



Anticipated Graduation Date: _____ Graduation Essay Due Date: _____

Attention Veteran Treatment Court participants:

Your attention is directed to the Graduation and Case Closure requirements outlined in the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Participants Handbook (page 13) which describes the duties of candidates for graduation from the Veterans Treatment Court. Wherein it is stated: "It will be necessary to discuss your progress toward the goals you initially set and why you believe you have met the graduation criteria."

You have heard the Judge in court referring to this as a "VTC Graduation Letter" and perhaps at other times as a "VTC Essay." What matters is not what you call your progress document rather, it is what you put in it that matters. In a minimum of a 500 word essay, you are to include the following:

- Brief description of participant's military career
- Participant's family background and work history
- Describe participant's arrest prior to participation in the program
- What has been the effect of the program on the participant?
- What will be the lasting difference in how the participant will do things in their life after supervision has ended?
- What are the participant's plans for the future?
- What will the participant's future family life be like?
- What are the participant's employment goals?
- What will the participant do differently from past history of substance use?
- Discuss your progress toward the goals you initially set in the program
- What are the participant's honest and helpful comments about the VTC?
- Why do you believe you have met graduation criteria?

Finally, this essay is due not later than two weeks or your last court date prior to the end of Phase 4. **You may return your completed essay to your supervision officer, VJO Frank Norris or VTCC Brenda Mueller. Remember: Leave no Veteran Behind!**

On graduation day, you will need to read or share in your own words, in no more than 2 minutes, that "portion" of your essay that:

- Addresses your arrest prior to participation in the program;
- What has been the effect of the program on you;
- What will be the lasting difference in how you will do things differently in your life after supervision has ended; and
- Your candid advice to fellow veterans on how they can succeed in the VTC and life afterwards.

Updated: 9/25/2017