



Case Study



Alcohol Monitoring Supports Caddo Parish's Alternative to Incarceration

HIGHLIGHTS OF SUCCESS

- Close to 90% of clients successfully complete the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Pretrial Diversion Program.
- 40 clients per month participate in the program—totaling nearly 500 clients per year—with about half of all clients on alcohol monitoring.
- In the past year, program participants have experienced more than 8,840 Sober Days; almost 87% of participants monitored by SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring had zero violations.

LOCATION

Caddo Parish, Louisiana

CATEGORIES

Jail Alternative
Alcohol & Crime

MONITORING SOLUTIONS



SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring®



SCRAM Remote Breath®

Overview

In the northwest corner of Louisiana, the Red River crosses south into the Bayou State, splitting the sister cities of Shreveport and Bossier City on opposite banks. It's along this stretch that the river serves as the eastern border of Caddo Parish. Once known as "The Gateway to the West," Caddo Parish is home to over 250,000 residents and 11 municipalities. Oil and gas, in addition to manufacturing and trade, contribute to the area's economy as it remains an active transportation hub.

According to statistics from the Louisiana Department of Corrections and the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the U.S., and jail overcrowding has become a serious issue across the state. As budget shortfalls and dwindling public resources burden local court systems and communities, alternative solutions to incarceration—particularly among offenders struggling with drug and alcohol misuse—are desperately needed.

District Attorney James E. Stewart and Chief Deputy District Attorney Wilbert Pryor have responded by creating

the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Pretrial Diversion Program, allowing lower-risk defendants to participate in comprehensive rehabilitation. The goal is to offer defendants a second chance while holding them accountable for their offense. Incorporating state-of-the-art electronic monitoring technology is a key part of the parish's solution.

Putting Defendants on a Better Path

Referrals to the program come from a wide variety of sources—including defense attorneys, prosecutors, judges, employers, and defendants themselves—and are screened by the DA's office. Once accepted, each defendant must complete a psychological and substance-abuse assessment to establish a treatment plan.

The program imposes requirements designed to help defendants understand the impact of their actions and set out on a better path. Participants must pay court fees and restitution, make progress toward education goals like obtaining a GED, attend MADD victim impact panels, go to counseling and behavior classes, and report to the program monthly.



Alcohol monitoring is assigned to defendants with alcohol misuse or abuse issues.

By addressing the motivations behind a defendant's offense and alcohol issues, the program allows defendants to move past their criminal history, to show they are truly remorseful, and reduce the chance they will repeat their offense.

"It's important for the program to be rigorous enough so that they think 'I don't want to go through it again,'" Chief Deputy DA Pryor says. "And at the same time, when they successfully complete the program, they can also say they've done something good for their lives."

How is SCRAM Technology Being Used?

Caddo Parish has been using SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring (SCRAM CAM) and SCRAM Remote Breath for over a year. Prior to the implementation of alcohol monitoring, the program lacked a method to ensure clients weren't drinking.

Now, about half of the 40 clients in the program each month are monitored with SCRAM CAM. They are required to wear the bracelet for at least 90 days and they must pay for it themselves. Many clients who enter pretrial diversion don't believe they have an alcohol problem, but the 24/7 monitoring provided by SCRAM CAM combined with counseling enables them to identify and address their substance abuse issues and ensures they adhere to the conditions of the diversion program.

"They hate wearing it, but it forces them to be more accountable for their actions," notes Consuella Henson, Pretrial Diversion Coordinator in Caddo Parish. "Before, we didn't have a way to measure drinking or what our clients were doing on a day-to-day basis."

The program also uses SCRAM Remote Breath for some defendants who are unable to wear SCRAM CAM, requiring them to test an average of four to five times each day.

Outcomes

The Caddo Parish District Attorney's Pretrial Diversion Program averages nearly 500 participants over the course



Caddo Parish Courthouse in Shreveport, Louisiana

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***— Wilbert Pryor
Chief Deputy District Attorney***

of a year. Since January 2017, over 210 of those participants have been monitored with SCRAM technology for a total of 14,100 days, and nearly 90% of clients successfully complete the program. With a goal of changing client behavior and evaluating a client's total success, one mistake or violation does not necessarily result in an automatic dismissal from the program. If a client is doing well overall but commits a violation, their time on alcohol monitoring is usually extended.

"They are brought in and asked to be honest about what happened," Pryor says. "We believe in giving deserving people a second chance, but violations will cause expulsion from the diversion program."

One client, an older man who had been drinking since he was 14, requested to wear SCRAM CAM longer than required by his treatment plan. He stated that it was the one thing that kept him from

drinking and his newfound sobriety made him feel better.

And with less than 1% of tests failed and 92% of tests completed and passed on schedule, Caddo Parish is also experiencing success with Remote Breath clients.

A criminal record results in hard consequences—affecting an offender's ability to find housing, earn credit, get a job, and support a family. This program allows defendants to show they are truly remorseful and to learn valuable lessons through counseling and treatment. "Our goal is to help out defendants who have made a mistake, who are earnest about their mistake, and to help them move past it in a way the community is confident that the mistake will not occur again," Pryor adds. "Giving a deserving defendant the opportunity to complete our rigorous diversion program helps our community."