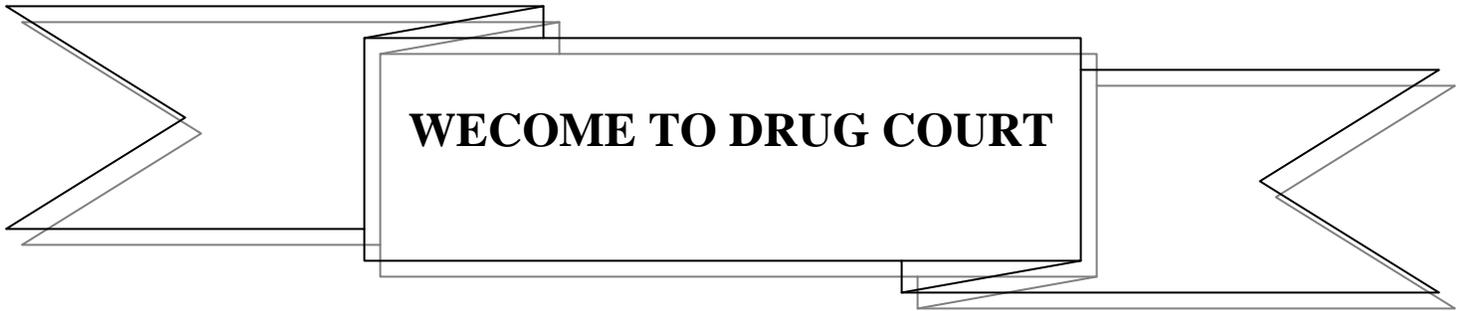


ANGELINA COUNTY DRUG COURT PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK Guidelines and Program Information

The Mission of the Angelina County Drug Court program is to equip, encourage, and empower substance-dependent citizens and their families to achieve their highest level of productivity and self-fulfillment through judicially unconventional supervision and personal accountability to strengthen their education if necessary to achieve gainful employment for the betterment of our community.



WELCOME TO DRUG COURT

This handbook is designed to:

- ◆ Provide information about Drug Court
- ◆ Answer questions
- ◆ Address concerns

As a participant in Drug Court, you will be required to follow the instructions given in court each week by the Judge, and comply with the treatment plan developed by your Community Supervisor (Probation) Officer, and Treatment Counselor. This handbook will explain what is expected of you. It will also provide general program information.

Ask your Probation Officer or Counselor to explain anything in this handbook that you do not understand! You are responsible for knowing this information!

WHAT IS DRUG COURT?

DRUG COURT is a special program in the Angelina County Judicial System. It is an intensive court-supervised program for those charged with a felony offense that is non-sexual, non-violent, and have a substance-abuse addiction.

DRUG COURT involves weekly court appearances, random drug testing, as well as individual and group counseling. DRUG COURT awards incentives for compliant behavior and imposes sanctions for negative behavior. All of the staff working in DRUG COURT will assist you to be sure you understand what is expected of you.

DRUG COURT has been developed to help you achieve total abstinence from illicit and illegal drugs. The program is designed to promote self-sufficiency and to return you to the community as a productive and responsible member. The program is voluntary. It is your choice to take part.

THE DRUG COURT TEAM

DRUG COURT is a unique non-adversarial program that involves working with a team of individuals who are all dedicated to your recovery. The Drug Court team consists of:

- ◆ District Judges
- ◆ District Attorney
- ◆ Defense Lawyer
- ◆ Community Supervision (Probation) Officer
- ◆ Therapeutic Officers (Treatment Counselors)
- ◆ Drug Court Coordinator

The program is voluntary and is your personal choice. The Team will be present to guide and assist you, but the final responsibility is yours. You must be motivated to make this change and commit to a drug free life.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT DO I DO?

DRUG COURT participants are required to sign a contract. This contract is an agreement between you and the Judge. It explains what is expected of you and what will happen if you do not follow the rules. Before you sign the contract you will have an opportunity to review it and have your questions answered. DRUG COURT participants are required to attend court, meetings, and treatment sessions as directed by your Judge, Community Supervision Officer, and Therapeutic Officer, and REMAIN DRUG FREE.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN DRUG COURT?

In order to graduate from DRUG COURT, you must maintain 24 months of continuous sobriety. 12 in Part I and 12 in Part II, which is less restrictive.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Participating in DRUG COURT will cost you \$60 monthly probation fees plus victim's restitution, if applicable. Other fines are waived. You will be charged for contested positive drug tests. If you continue to relapse and start over in Phase I, under some circumstances, you may have to pay for your counseling sessions.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Dismissal of Your Charges

Successful completion of DRUG COURT will result in having the original charge(s) dismissed provided all fees and restitution are paid.

DRUG COURT gives you the opportunity to:

- ◆ Develop Job Skills and remain employed
- ◆ Rebuild Family and Community Ties
- ◆ Maintain a Healthy Body and Mind
- ◆ Live a Drug and Crime Free Life!

A New Beginning

DRUG COURT offers you the chance to move forward in your life. Remember, there are many people who make up the DRUG COURT Team and they all want to see you succeed. If you take advantage of the assistance offered, you will discover many ways to make better life for yourself.

While we recognize that addiction is a terrible disease, it is important for you to remember that you are in DRUG COURT because of criminal behavior.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

“There’s no elevator, you have to take the steps.”

Our treatment plan begins with an Orientation followed by 3 phases of Part I. Each phase consists of treatment goals, activities, and requirements that you must meet in order to have your case dismissed.

In all phases you must:

- ◆ Meet weekly with your Probation Officer and Treatment Counselors
- ◆ Attend Court once a week OR as Directed by the Judge
- ◆ Follow your Treatment Plan as Directed, including random Drug Testing

**YOUR TREATMENT TEAM WILL RECOMMEND TO THE JUDGE
WHEN YOU ARE READY TO MOVE INTO THE NEXT PHASE.**

Remember: If you miss appointments, fail to stay away from drugs and alcohol or ignore other requirements, you WILL be sanctioned!

ORIENTATION

After you have been screened and approved by the DRUG COURT Probation Officer, you will offer a plea bargain before the Judge and await his approval or your request for Drug Court. Once the Judge has agreed, you will appear in DRUG COURT the next Thursday night at 7:00 p.m. The Judge will introduce you to your Therapeutic Officer who will instruct you when and where to report for a treatment assessment and your first counseling session. (You will be attending both group and individual sessions weekly) Additionally, your Treatment Counselor will inform you as to your substance abuse orientation session. Your Probation Officer will also set up an appointment for your weekly visit with him. You will be given a phone number and instructed to call every morning to determine if it is your day to submit to a UA test at the Probation office.

At first it seemed like such a hassle – going to court, going to counseling meetings, 12 step meetings, and meeting with my probation officer every week. But looking back, the time went by very fast. Now I’m done, and I can say, “IT WAS WORTH IT! IT REALLY DOES WORK!” Drug Court Graduate 2006

PHASE I - CHOICE

All participants in DRUG COURT enter in Phase I. Phase I begins after you sign the DRUG COURT contract. Phase I is focused on helping you:

- ◆ Work towards a drug and alcohol free life, and
- ◆ Secure a safe, supportive living environment, and
- ◆ Identify and seek help for any health or mental health problems

The Objectives include:

- ◆ Detoxification and abstinence
- ◆ Referral and admission into treatment

To advance to Phase II, you must meet all of the Phase I requirements, which include:

- ◆ Report to court once a week on Thursday night,
- ◆ Report to your Probation Officer once a week as scheduled,
- ◆ Participate in Substance-Abuse Orientation,
- ◆ Attend group counseling sessions as scheduled at the Burke Center,
- ◆ Attend individual counseling sessions as scheduled at the Burke Center,
- ◆ Secure a Sponsor,
- ◆ Bring your Sponsor and/or Mentor to meet the Judge,
- ◆ Attend community support groups (AA) twice a week,
- ◆ Participate in educational workshops as scheduled,
- ◆ Submit to random UA tests at the Probation Dept., and
- ◆ Remain abstinent from drugs and alcohol.

***Remember: Moving into the next Phase is dependent on
the CHOICES you make!***

PHASE II – CHANGE

Phase II will concentrate on:

- ◆ Stabilizing you in treatment,
- ◆ Helping you confront underlying issues surrounding your addiction, and
- ◆ Motivating you to Change behavior.

Advance requirements to Phase III include:

- ◆ All of the requirements established in Phase I, PLUS-
- ◆ Being employed full-time or attending school full-time,
- ◆ Disassociating yourself from old people, places, and things,
- ◆ Remaining sober for at least seven months,
- ◆ Passing a DNA hair test for drugs, and
- ◆ A demonstrated sincere, positive effort towards achieving your new lifestyle.

All Phase II participants are expected to meet higher expectations. Relapses will be treated in a stricter manner. Consistent failed drug tests will result in a temporary disruption of the DRUG COURT program for a minimum ninety day residential treatment program.

Remember: moving into the next Phase is based on how you deal with the Changes of Recovery.

Phase III – Challenge

The focus of this phase is to:

- ◆ Help you rise to the Challenge of recovery as a way of life,
- ◆ Promote continued Challenges towards self-sufficiency while you reconnect with the community, and
- ◆ Take responsibility for your actions.

Graduation Requirements:

- ◆ All of the previous requirements of Phases I and II,
- ◆ Completion of GED, or training/vocational school,
- ◆ Payment in full of all probation fees related and restitution,
- ◆ Continued sobriety,
- ◆ Continued attendance in community support groups, and
- ◆ Enrollment in the 4Cs alumni organization.
- ◆ Submit a Graduation Application and attend an exit interview session

Now that you have made the *Choices*, made the *Changes*, and met the *Challenges*, you are ready for *Part II!*

PART II

The Second 12 months of Drug Court is very simple . . .

- Continue Attending Community Support Groups
- Participate in Drug Court 4Cs group twice a Month
- Report in Court to the Judge every Month
- Submit to Hair Strand Test every 3 Months & UAs as directed
- Continue Reporting to Probation Officer every Month and every other Month the last Six Months

GRADUATION – *A time to celebrate your accomplishments!*



Once you have completed all necessary requirements, you may be eligible to have your case dismissed and to graduate from DRUG COURT.

Recovery Requirements:

- ◆ Assuming responsibility for oneself
- ◆ Ability to make good choices

At Graduation you will . . .

invite your family and friends to join you for the ceremony and reception,
receive your dismissal papers for your felony charge signed by the Judge.

Life Change Requirements:

- ◆ Complete all Drug Court phases
- ◆ Progress towards your educational and career goals
- ◆ Continue attendance at Community Support Groups
- ◆ Continue participation in Drug Court as an Alumni
- ◆ Maintain sobriety FOR LIFE!

WHAT ARE THE RULES OF DRUG COURT?

As a Drug Court participant, you will be required to abide by the following rules:

➤ **Cease all drug related activity!**

You will not be permitted to use or sell drugs, nor associate with those who do. Alcohol is also considered a drug. Any relapse must be reported to your Treatment Counselor or Probation Officer.

Every morning, Monday-Friday, you will call Probation before 10:00 a.m. to determine if it is your day to report for random UA testing. You will also be drug tested during your probation appointment, and possibly at the courthouse or treatment center. Repeated relapses (positive UAs) may result in a Hair strand test, additional counseling, a weekend in jail, or being placed in a residential facility.

You are responsible for notifying your doctor that you are in the Drug Court program and request alternatives to narcotics for pain medicine. *All prescriptions must be reported to your Probation Officer. See Appendix A.*

You will not be permitted to continued relationships with acquaintances who use drugs, nor will you be permitted to allow any drug use in your home. Changing people, places, and things that are harmful to you, is the first step towards taking the path to recovery.

➤ **Follow Your Treatment Plan!**

You must attend all group and individual counseling sessions as directed by the Judge. You will also have a weekly appointment with your Probation Officer. Additionally, the Judge will instruct you on how many weekly meetings you must attend with local community support groups (these are usually faith-based 12 step programs that meet at night or during the lunch hour).

DRUG COURT RULES CONTINUED

Each person's Treatment Plan will vary depending on the length of their time in the program and their progress. It may also include educational life skills workshops or family/couples counseling.

If sessions are missed, sanctions may include double the number to make-up the following week, written summaries of special videos or educational presentations, community service hours.

➤ **Appear in Court Every Thursday Night**

You will be required to appear in front of the Judge weekly. At this meeting, the Judge will request that you report on your weekly progress. He may order you to find employment, see a doctor, or find a new residence. He may ask what lessons you have learned in your counseling sessions, and what challenges you have experienced. The Judge will not only monitor your compliance with his instructions, but also your attitude towards recovery.

It is during these weekly court appearances, that reward tokens are given for each month of sobriety, and sanctions are delivered too. Drug Court is held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday nights at the second floor of the County Courthouse. Please bring a mentor, sponsor, or a family member with you.



➤ **Be on Time!**

If you are late to an appointment, it may count as a missed appointment. If something comes up where you absolutely cannot attend something, CALL IMMEDIATELY and talk to a person! Leaving a recorded message does not count!

DRUG COURT RULES CONTINUED

➤ **Treat Others with Respect**

You will soon discover that the Drug Court Judge and his staff are concerned about your sobriety because we want to see you succeed in life! You will also find that many of the other participants will soon become life-long friends as you tackle this journey together. Remember to respect the opinions and feelings of others! Inappropriate behavior will be reported to the Judge and sanctioned.

➤ **Dress Appropriately**

This means to your weekly court appearance as well as to your appointments at the Probation Department (CSCD) and Treatment Centers. This includes shoes and belts. Do not wear clothes that are too revealing, ripped, or contain logos of alcohol/drug themes. Sunglasses and hats may not be worn in the courtroom.

➤ **Be Law Abiding**

You are required to refrain from any other violations of the law. For example, if you are driving, make sure it is only with a valid driver's license in a car that is insured! If you have community service hours from previous violations, or tickets to pay, those must be taken care of. Any new violations, tickets, or arrests will be sanctioned in Drug Court.

VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS

Failure to comply with Drug Court rules may result in Sanctions.

Violations:

- Missed Drug Tests
- Positive Drug Test
- Diluted Drug Test
- Missed Meetings or Appointments
- Missed Court Appearance
- Lying to the Judge!
- Additional Charges
- Failure to Complete the Judge's Instructions
- Inappropriate Behavior during any meeting
- Additional offenses while in Drug Court



Sanctions/Therapeutic Interventions:

- Community Service Hours
- Additional Counseling Sessions
- Increased Drug Testing
- Weekends in Jail
- Additional Educational Workshops
- Homework (written essays)
- 30-90 days in a Residential Treatment Facility
- Extension of sobriety date for increased time in program
- Anything else the Drug Court Team Deems Appropriate

WHY DRUG COURT?

THE BENEFITS OF DRUG COURT DISMISSAL:

- Your Felony case will be dismissed!
- Your Probation term could be as short as two years (two years sober!)
- You will have reduced Probation fines/fees
- You will have learned job skills and advanced in your education
- You will have better job prospects for more meaningful employment
- You will have learned to associate with people you can trust
- You will learn that your addiction will not prevent you from being a success!

CONSEQUENCES OF A FELONY CONVICTION:

- A Felony drug conviction causes housing difficulties with public housing and with apartment complexes that run criminal background checks.
- A conviction may cause you to lose your parental rights.
- You may be barred from getting a license in certain occupations, such as hairdresser, barber, law, insurance, bondsman, escrow agent or medicine. You may be barred from working in the fields of childcare, education, and health care.
- Immigration may deport you.
- You will lose your right to apply for citizenship.
- You will lose your right to vote in elections if you are convicted of a Felony offense.
- You lose your right to purchase or possess a firearm. No hunting with a firearm.

It's Your Choice.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Judge Paul E. White, 159 th District Court	639-3913
Melvin Hicks, Community Supervision and Corrections	633-7671
UA call-in number Monday-Friday at Probation	633-7699
Keith Smith, Therapeutic Counselor ADAC	634-5753
Donald Recker, Therapeutic Counselor, Burke Center	633-5602
Georgia Kimmey, Court Coordinator	676-3750
Substance Abuse Hotline	1-888-633-7699