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NEWS RELEASE

Date: May 20, 2008
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Director of Communications

New Court Provides Quick Resolution, Appropriate Treatment and Aims to Reduce Recidivism

*The Linda Anderson Alternative Treatment for Misdemeanants Modeled on the Highly
Successful Drug Treatment Court*

**Defendants Charged with Drug Possession, Retail Theft and Prostitution are
Eligible Depending on Prior Record**

WHAT: News Conference to announce the new Linda Anderson
Alternative Treatment For Misdemeanants

WHEN: Tuesday May 20, 2008
11 a.m.

WHERE: Philadelphia District Attorney's Office
Three South Penn Square
Corner of Juniper and South Penn Square
Mezzanine Level

PARTICIPANTS: District Attorney Lynne Abraham
President Judge Louis J. Presentza
Honorable Ronald B. Merriweather
Honorable Lydia Y. Kirkland
Honorable John O'Grady
Honorable George Overton
Adrian J. Moody, Esquire, friend and
former law partner of Judge Anderson
Ms. Allory Kenney, Judge Anderson's daughter

District Attorney Lynne Abraham today announced a new pre-trial diversion program, the Linda Anderson Alternative Treatment for Misdemeanants (ATM.) The ATM Program is modeled on the highly successful Drug Treatment court for drug offenders, which provides appropriate treatment as determined by the Probation Department and aims to prevent further recidivism.

The new program targets offenders who are charged with drug possession, prostitution and retail theft. To be eligible for the Anderson ATM Program, defendants must not have been on probation or parole for any violent crimes within the past 10 years or non-violent crimes within the past 5 years. Eligible defendants will be put on one year probation with drug, alcohol and mental health treatment as well as job training arranged by the Probation Department. If the defendant complies with treatment and remains arrest-free for one year, the case will be withdrawn.

Thirty two defendants have entered the program since it began on March 25, 2008.

In a fitting tribute, the new program has been named in honor of the late Judge Linda Anderson, who passed way in November 2007. Judge Anderson identified the necessity of such action years ago.

“The Linda Anderson ATM Program is a fitting tribute to her memory,” said District Attorney Lynne Abraham. “This new program gives defendants an opportunity to resolve their cases earlier and get the help they need to prevent further criminal behavior, a great benefit to public safety. We all benefit when the criminal justice system is used effectively to stop these quality of life crimes.”

“Linda Anderson was a unique judge...knowledgeable, hard-working, compassionate with a true understanding of public service,” said Municipal Court President Judge Louis Presenza. “The ATM program is rightfully deserved and is a lasting tribute to her memory and legacy.”

The Anderson ATM Program targets lower level offenders and is only offered in the Municipal Court Pre-Trial Room where all defendants go within 4-6 weeks of their arrest. Defendants are assessed by the Probation Department and referred to the appropriate program depending on the assessment. If a defendant does not comply with the treatment program or gets arrested on new charges, the defendant is found guilty and can be sentenced to jail. The Anderson ATM Program is similar to Drug Treatment Court where defendants plead guilty but are put in treatment. If they successfully complete treatment, their case is withdrawn.



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