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Memorandum

To: Administrative Judges
From: Joseph J. Traficanti, Jr. *JT*
Date: December 23, 2003
Subject: Drug Treatment Courts

Now that drug treatment courts in most areas are in operation, or an advanced phase of planning, a portion of my efforts are focusing on the process of integrating these courts into the normal operational and administrative procedures for each judicial district. This will help facilitate the eventual transition of administrative control to each district.

One procedural area that I have been asked to address is the practice of purchasing awards and incentives, such as plaques or gift certificates, for drug court participants. In reviewing the financial procedures for the Unified Court System I have found no authority to support this type of expenditure and the majority of our drug courts do not present such items. While there are many drug courts that currently provide such items to participants to commemorate phase advancement or successful graduation from the program, the items presented are often donated through a community based or non-profit agency rather than purchased. These types of donated awards are not prohibited, but neither the judge nor the court can be involved in the solicitation of such items.

It would be appropriate for the drug treatment courts to present certificates of achievement signed by the judge at the time of phase advancement or graduation. These types of certificates can either be purchased or produced locally using office technology. It would also be appropriate to purchase the inexpensive tokens or pins that are commonly presented with the certificates.

I hope that you find this type of procedural guidance helpful in the successful operation of your drug treatment courts and I ask that you contact me with any questions that you may have. As always, I thank you, your judges and court staff for all of your hard work in establishing and supporting the drug treatment court program.

Please distribute this memorandum to all appropriate drug treatment court judges and personnel.

cc: Honorable Jonathan Lippman
Honorable Ann T. Pfau
Honorable Joan B. Carey
David L. Sullivan
Frank T. Jordan
Executive Assistants