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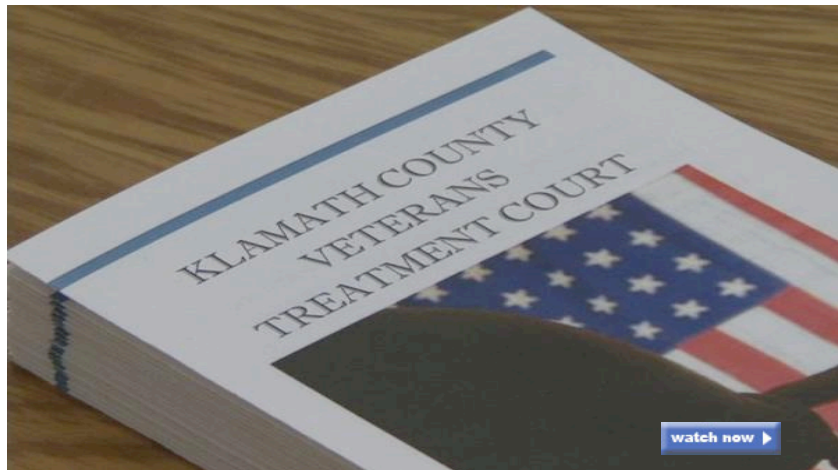
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Klamath Co. establishes Veterans Court



November 9, 2010

By Tove Tupper

November 9, 2010

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. - Veterans in Klamath County that commit certain crimes will now have another option to serve their time.

On Tuesday, the county officially opened a new veterans court, the first in the state of Oregon. It will operate similar to drug court. Any veteran that commits either a nonviolent crime, or one that does not involve a firearm, will be eligible. The court will oversee treatment of the veterans in the criminal justice system that are struggling with substance abuse or mental health disorders.

Klamath Falls District Attorney Ed Caleb says he hopes the court will not only improve the lives of veterans, but save taxpayers money.

"As veterans, I don't want to say we're different, but we are different. And the message is that we need to take care of our own," Veteran Rod Evans said.

Klamath County says it did not spend any money setting up the court. It received federal grants for employee training, and it is working with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide treatment

Caleb expects the court to save the county money in the long run by cutting down on the number of repeat offenders.

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