the RICC's cost effectiveness to the state. I compared the costs associated with the disposition of specific offenses in the traditional court system and compared those with the costs of the disposition of the same offenses in the RICC. I analyzed state payroll records, community providers' costs, the RICC grant, the confidential RICC client database, DDRs, Vermont Department of Corrections reports, and focused on specific common offenses. This analysis reveals: a) within the constraints of the RICC grant, the RICC spends much less than the traditional court system on a case-by-case basis; b) the two systems are far more equal when costs outside the RICC grant are taken into account. The RICC is at least as cost-effective as the traditional court system, although it may be even more effective if it decreases recidivism. Both the nuances of external costs, and the recidivism rate associated with this new program warrant further study.