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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 11, 2022

**ATTORNEY GENERAL LESLIE RUTLEDGE ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR  
ARKANSAS SPECIALTY COURTS**

**LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS** -- On October 11, 2022, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge announced a \$1 million allocation to provide additional funding for Arkansas's specialty courts. Rutledge's announcement will provide needed funds to the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts to enhance specialty courts across Arkansas.

In 1994, Arkansas implemented the first drug court in Pulaski County. Currently, Arkansas has a total of forty-nine (49) adult drug courts, fifteen (15) juvenile drug courts, eleven (11) veterans treatment courts, six (6) mental health courts, four (4) HOPE and Swift courts, and twelve (12) DWI courts.

Specialty courts are founded on the traditional adult drug court model, which addresses the underlying cause of criminal behavior, including substance use, mental health, and criminogenic risk factors. Participants enter into specialty courts to receive long-term treatment with intensive court supervision for an average of sixteen (16) months. Unlike traditional court, specialty courts take a collaborative approach to justice. The specialty court team includes the judge, program coordinator, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, treatment provider, community supervision officer, and law enforcement officer. Together, the specialty court team works collaboratively to guide participants to achieve established recovery goals and provide accountability for lapses in improvement.

"Specialty courts are the most effective tool available to the judiciary to reduce recidivism, improve public safety, and, most importantly, restore dignity to individuals, families, and communities affected by untreated substance use and mental health disorders," said Janet Hawley, State Specialty Court Coordinator.

Rutledge has been a consistent advocate for specialty courts. This contribution comes from the more than half a billion dollar settlement with opioid consulting firm McKinsey & Company. In February 2022, Rutledge finalized a \$26 billion opioid settlement agreement with drug distributors and Johnson & Johnson, resulting in Arkansas receiving \$216 million to address the opioid epidemic. In July 2022, Rutledge negotiated a \$9.75 million settlement with Endo Health Solutions Inc. and Pharmaceuticals Inc.



"Funding provided by Attorney General Leslie Rutledge will directly impact Arkansans throughout the state," said Marty Sullivan, Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, "These programs provide evidence-based treatment services to individuals while supporting collaborative partnerships among the judiciary, public agencies, and community-based organizations."

The Specialty Court Program Advisory Committee, chaired by Chief Justice John Dan Kemp, was established by Act 895 of 2015 to promote collaboration and provide recommendations on issues involving specialty courts. The Specialty Court Program Advisory Committee will oversee the distribution of funds provided by the Attorney General.



For Additional Information, Contact:

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*ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS*



***“Supporting Courts,  
Ensuring Justice”***

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