

Future Forward

- Program Eligibility

Targeted defendants are 24 years of age or older, who are Philadelphia residents and have a high school degree or GED and are interested in obtaining college credit. They are first-time felony offenders charged with a non-violent crime, with no more than one prior misdemeanor conviction. Defendants must pass the Community College of Philadelphia's (CCP) entrance exam and be eligible for federal financial aid. Defendants are not drug dependent and accepted at the discretion of the District Attorney's Office and after a careful review of their case.

- Disposition

Defendants enter a nolo contendere plea and the Court defers entry of judgment while the defendant completes the program.

- Details and Length

The program length is approximately one year. Individuals who are offered and accept admission into the CCP, after completing testing and financial aid requirements, will be enrolled in three courses for three consecutive semesters. These courses will be administered in conjunction with CCP's Reentry Support Project (RSP). Specific classes will be required in the first semester; however, students will be given greater flexibility in subsequent semesters. In addition to College courses, program participants will be required to attend personal, academic, and professional development workshops and activities coordinated by the RSP. Each month, participants also appear for progress listings before a supervising judge. Participants must remain in good academic standing and not get re-arrested to continue in the program.

- Program Completion

Program participants must successfully earn a minimum of 27 college credits during their three semesters to be considered as program completers (it is at each program participant's discretion as to whether he or she wants to continue enrollment at the College after his or her third semester). If the defendant successfully completes these requirements, the Court will dismiss the case with prejudice. Individuals who are terminated from the program due to non-compliance prior to completion will have a guilty verdict entered by the Court and they are be sentenced accordingly. Participants who are terminated from the program due to cognitive issues will be permitted to withdraw their plea after the first semester and have their case diverted to another program or sent for trial.

- Expungement Eligibility

If the defendant does not get arrested and subsequently convicted and all court costs are paid, within one year from successful completion of Future Forward, the case will be expunged.