



**OFFICE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY 30th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
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**STATE FUNDS EXPANSION OF ROCKET DOCKET IN JEFFERSON
COUNTY COURTS TO FOCUS ON HEROIN CASES**

LOUISVILLE, KY -- Tom Wine, Commonwealth's Attorney for Jefferson County, and Mike O'Connell, County Attorney for Jefferson County, announced today that Jefferson County has received a grant from the Kentucky Prosecutor's Advisory Council to expand Jefferson County's Rocket Docket program. The \$108,000 grant will fund the creation of two Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney positions to the Rocket Docket program currently serving District and Circuit Courts.

The Rocket Docket program was originally established in 1993 to expedite the handling of certain felony offenses in the Jefferson County courts. The two new positions will focus on low-level heroin cases. Prosecutors will make recommendations on those cases taking into account the defendant's treatment needs and current risk to self as determined by the Louisville Metro Department of Corrections intake evaluations and Pretrial Services evaluations, while at the same time ensuring the protection of the general public.

The grant will help Jefferson County prosecutors address the growing and complex needs associated with heroin addiction and the huge increase in heroin-related arrests. In 2011, there were 190 heroin arrests while in 2014, the last year there were complete records, the Louisville Metro Police Department alone made over 1,500 felony heroin arrests.

Commonwealth's Attorney Wine stated: "The Heroin Rocket Docket will allow heroin use to be addressed more quickly and effectively than it is at present. The establishment of this program is another example of the continuing cooperative effort of the Jefferson County Attorney and the Jefferson County Commonwealth's Attorney to address criminal issues affecting our community."

County Attorney O'Connell added: "It is clear that heroin is a growing problem for this community and its impact is seen every day in our courtrooms. This effort is a positive step in addressing this scourge – holding people accountable while trying to address treatment needs as well."

The Heroin Rocket Docket will be operational on August 1, 2015.