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D.C. 'Safe Surrender' Brings in 764 with Outstanding Warrants

Updated at 11:40 a.m.

Hurricane warnings cut short the final day of the District of Columbia Superior Court's Safe Surrender program, but participation still topped turnout from the last time the court sponsored the program in 2007.

Over the course of three Saturdays in August, court officials reported that 673 people with outstanding warrants for nonviolent felonies and misdemeanors turned themselves in, with nearly 99 percent going home the same day. Including weekday surrenders, 764 people have voluntarily surrendered this month.

On Saturday, the court received 268 surrenders, despite closing early around noon in anticipation of Hurricane Irene hitting the region.

The first time the program took place in October 2007, 530 people participated. The court takes voluntary surrenders year-round, but the program was created to make a dent in the number of outstanding warrants and also give fugitives a safe place to turn themselves in.

About 16,000 outstanding bench warrants remain, according to the court's most recent list posted online Friday.

The program was a partnership between the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, D.C. Public Defender Service, D.C. Superior Court, Metropolitan Police Department, Office of Attorney General, Pretrial Services Agency, U.S. Attorney's Office and the U.S. Marshals Service.

A previous version of this article incorrectly stated the number of outstanding warrants.

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