



PHOENIX PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

What is it?

The Phoenix Program (“Phoenix”) is a voluntary diversion program offered by the Office of the DeKalb County Solicitor-General. It is designed to assist women in their quest to abandon a life of sexual exploitation. Program participants generally face prostitution charges. However, there may occasionally be other charges associated with the case.

Who can participate?

This voluntary program diverts cases in which women of varying ages have been charged with prostitution. The selected participants have little to no criminal history, and will not be admitted if the facts of the case (or other information) indicate they have engaged in exploiting or recruiting others.

What are the requirements?

Phoenix is a minimum nine (9) month program. Each participant is required to meet with a case manager once a month, attend twelve (12) **group counseling** sessions with a licensed therapist, and attend a series of **life skills classes** focused upon job readiness. Participants are subject to random drug screenings and are expected to remain arrest free during their program enrollment. Participants are also required to either **complete their high school diploma or equivalency degree while enrolled in the program**. The DeKalb Solicitor’s Office has partnered with DeKalb Workforce Development to offer, free of charge, GED classes, adult education opportunities, and workforce training. In addition, each participant is required to **attend court once per month** and provide a progress report to the presiding judge. Finally, in an effort to fulfill meaningful community activity and schedule structure, each participant is required to perform eight (8) hours of weekly **community service** unless enrolled in school or employed.

What is the incentive to participants?

Successful participants receive a dismissal of their case with record restriction. Phoenix also connects women to necessary resources to become more independent and escape homelessness and violence.

What is the participant cost?

There is no cost for the program or for the classes each participant is required to take. The program is funded through criminal justice grants and partnerships with community groups.

What happens to participants who do not meet program conditions?

If a participant fails a drug screen, misses a class/meeting, or fails to participate as necessary, her case will be set for a sanction hearing in front of the judge. Dismissal from the program will occur for serious violations of the rules or as a result of a series of minor violations. Participants may be returned to State Court for traditional prosecution.