



HAMILTON COUNTY DRUG  
COURT

Participant  
Handbook

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Welcome to the Hamilton County Drug Court this handbook is designed to answer your questions and provide overall information about the Drug Court Program. As a participant, you will be expected to follow the instructions given in Drug Court by the Judge and comply with the rules and regulations of both Drug Court and treatment.

This handbook will detail what is expected of you as a Drug Court participant. It will review general program information. If you are reading this handbook it means that you have been accepted into Drug Court based on a look at your history of drug use and other contact with law enforcement and it also means that we are confident that Drug Court will help you to learn how to make successful choices free of the influence of drugs.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*“To provide an alternative sentencing system that reduces recidivism through breaking the cycle of addiction and enhancing the offenders’ likelihood of success in society”*

## THE HAMILTON COUNTY DRUG COURT TEAM

The Drug Court Judge and Drug Court Team work together to make all decisions regarding your participation in the Drug Court Program. In addition to the Judge, the Drug Court Team consists of the following members:

Drug Court Judge	Rebecca Stern
Drug Court Coordinator	Elaine Kelly
State’s Attorney	Brian Finlay
Public Defender	Steve Brown
Case Managers	Jeff Hill
	John Cooper
CADAS Clinician	Cindy Black
Program Assistant	Crystal Couch
CADAS Liaison	Mary K Roberts
Community Corrections	Chris Jackson

## **PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

To successfully complete Drug Court, you are required to be involved in several activities which will benefit and sustain your recovery. As a participant in the Hamilton County Drug Court, you will be required to:

- Engage in substance abuse counseling.
- Attend frequent court sessions.
- Meet with Drug Court staff.
- Submit to random urinalysis and/or hair screenings.
- Attend 12 step meetings.
- Obtain and maintain contact with a same sex sponsor
- Obtain employment and/or attend school.
- Obtain your high school diploma or GED.
- Submit your self, residence and car to search.
- Pay your restitution, child support and court fines.

## **TREATMENT**

An initial plan will be developed for you by you and your counselor following an assessment of your problems and needs by a substance abuse specialist. The plan will act as a guide for your first phase in Drug Court; a more permanent treatment plan will be developed by your treatment providers and Drug Court Case Managers. This plan will help you set goals, select methods for meeting those goals, and develop target dates for achieving those goals.

Treatment is provided by CADAS located in North Chattanooga. The Hamilton County Drug Court has contract with CADAS for clients who can not pay for treatment. There is the expectation that as you advance in the Drug Court program that you do start paying for your housing within the OASIS half-way house.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Before your Drug Court hearing, the Judge will be given a progress report presented by your Treatment Provider and the Drug Court staff. The progress report will discuss your drug testing results, attendance, participation and cooperation in the treatment program, employment or other requirements that may have been imposed. The Judge may ask questions about your progress and discuss any problems you may be having. If you are doing well you may be rewarded with reduced program requirements or other incentives. If your progress reports show that you are not doing well, the Judge will discuss this with you and determine future action, which could include a sanction in order to help you remember your goals in the program. Sanctions can be anything from increased program requirements to jail custody.

## **DRUG COURT HEARINGS**

As a Drug Court participant, you will be required to appear in Drug Court on a regular basis. The number of times you must appear depends upon the phase of Drug Court you are currently in. Failure to appear will result in a warrant being issued for your arrest and detention in jail until you can appear before the court. If you have questions about your court appearances you may contact the Drug Court staff.

## **PHASES OF DRUG COURT**

The Drug Court program is a minimum of 14-months divided into 5 phases. A participant must successfully complete each phase before transitioning to the next phase.

### **PHASE ONE**

Length of phase: At least 90 days (12 weeks)

Requirements: Drug Court attendance weekly; at least two random urine tests per week; complete 28 day residential stay (if part of treatment plan) move to a sober living environment; attend Intensive Out-Patient counseling sessions; regular attendance at 12-Step meetings (a minimum of seven per week) ; start seeking employment or vocational training.

### **PHASE TWO**

Length of phase: A minimum of 90 days (12 weeks)

Requirements: Drug Court attendance every other week; at least two random urine tests per week; complete Intensive Out Patient; attend a minimum of five 12-step meetings; secure a permanent sponsor; actively paying restitution (if required), court fees, rent at OASIS (if required); maintain employment or continue education.

### **PHASE THREE**

Length of phase: A minimum of 90 days (12 weeks)

Requirements: Drug Court attendance every third week; random drug tests a minimum of once a week; attend a minimum of five 12-step meetings; actively paying restitution (if required), court fees, rent at OASIS (if required); maintain employment or continue education.

### **PHASE FOUR**

Length of phase: A minimum of 90 days (12 weeks)

Requirements: Drug Court attendance at least 1 time a month; random drug tests a minimum of once per week; attend a minimum of three 12-step meetings; actively paying restitution (if required), court fees, rent at OASIS (if required); maintain employment or continue education.

### **PHASE FIVE**

Length of phase: A minimum of 45 days (6 weeks)

Requirements: Mentoring other drug court participants; random drug tests as ordered by Court; secured permanent sponsor in self-help sobriety group; have a

permanent payment plan established for restitution and fines; stable employment or positive reports from vocational or educational program.

### **CURFEWS**

While on Phase I your curfew will be 8:00 P.M. this means you will be expected to be back at your residence no later than 8:00 P.M. As you progress through the program, curfew restrictions decrease and you will eventually be curfew free. If at any time it is felt that you are abusing your time, your curfew may become more restricted

Make sure that jobs you are applying for fall into your curfew times. We understand that there may be instances where you will be late home from work. Both Drug Court and OASIS have policies in place to accommodate such situations.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

State and federal laws require that your identity and privacy be protected. In response to these regulations, Drug Court, Drug Court staff and treatment providers have developed policies and procedures that guard your privacy. You will be asked to sign Consent for Disclosure of Confidential Substance Abuse Information. This disclosure of information is for the sole purpose of hearings and reports concerning your specific Drug Court case(s).

### **CASE MANAGEMENT**

As you enter Drug Court you will be assigned a Case Manager. This person will be your new best friend. Your Case Manager will help you as you progress through the program. You will meet with your Case Manager on a regular basis. These meetings are mandatory. If you are unable to keep your appointment, you must contact your Case Manager PRIOR to your appointment, not after you have missed it. Remember, you are not the only client your case manager has, so changing your appointment in non-emergency situations is not allowed.

### **12-STEP MEETINGS**

Attendance at 12-Step meetings is mandatory throughout the Drug Court program. These meetings are vitally important to your recovery. You will be required to provide written verification of your attendance to the Judge on at each court appearance.

While attending these meetings you will be required to obtain a same-sex sponsor. A sponsor is a 12-step member who has significant sobriety (a minimum of 12 months and who is working the 12 steps with their own sponsor), this person work through the 12 steps with you. When you first start attending these meetings, it is recommended that you collect several numbers from people who attend AA/NA/CMA meetings. This will form the basis of your support system until you can secure a permanent sponsor.

All meetings must be documented on a Drug Court meeting sheet. Your meeting sheet can **only be signed by the chair-person**, not random members of the meeting. You will submit your meeting sheet to the Judge at each court appearance. If you are unable to produce a meeting sheet it will be considered the same as not attending meetings and an appropriate sanction will be imposed. Your Drug Court peers are not permitted to sign your sheet. You are responsible for your meeting sheet, there is no reason for you to have possession of anyone else's meeting sheet..

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

Unless you are married, or are already in a "significant" relationship, no relationships of a romantic or sexual nature will be tolerated within the first twelve months of your recovery. You are in Drug Court to work on your recovery and your core issues, relationships are a distraction and take away your focus. If this is an area where you struggle, talk to your counselor, talk to you Case Manager or talk to your sponsor for guidance

### **VEHICLES AND DRIVING RESTRICTIONS**

In order to possess a vehicle while a Drug Court participant the following criteria must be met:

1. You must submit proof of a **VALID** Tennessee Drivers License to your case manager
2. You must submit proof of insurance to your case manager
3. You must submit a vehicle information sheet to you case manager

If you are unable to produce items 1 **and** 2 of these documents do not get behind the wheel of a car for ANY reason (including vehicle maintenance, moving the car to another parking space). There is **NO** excuse for an unlicensed/uninsured person to be driving a car.

### **CELL PHONES**

A cell phone is a luxury item and is not crucial to your recovery. You may only invest in a cell phone when you have taken responsibility for your other financial affairs. Make sure a cell phone is available in your budget and you obtain permission from your case manager before purchasing one. Once you have a cell phone, make sure your case manager knows your phone number immediately. If you change your cell phone number, make sure you let you case manager know.

Your cell phone is not to be used for taking and transmitting photographs of yourself or others. It is strongly advised that you do not let others use your cell phone, not even for a "quick call". Do not let your cell phone out of your possession. You are responsible for all calls, texts and pictures on your cell phone and sent from your cell phone. If at any time it is felt that you are abusing you cell phone, or are using your cell phone in or at inappropriate times, your cell phone will be confiscated.

## **EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA**

You must be employed within thirty days of completing residential treatment

1. Employment must be within Hamilton County. Employment outside of Hamilton County must be approved by the Drug Court and Treatment Teams.
2. Overtime must be approved by your Case Manager
3. Employment changes must be approved by your case manager prior to departing from one job and moving to the next place of employment.
4. If you are unable to secure employment within 30 you will be required to perform Community Service until you become employed. These days will increase the longer you are unemployed.
5. Any person not employed within the given time frame will be asked to produce evidence of their job searches
6. You will be required to produce your pay stub to your case manager during your scheduled appointments.

## **EDUCATION CRITERIA**

If you did not graduate High School or have not obtained your GED, you will be required to enroll in a GED at a approved location. You will be required to obtain your GED prior to graduating from Drug Court.

Before you are eligible to take the GED you will first complete what is called the TABE. The results from this test will determine your current educational standing. Do not be alarmed by these results, they are there solely as a guide line for studying, not as a measure of your intelligence. If it is determined that is not realistic for you to obtain your GED within 12 months, you will still be required to attend GED classes in order to improve your educational level.

If you did graduate High School or have obtained you GED, you may be encouraged to apply for a higher education, either at Chattanooga State for an Associate's Degree or vocational classes or at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga for a Bachelor's Degree.

## **DRUG COURT PROGRAM RULES**

As a participant you will be required to abide by the rules outlined in the participant contract, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Totally abstain from the use of illegal drugs and alcohol. Do not purchase alcohol or drugs for yourself or others. (This includes writing or picking up prescriptions for yours self or others)
2. Always tell the truth. This is crucial. If you are found to be untruthful, this may eventually result in your termination from the program. No matter what the truth is, you are **strongly** advised to tell it! (Hint—if a Team Member asks you a specific question—they already know the answer!)
3. Make NO threats towards staff or other participants. Inappropriate physical or verbal behavior will not be tolerated and will result in your termination.
4. Inform **all** treating physicians (including your dentist) that you are a **recovering addict** and may not take narcotic or addictive medication (see medication sheet for approved medications and instructions)
5. Attend all scheduled court sessions and treatment sessions
6. Submit to random drug testing when requested. A refused or missed drug screen will be considered a positive drug screen, and will be sanctioned appropriately
7. Do not associate with people who use or possess drugs or be in areas known to have drug activity.
8. Do not possess **any** weapons while in the Drug Court program.
9. Do not forge any documents such as 12 Step meeting sheets
10. Keep the Drug Court team and treatment providers informed of your current address and phone number at all times.
11. As a condition of participation in the Drug Court program, your person, property, place of residence, car or personal effects may be searched at any time with or without a warrant, and with or without reasonable cause, when required by a law enforcement officer or Drug Court staff.
12. Dress appropriately for court and treatment sessions.
13. No new tattoos or body piercing during your time in the Hamilton County Drug Court.

14. Do not attempt to split staff. The Drug Court team and Treatment team meet and talk on a regular basis.
15. Abide by all other rules and regulations imposed by the Drug Court Team and listed in the Hamilton County Drug Court Contract.
16. The rules of Drug Court are subject to change without prior notification.

### **DRESS CODE FOR COURT**

Program participants will be assisted with obtaining education and skills assessments and will be provided referrals for vocational training, educational, and/or job placement services. Drug Court's program for preparation for the workplace includes dressing appropriately for court. The participants will dress for court as follows:

- No tank tops, muscle shirts, crop-tops, starter jackets or shirts with obscene words or pictures.
- No clothes with language or pictures advocating tobacco, alcohol or drug use.
- No clothes with sexual connotations or flirtatious language
- No sagging (i.e., pants or shorts that hang below the waist)
- No unbuttoned shirts
- No shorts, even in the summertime
- No hats, caps or bandanas
- No gang attire or colors of any kind
- No phones or pagers in the courtroom
- No mini skirts
- No underwear of any kind is to be seen
- No facial or tongue jewelry may be worn

If the participant wears any of the above to the courtroom, you will be sent home and it will be counted as a court absence and appropriate sanctions imposed.

**COMPLIANCE WITH DRUG COURT RULES WILL RESULT IN  
INCENTIVES CALLED "REWARDS", FAILURE TO COMPLY  
WITH RULES MAY RESULT IN SANCTIONS.**

### **REWARDS**

Upon the recommendation of the Hamilton County Drug Court Team, participants may be given rewards or incentives for compliant behavior. Common rewards may be as follows:

- In court praise, encouragement, applause or certificates of achievement.
- Reduced frequency of status hearings.
- Decreased urinalysis testing.
- Reduction of pending fines and fees.

- Selecting something from the “goody bag” which has pens, pins, t-shirts, movie pass, gift certificates to restaurants, etc.
- Promotion to next Phase, reduced time in your current Phase.
- Restoration of lost privileges because of relapse or some other infraction.

## **SANCTIONS**

You may wonder how you will be held accountable. If you do not do what is required by Drug Court, this is what may happen:

- Warning from the team.
- Reading/writing assignments.
- Letter of apology to the court and/or your peers
- Increase the number of self-help group meetings you must attend each week.
- Sit in the court for the entire morning or day or more than one day, writing about the experience, and giving the report to the Court (cigarette breaks are not allowed)
- A curfew will be imposed.
- Perform public service work or Sheriff’s work detail.
- Increased frequency of status hearings.
- Increased urinalysis testing.
- Increased frequency of contacts with Drug Court staff.
- Extension of duration in Hamilton County Drug Court program.
- More intensified outpatient treatment; i.e. more sessions per week.
- Change of outpatient treatment to inpatient treatment.
- Community Corrections
- Serve a work release sentence.
- Last participant at the next court date.
- Demotion to previous Phase.
- Jail for an undetermined amount of time.
- Instant jail or incarceration until a residential bed is available.
- Termination from the program

This list is not conclusive, the Drug Team does its best to fit the sanction to the individual requirements

## **TERMINATION FROM DRUG COURT**

Warrants, new arrests or a violation of any aspect of your treatment plan will result in you being terminated from the Drug Court Program. Other violations, which may result in sanctions or a termination hearing, include the following:

- Dishonesty.
- Positive/diluted urine test or failure to submit urine sample.
- Unexcused absence and/or absences from counseling session or support group.
- Failures to follow treatment conduct rules.

- Willful failure to pay fees, as ordered.
- Failure to attend scheduled status hearings without just cause.
- Curfew violation.
- Charged with any new offense (you may reapply once the new charge has been satisfied).
- Failure to comply with Court, Drug Court staff and/or treatment provider's recommendations.
- Leaving the jurisdiction without permission of the Drug Court team.
- Failure to attend self-help group per treatment plan recommendation.
- Other violations, which **will result in an automatic termination**, include the following:
  - Possession or delivery of drugs.
  - Violent or abusive behavior at treatment site, program site, or other place of contact or participation.

If you do pick up a new charge, you will be removed from the Drug Court program until such time as the new case has been resolved. However, if you are interested in remaining in the Drug Court Program, let your case manager know immediately. Such a request may result in a suspension from the program rather than a termination from the program.

#### **RULES FOR WHERE YOU CAN LIVE WHILE IN DRUG COURT**

- You are expected to live in Hamilton County while participating in the Drug Court program. If there is a situation where this is not immediately possible, permission must be granted prior to moving outside of the county.
- You will turn in your new address to your case manager **PRIOR** to moving there. Approval for your new address is mandatory.
- If you are thinking about moving from your current address, you must let your case manager know prior to giving in notice.
- If you are thinking about changing your curtains, discuss this with your case manager.

#### **TIPS ON HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE HAMILTON COUNTY DRUG COURT**

1. Keep all your appointments and make all court appearance. Making appointments is as important as coming to court. If you have problems remembering your appointments and court dates, use the notebook given to you. Write the dates down!!!
2. Plan your schedule (work, school, treatment) in advance.
3. If you have a problem making early morning appointment, go to bed early, and buy an alarm clock.
4. Know your treatment schedule as well as you know your date of birth.
5. If you absolutely cannot make an appointment or court appearance, call before not after.

6. Plan ahead. If transportation is a problem, have a back-up plan to get to where you have to be. Failure to have adequate transportation is not an acceptable excuse.
7. Keep all your paperwork. Do not throw anything away.
8. Be honest. Honesty is essential to your recovery.
9. Carry a photo ID with you at all times.
10. If you are unsure about ANYTHING—ask a staff member before you act!
11. Try to remember that **everyone involved in Drug Court wants you to succeed**; we are not trying to trick or trap you. There is no benefit to the program for your failure.

#### **Courtroom rules and Behaviors:**

1. You will not bring any food or drink into the courthouse or chew gum while in the courtroom
2. The Judge shows you respect, likewise you will show the utmost respect to the Judge when in the courtroom. Speak appropriately and clearly enough so everyone can hear you.
3. You will not talk in the courtroom during Drug Court session.
4. You will remain in the courtroom until dismissed by the Judge.

#### **GRADUATION**

Upon your successful completion of a treatment program and satisfaction of all other court requirements including continued sobriety, you will have a graduation ceremony from Drug Court. Graduation from Hamilton County Drug Court is recognized as a very important event. Your loved ones will be invited to join you at a special ceremony as the Drug Court Team congratulates you for successfully completing the Drug Court Program and achieving your goal to establishing productive and a drug-free life.

#### **CHEMICAL TESTING**

You will be drug tested randomly throughout your entire Drug Court Program. All participants are to check the drug testing schedule EVERY day (Monday through Sunday) by calling **423.209.7570** before 8:30 A.M.

Participants must be tested the day they are told to come in for testing.

You will be directly observed by a person of the same gender to ensure a true clean collection.

If you miss a drug test, it will count as a positive (dirty) test. If you have a positive test in any drug court phase, the Judge, based on recommendations from the Drug Court staff or treatment staff, will apply immediate sanctions including time in jail to help you stop your drug using behavior.

Participants who feel the test done on site is incorrect, must immediately tell the Drug Court staff they want the urine sample sent out for a confirmation test ( A \$50

fee will be charged if this sample returns a “positive” result). Diluting or falsifying urine samples will result in a sanction.

### **CONCLUSION**

The goal of the Hamilton County Drug Court is to help you achieve a life free of dependence on mind-altering substance. The Judge, and the Drug Court Team are here to guide and assist you, but the final responsibility is yours. To succeed, you must be motivated to make this commitment to a drug free life.

### **USEFUL NUMBERS**

Drug Court Coordinator	Elaine Kelly	423.209.7573
District Attorney	Brian Finlay	423.209.7400
Public Defender	Steve Brown	423.634.6374
Case Managers	Jeff Hill	423.209.7571
	John Cooper	423.209.7581
Program Assistant	Crystal Couch	423.209.7582
Treatment	Cindy Black	423.756.7644
Community Corrections	Chris Jackson	423.493.9268
CADAS		423. 756.7644
Alcoholics Anonymous		423.499.6003
		423.267.0823
		800.851.3291
Narcotics Anonymous		423.899.6500

