



## **News from the Shelby County Mayor's Office**

**Mark H. Luttrell, Jr., Mayor**

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### **Shelby County Establishes Veterans' Court**

Shelby County Government has established a Veterans' Court to help address the root causes of why some veterans commit crimes. The court will offer mental health treatment programs for veterans in lieu of jail time.

Shelby County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr. will announce details about the new court during a news conference this Friday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m., at the Criminal Justice Center, 201 Poplar Avenue, Lower Level, in the Shelby County General Sessions Division Seven (7) courtroom. The cases will be heard by Judge Bill Anderson.

**"This is a unique partnership between Shelby County Government and several agencies. We believe this specially-designated court will help veterans make better choices and turn from lives of crime. Services will include counseling and mentor programs. The supportive nature of the Veterans' Court will be one of its most important attributes,"** said Mayor Luttrell.

Many veterans suffer from addictions, depression and other mental illnesses caused by traumatic experiences.

As a result, Pat Hines, Veterans' Justice Coordinator for the VA Medical Center in Memphis, approached Congressman Steve Cohen last year about the need for a specific court to hear veterans' cases. Representatives of several community agencies then joined in the effort, which led to the Shelby County Veterans' Court.

Staff with the Shelby County Pre-Trial Services Bureau will identify veterans booked into the Shelby County Jail. Qualifying cases will be then referred to Judge Anderson's court by prosecutors with the Shelby County District Attorney General's staff. **"Our goal is to ensure veterans get the necessary treatment to keep them from repeating their criminal behaviors,"** added Mayor Luttrell.

**(End of Release)**