



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Probation Enhances Supervision of DUI Offenders** *Preemptive move will mean more oversight for misdemeanor drunken drivers*

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**San Rafael, CA** – Marin County's high rates of alcoholic beverage consumption and subsequent arrests and convictions for driving under the influence have led to a major change in the way DUI cases are handled by the [Marin County Probation Department](http://www.marincounty.org/probation).

As of August 1, third-time convicted DUI offenders are receiving supervised probation for the first time in County history. Previously, it took four DUI convictions for an offender to become a felon and prompt a mandatory assignment to a probation officer. With the change, three-time DUI offenders receive a grant of supervised probation and must report to a probation officer.

Probation's DUI caseload is expected to increase by about 60 cases per year. The Probation Department has requested no further funding from the County to handle the increased caseload.

Probation Chief Michael Daly said it was his department's choice to make the change.

"People who are convicted of a third DUI clearly have a problem," he said. "For public safety purposes, a higher level of supervision is needed. In addition to these folks having to report directly to a probation officer, we will be conducting unannounced probation searches to make sure all court orders are being fulfilled. We will also be monitoring their treatment so they don't continue to be a public safety issue."

Third-time DUI probationers typically have court orders that include a search clause, have a vehicle ignition lock device installed, a no possession or consumption of alcohol and alcohol/drug treatment. If the offender demonstrates a clean-and-sober track record over 18 months, a lower level of supervision could be assigned thereafter.

The County's [Department of Health and Human Services](http://www.marincounty.org/health-human-services) (HHS) has focused on the root



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causes of substance abuse and educating residents through various programs. In eight of the past nine years, Marin has been billed as the healthiest county in California but has been consistently called out for high rates of binge drinking and DUIs. The HHS-supported [Marin Prevention Network](#) joins community-based coalitions across the county to promote substance use awareness and design local policy solutions.

“We are very pleased that Probation is making this commitment,” said Dr. Matt Willis, the County’s Public Health Officer. “We share a goal to protect our residents. Working to prevent substance abuse and addiction before it starts, to prevent that first DUI, is also vital. It’s important to note it’s not only alcohol. Cannabis, opioids, and sedatives like Xanax also impair driving and can lead to DUI convictions. People driving while impaired put themselves and the community at risk, and they need help.”