



Tips on starting a court monitoring program

The thought of starting a court monitoring program may seem daunting. But by building on your experience and meeting with others knowledgeable about your courts, you can develop a program to create lasting change in your justice system. Here are some hints.

Do your research and start to gather allies

WATCH'S *Developing a Court Monitoring Program* toolkit is a step-by-step guide to forming a new program or integrating court monitoring to an existing organization. Start by meeting with people who are familiar with your local courts, including battered women's or sexual assault advocacy groups, or groups like the YWCA, League of Women Voters, etc. They may be sources of community support or volunteers, and may have knowledge of previous attempts to monitor the courts in your area.

Talk with key members of your justice system

We recommend interviewing court personnel to let them know what you are doing, get their feedback, and identify concerns. WATCH can provide you with a list of interview questions and suggestions on who to meet with.

Identify courts and cases to be watched

If you are considering court monitoring, you are probably aware of many problems that you could address, but don't try to do everything at once. We recommend that you keep your focus narrow to start. Develop simple court monitoring forms that are easy for volunteers to complete and for you to analyze. WATCH can send you sample forms.

Recruit and train volunteers

Volunteers can be trained in a group or one-on-one, depending on your needs. Make sure volunteers understand their role as observers, and your expectations. Schedule a *Managing Court Monitor Volunteers* webinar with a WATCH staff person.

Contact WATCH!

We can help you with just about everything. Visit our website for resources, information and training materials. Email us with questions or contact us to schedule a phone consultation or webinar training.