

Syracuse Community Treatment Court

Handbook for Participants

Guidelines and Program Information

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Important names and numbers to know:

My Attorney _____ Number _____

My Case Manager _____ Number _____

My Probation Officer _____ Number _____

Welcome to the Syracuse Community Treatment Court

This handbook is designed to:

- _ answer questions
- _ address concerns and
- _ provide information about Treatment Court

ALL LEGAL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO YOUR ATTORNEY. THIS HANDBOOK AND ORIENTATION IS DESIGNED TO EXPLAIN THE TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM.

In this program, you will be expected to follow the instructions given in court by the Treatment Court judge and comply with the treatment plan developed for you by your case manager. This handbook will explain what is expected of you. It will also explain general program information.

What is Treatment Court?

The Treatment Court is a special part of Syracuse City Court. It is a court supervised treatment program for people who have been charged with non-violent felony or misdemeanor offenses who have a drug addiction.

Treatment Court is a voluntary program which includes regular court appearances before the Treatment Court judge. If you are accepted into the Treatment Court you will be expected to follow a treatment plan.

What is a Treatment Plan?

A treatment plan will begin with an evaluation conducted by the Treatment Court staff. This plan may require all or some of the following:

- _ inpatient treatment
- _ outpatient treatment
- _ halfway house placement
- _ regular and random drug testing
- _ counseling (individual and group)
- _ Acupuncture (we will explain this later)
- _ educational/vocation/employment program

Your case manager will also help you with other areas of your life based on your individual needs.

This may include referrals for:

- _ educational and skills testing

- _ job training
- _ Public Assistance/Medicaid
- _ school or other educational services
- _ family counseling
- _ job placement services

While we recognize that addiction is a treatable disease, it will be important for you to remember that you are in treatment court because of criminal behavior.

How long will I be in treatment court?

The program length is determined by individual progress, but will be no less than 12 months. Felony level cases will take approximately 18 months to complete the program.

How can I participate in Treatment Court?

Following arrest, if you are eligible, you will be offered the choice of participating in Treatment Court or regular court prosecution on the pending charges. Successful completion and graduation from the program will result in having the pending charges reduced or dismissed. In some cases, such as Violations of Probation, the charge will not be dismissed but you will be favorably re-sentenced.

The Treatment Court judge is told about your progress by your case manager or probation officer and treatment providers. After talking to the people listed above, he will make the final decisions including whether or not you will be accepted into the Treatment Court and whether you will remain there.

What's in it for me?

Benefits of the Program

Dismissal of Charges

Successful completion and graduation from the program will result in having the pending charges reduced or dismissed. In some cases, such as Violations of Probation, the charge will not be dismissed but you will be favorably re-sentenced.

A Second Chance

The program offers you the chance to move forward in your life with the new things that you have learned.

Healthy Lifestyles

The programs that you will join will help you take control of your life in many ways. Even more important than the things you will learn not to do - like drugs and alcohol - are the things you will learn how to do - like eating right.

We are here to help! Nobody said it would be easy.

On the pages to follow you will find some of the steps involved in this program and some of the resources you will need to succeed. The people who work in Treatment Court want to see you succeed. Make sure you use the program as a way to make a better life for yourself.

Rules:

What are the rules of the program?

To remain in Treatment Court you are required to follow very clear rules.

1. Regular Court Supervision:

You must participate in regular court supervision (in other words, you must show up at court and for meetings with your case manager).

You will be required to appear in front of the treatment court judge on a regular basis. The Judge will be given process reports on you regarding your drug tests, attendance and participation in your treatment program. These reports will come from your treatment provider and your case manager. The Judge may ask you, your treatment provider and your case manager about your progress, and discuss the problems you may be having.

2. Regular Attendance:

You must attend all scheduled sessions (for treatment and other services). As a Treatment Court participant you are required to attend all scheduled treatment sessions and all your scheduled court dates.

At first you will appear weekly. As you make progress your schedule will be reduced. If you are doing well you will be encouraged to continue working towards graduation.

Treatment sessions include counseling, educational sessions and other sessions as directed. You will be required to be on time for all sessions. If you are late, you will not be allowed to participate and will be considered absent.

Your schedule for Treatment Court will vary according to your progress. You will be told when you are expected for your next appointment each time you appear in court.

You are to arrive on time for court and stay until your case is called or you are dismissed.

3. Required Paperwork:

You must complete all required paperwork.

Release of Information:

Treatment providers, the District Attorney's office and your attorney will each be giving

information to the Treatment Court Judge. You will be asked to sign releases of information to allow this to happen.

Contract:

All Treatment Court participants are required to sign a contract in court that states the information listed in this handbook. The contract will also be signed by your lawyer, the District Attorney's office and the Treatment Court judge. This contract will be kept in your file.

4. Completion of Program Phases:

You must successfully complete all four phases of the program. The Program Phases are explained in the following pages. They are your steps to success.

IF THERE IS ANYTHING IN THIS HANDBOOK THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, ASK YOUR CASE MANAGER OR PROBATION OFFICER TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU.

Steps to Success/Levels and Phases of Treatment

The Syracuse Community Treatment Court is a four phase program lasting a minimum of year. The program may take longer based on individual progress. Each phase consists of specific treatment goals, activities and requirements before moving to the next phase. The Treatment Court phases are explained in detail below

Remember: While there are certain things that you must complete, your ability to move along in the program and graduate will depend mostly on your actions.

PHASE 1- Orientation

Phase 1 is the beginning of Treatment Court and will last you until you enter your recommended treatment program. During this time you will be assigned a Case Manager and he or she will work with you to help you develop a client specific plan.

You entered Phase 1 at your first appearance before the Treatment Court judge. During Phase 1 you will be asked to sign a contract in court that says you understand the expectations the court. The contract also says that when you successfully complete Treatment Court your cases will be disposed of in a favorable way. Treatment court staff should be able to answer any questions you may have about how the court works.

During Phase 1 you will also:

- _ receive a complete substance abuse evaluation
- _ receive an educational evaluation
- _ receive an orientation to Treatment Court (including a review of this handbook)
- _ give urine samples, as requested, to be tested for drugs
- _ meet with or contact you case manager as often as requested per week
- _ be required to be in court weekly to discuss your progress with the Judge.

As you move along in this program remember that your progress depends on you. A relapse will not mean you will automatically be discharged from treatment court. However, there will be consequences for breaking the rules. Any time when you are not following the program will not count toward graduation.

Once you enter the recommended Treatment Program you will be moved into Phase 2.

PHASE 2 - Stabilization

This Phase is when you will enter the initial treatment Program may include an inpatient or outpatient program. This phase can last one to three months.

During this time you will:

- _continue to receive acupuncture treatments when available
- _have contact with your case manager as directed
- _appear in court as scheduled and
- _give urine screens as requested

As you move toward the end of this phase you and your case manager will discuss your progress in your individual treatment plan that was developed in Phase 1. You will also begin to discuss your aftercare.

In order to move to the next phase you must

- _adhere to your court reporting schedule
- _improve and maintain your sobriety
- _show documented positive participation in your treatment program
- _participate in 12 step programs
- _provide documentation that you have secured a sponsor

Your case manager and treatment provider must recommend to the Judge that you are ready to move on.

Throughout the time you are involved in Treatment Court you will review your plan with your case manager and follow it carefully.

PHASE 3 - Decision Making

During this phase, which will last two to four months, you will still continue in your recommended treatment program. You will continue to have contact with your case manager as directed, appear in court as directed and provide urine screens as required.

As you move toward the end of this Phase you will meet with your case manager to review and update your treatment plan and discuss the community transition phase. In order to move into Phase 4 you must

- _adhere to your court reporting schedule
- _demonstrate sobriety

Your case manager and treatment provider must recommend to the Judge that you are ready to move on.

Remember your ability to move the next phase will be based on your own progress and your ability to stay focused on what you must do to meet all Treatment Court expectations.

You are required to participate in and educational/employment program as directed by your case manager/probation officer. You will not be allowed to graduate from the court until you have met this requirement. You will be directed to attend this portion of the court at the end of Phase 3 or as determined necessary.

PHASE 4 - Community Transition

Once you are admitted to this phase you are well on your way to graduation. During this phase you will be completing treatment but continuing to maintain contact with your case manager. Your case manager will assist you in enrolling in school or job training or help you seek a job. You will still be required to appear in court as scheduled and have contact with your case manager as directed.

During this phase you will be asked to complete a community service assignment. This will involve a project where you will be required to help the community in some way. You may work in a group with other drug court participants or individually. Your case manager will discuss the options with you as the time gets closer.

This is the last phase of your program before graduation. In order to graduate you must complete this phase. You must also:

- complete treatment
- complete a minimum of 12-18 months in Treatment Court
- complete a community service assignment
- participate in a job readiness program as directed by your case manager
- have a job or be enrolled in school
- completed your high school education or GED
- participate in a pre-graduation meeting
- complete your graduation survey
- have a recommendation from your case manager

The final decision for graduation will be made by the judge.

Graduation is a time to celebrate your transition to a healthy lifestyle.

This is time to celebrate your accomplishments

You will be able to invite your family and other important people to the ceremony.

You will also have your charges dismissed at this time.

Treatment Court Expectations

What is expected of me?

As you can see, you are expected to follow a set of basic rules. Some other expectations have to do with how you act in court and the things you must do in order to follow your own treatment plan.

The rules and expectations of all Treatment Court participants are listed below.

Treatment of Others:

You should respect the opinions and feelings of other people in the Treatment Court. At times you must understand that verbal or physical threats to anyone in the program will not be tolerated. You should not be disrespectful and if you are, or especially if you are violent, it will be immediately reported to the Court and may result in the return of your case to the regular Court docket.

You will not be asked to be an informant in this program. You will not be expected or encouraged to discuss any information concerning anyone's behavior or progress except your own.

Dress Code:

You will be required to dress appropriately for your court appearances and treatment appointments. Clothing bearing drug or alcohol related themes or drug use is considered inappropriate. Clothing that can be described as gang related and/or gang colors are also considered inappropriate in court and treatment sessions. Sunglasses are not to be worn in the court unless approved by a doctor.

Refrain from Further Possession or Use of Drugs:

You will not possess, sell or use illegal drugs or alcohol.

Abstinence:

The goal of Treatment Court is to help you remain abstinent from alcohol and all non prescribed drugs. You will be tested throughout the entire Treatment Court process. The Treatment Court Judge will have access to all drug test results including failures or refusals and may order a drug test at any time. A positive test will not automatically disqualify you but may result in a sanction or a change in treatment. Drug screens can be conducted at any time at the treatment agencies or during court appearances.

Housing:

Stable housing is necessary for your recovery. You will be expected to discuss any changes in your living situation prior to making those changes with your case manager and the Treatment Court judge. Your case manager can help you identify better housing if necessary.

Refrain from Further Violations of the Law:

You are required to refrain from any further violations of the law. Additional charges may result in being terminated from the Treatment Court.

Medical Issues:

You are expected to seek medical attention when needed. You are also expected to follow through with any medical advice. You may be asked to provide evidence to the court of any medical conditions or appointments. Any prescribed medications must be reported to your case manager immediately.

Acupuncture:

Acupuncture is an alternative medical treatment. Your case manager will be able to explain this to you in detail. Acupuncture treatments can be very beneficial and may be a requirement of your treatment plan. Participation is encouraged throughout the program. While acupuncture will not cure alcoholism or drug addiction, it will lessen depression reduce or eliminate withdrawal symptoms such as drug cravings, body aches, headaches, nausea, sweating, and muscle aches. Assist with stress reduction and relapse preventions

What if I don't follow the rules?

***If you break the rules of Treatment Court you will be subject to a sanction.
Any of the following may result in a sanction.***

1. New arrest
2. Abscond or termination from a program with an involuntary return to court.
3. Abscond or termination from a program with a voluntary return to the court.
4. Dirty, missed, or substituted or adulterated urine. Including refusing to give a urine when asked.
5. Missed group or individual session at treatment.
6. Missed court appearances.
7. Failure to follow the directions of the Treatment Court Judge
8. Breaking the rules at a Treatment Program.
9. Demonstrating a lack of progress.

Sanctions in Treatment Court may include but are not limited to:

1. Verbal warning or admonishment
2. Increased urine testing
3. Increased attendance in court.
4. Moving to a higher level of care
5. Day for Day Warning
6. Community Service Van Assignment
7. Incarceration
8. Dismissal from the Treatment Court

Incentives for progress in Treatment Court can include:

1. Decrease in attendance in court.
2. Praise from the Treatment Court judge
3. Drug Court round of applause.
4. Special incentives from the judge.
5. Graduation
6. Dismissal of charges.

Relapse/ Trigger Prevention

Relapse and triggers can happen at any time in many different ways. Your case managers and treatment program will help you identify them and discuss ways to prevent and work through them.

Relapse triggers can include:

- hanging around with people who are drinking and drugging
- going to places where you used to use.
- spending time thinking about the parties and forgetting about the problems that you created
- fighting with loved ones
- good luck
- bad luck
- medicine, even prescribed that can get you high.

Remember:

For people in recovery triggers are not an excuse to use they are a reason to go to a meeting, to call a recovering friend and to get more support.

Alcoholics Anonymous/ Narcotics Anonymous: An AA/NA schedule can be obtained from the Treatment Court, your case manager and/or your treatment provider. You can also call the following numbers listed below to find a meeting.

MEETINGS ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE COURT

Alcoholics Anonymous: 463-5011
Narcotics Anonymous: 472-5555