

Case Study: Kane County, IL

SCRAM CAM Provides Sober Days and Rehabilitation in IL 16th Judicial Circuit

Domestic Violence

Aurora, IL – Kane County is one of the five “collar counties” comprising the Chicago metropolitan area, with Aurora as the largest city within the County. In 2007, Kane County instituted its very successful SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring (CAM) program, becoming the third Illinois county to leverage CAM technology to more effectively manage alcohol offenders (particularly in the areas of DUI and Domestic Violence), help reduce jail overcrowding, save taxpayer dollars, and better protect its citizens.

How is SCRAM CAM Being Used?

According to Kane County’s program criteria, SCRAM CAM is typically used either as a condition of bond release or as a sentencing condition to enforce judicial sobriety orders for alcohol-fueled crimes. With regard to DUI, Kane County will suggest SCRAM CAM for:

- 1st DUI offenses with aggravated circumstances (such 0.15 or higher BAC), prior alcohol arrest history, or a significant/high-risk DASA (Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse) Assessment score
- 2nd DUI offenses with no aggravating factors
- Felony (3rd or higher) DUIs with no previous violent criminal charges

In Kane County, SCRAM CAM is also used on lower-risk Domestic Violence (DV) offenders, as court dockets have reaffirmed that 80-90% of felony DV cases usually stem from alcohol misuse. Hon. Marmarie Kostelny uses SCRAM CAM in a tiered approach on the approximately 1200-1600 misdemeanor and 300 felony DV cases that are tried in her courtroom each year. Judge Kostelny advocates using SCRAM CAM for 90-120 days in conjunction with treatment, rather than jail. “The purpose of SCRAM, in my mind, is rehabilitation,” she says.

Highlights of Success

- Effectively used for both DUI and Domestic Violence
- SCRAM CAM has reduced jail overcrowding and saved Kane County taxpayers over \$3 million

SOBER DAYS: 99.6%

What are Sober Days?

Outcomes

Depending on the judge and number of offenses, the typical SCRAM CAM monitoring period for DUI offenders is between 90 and 200 days. In 2011, 1,605 misdemeanor DUI cases were filed in Kane County, of which 751 offenders were monitored by SCRAM CAM. Since its program inception, Kane County has also generated an extraordinarily high percentage of Sober Days (99.8%), which is a testament to its defined SCRAM CAM program criteria and strong, consistent judicial support.

By using SCRAM CAM as a step-down alternative to incarceration for lower-risk alcohol offenders, jail overcrowding has been reduced and has saved Kane County taxpayers over \$3 million.

According to Steve Sims, the First Assistant State Attorney who has been instrumental in building Kane County’s SCRAM CAM program, the technology not only helps Kane County better allocate its limited criminal justice dollars but also keeps the community safer. “There is no better tool than SCRAM,” he says. “These first, second, or three-time DUI offenders are ticking time bombs” that—unless closely monitored, accurately assessed, and effectively deterred—are likely to continue their behavior.

Overall, Kane County has had measurable, sustained success with its SCRAM CAM program. According to Kane County State’s Attorney Joe McMahon in his 2011 Year-End Report, “With 24/7 monitoring, SCRAM CAM has proven to be an extremely valuable tool in assisting the court system in enforcing prohibitions against alcohol consumption.”

