



**Family Dependency Treatment Court  
of Hancock County  
Participant Handbook**

**Judge Kristen K. Johnson**

**Hancock County Juvenile Court**

308 Dorney Plaza

Findlay, Ohio 45840

## **Welcome!**

This is your handbook for the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court (FDTC). Please read it carefully, as this handbook details your rights and responsibilities for this specialized docket program. If you have any questions about its contents, please ask the Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator.

The mission of the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court is to provide collaborative evaluation and treatment services for substance abusing parents who have lost, or are at risk of losing, custody of their child(ren) due to abuse, neglect, or dependency. These intensive services will be provided with the expectation that parents will attain sobriety, safety, and expedite reunification with their children. The Family Dependency Treatment Court is designed to provide you with an opportunity to assist you in becoming abstinent from drugs and alcohol and live a healthier lifestyle for yourself and for your child(ren).

There are numerous resources that you will have access to by participating in this program including, but not limited to, a range of alcohol and drug treatment services, case management services to assist with linkage to local services, and incentives.

Our treatment team will administer a series of validated screening and assessment tools to determine your eligibility into our program, and based on the results, will place you in our program based on your risks and needs. Please expect to fully participate in this program for a minimum of twelve (12) months. There is no guarantee that you will complete the program within this minimum timeframe, as progression through the program is not based solely on a predetermined timeline. You may earn additional time in the program if you fail to maintain abstinence, obtain new charges, or do not complete all of the requirements of the program including your mental health and/or drug and alcohol treatment plans.

Other basic requirements of the Hancock County Family Dependency Court that you will be expected to follow include:

- Attend status review hearings;
- Attend appointments with the providers and case managers;
- Attend appointments with the coordinator and/or probation officers;
- Submit to frequent and random alcohol and drug screens;
- Comply with sanctions for infractions;
- Engage in a sober support community.

## **Criteria of Eligibility for the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court**

### **Legal Eligibility Screening**

1. *Written legal eligibility criteria*- refers to the types of cases that may make an individual legally eligible for the treatment court program. The criterion includes:

- Must be an adult of Hancock County.
- A parent/guardian of child(ren) whom Hancock County Children Services has filed a complaint of abuse, neglect, or dependency.
- Have risk factors identified on the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN) that indicate their need for the program.
- Violent and sex offense cases will be carefully reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

2. *Written legal ineligibility criteria*- refers to cases that may make an individual legally ineligible for the program and are disqualifying factors. These factors include:

- Charges involving sex crimes.
- Charges involving the use of a weapon.
- Violent offenses involving a victim with a serious injury.

If the potential participant appears to be a candidate and meets legal eligibility criteria, then the potential participant is referred for clinical assessment.

### **Clinical Eligibility Screening**

1. *Written Clinical Eligibility Criteria*- refers to factors that make an individual clinically eligible for the treatment court program. These criteria are collaboratively developed, reviewed and agreed upon by the advisory committee. These factors include:

- Clinically assessed to be in need of an Intensive Outpatient level of care and as being drug and/or alcohol dependent and because of this dependency, cannot safely and effectively parent his/her child(ren).
- Cognitively able to participate voluntarily in the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court evaluation process, treatment recommendations, and all services and activities as deemed necessary.

2. *Written Clinical Ineligibility Criteria*- refers to factors that may make an individual clinically ineligible for the treatment court program. These factors include:

- Clinical diagnosis of a severe mental illness that would hinder the ability to complete program requirements.

- Clinical diagnosis of a developmental disability that would prohibit the client from completing program requirements.

### **No Right to Participate**

The written legal and clinical eligibility criteria and termination criteria do not create a right to participate in the Family Dependency Treatment Court.

### **Process for Entry into the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court**

1. **Participant Identification and Referral**- Informal referrals may come from HCJFS.
2. **Screening**- You will be screened within seven (7) days of referral to determine your legal eligibility into our program during a meeting with the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator (Coordinator).

During the screening meeting, the coordinator will:

- Explain the program requirements and expectations to the participant.
- Complete a GAIN assessment assessing the participant's need for the program.
- Assists participant in filling out/signing necessary paperwork and releases for participation in the program.
- Assists participant in setting up MH/AOD assessment with an MH/AOD provider.
- Informs MH/AOD provider of participant's name to expedite MH/AOD assessment.

During the screening meeting, the participant will:

- Submit to a baseline drug test.
- Voluntarily disclose criminal history, residency information, education, and employment, and family, medical, and other information during the GAIN assessment process.

3. **Clinical Assessment**- You will be scheduled to receive an in-depth, clinical assessment within seven (7) days of your legal eligibility screening that will determine your clinical eligibility to participate in our program. The coordinator will inform you of your scheduled appointment. If there are any issues with completing the clinical assessment, please contact the Coordinator immediately. If for any reason, you fail to complete the clinical assessment, acceptance into the program would be denied.

4. **Acceptance into Docket**- Your legal and clinical eligibility criteria is reviewed with the Treatment Court Team. If approved by the Judge, you will be required to appear at the next Treatment Court Status Hearing.

-The Family Dependency Treatment Court Docket Judge shall have the discretion to decide the participant's admission into the treatment court program in accordance with the written legal and clinical eligibility criteria for Family Dependency Treatment Court.

-The written legal and clinical eligibility criteria and termination criteria do not create a right to participate in the Family Dependency Treatment Court Program.

Once you have been advised of your acceptance into the program, you will be asked to acknowledge an understanding of responses to compliance and non-compliance with our program including criteria for termination.

You will be asked to meet with staff to complete necessary paperwork including releases/exchanges of information.

At this time, you have now entered into our program and officially been ordered into our Family Dependency Treatment Court. Your Jobs and Family Services case plan will be updated to reflect your admission into the Family Dependency Treatment Court program.

**You will appear at the next status review hearing. Status review hearings will take place at the Hancock County Juvenile Court before the Judge every Thursday at 2:00p.m., until completed.** *(Not all participants are required to appear at each status review hearing. Participant's progress and phase in the Family Dependency Treatment Court docket determines frequency).*

*Summary of Supervision and Treatment Requirements*

#### Supervision Requirements

Upon entry into the program, you will begin reporting to the Coordinator. The Coordinator will monitor your performance and progress throughout the program. You will report to the Coordinator as outlined in each treatment Court phase, your case plan, your treatment plan, and in any additional Court orders. Reporting to the Coordinator may be increased or decreased depending on your progression in the program. Changes of address, phone numbers, employers, etc., must be reported to the Coordinator within 24 hours. You are subject to random unannounced home visits that may entail a request for alcohol/drug screen.

## Treatment Requirements

Treatment services are individualized based upon the results of your clinical assessment and determined level of care and ongoing progress in the program.

Treatment services will be provided by licensed addiction professionals and clinicians. Treatment services may include: residential treatment, intensive outpatient treatment, individual treatment sessions, family therapy, gender specific programming, medication, medication monitoring, programming to address those who have been diagnosed with co-occurring disorders, and case management.

Ancillary services may also be required based on the individualized results of your clinical assessment and may include: education, vocational training, employment, transportation, housing, parenting classes, domestic violence programming, and physical, mental, and dental health services.

## **Your Treatment Team Members**

### **Judge**

The Judge is the leader of the treatment team. The Judge attends all treatment team meetings, monitors treatment progress, and is the decision-maker, especially concerning incentives, sanctions, phase advancement, and successful completion or unsuccessfully termination from the Family Dependency Treatment Court program. The Judge will discuss your progress with you at each status review hearing.

### **Defense Counsel**

*Defense counsel attends treatment team and the status review hearings upon your request. It is your responsibility to contact your defense counsel for attendance at the treatment team meetings and status review hearings. It is your right to request attendance of defense counsel during the portion of the treatment team meeting that concerns you.* The defense counselor provides input on incentives and sanctions, phase advancement, successful completion, or unsuccessful termination. The defense counsel may also assist the participant in advocating for themselves throughout their participation in the Family Dependency Treatment Court program.

### **Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator**

The Coordinator facilitates and participates fully in team meetings, provides input on incentives and sanctions, phase advancement, successful completion, or unsuccessful termination. The Coordinator is responsible for the administrative aspects of the program and directly oversees and maintains the daily operation of the Family Dependency Treatment Court of Hancock County, including meeting with any potential participants upon referral and gathering progress reports from treatment and service providers to present to the treatment team. The Coordinator

provides compliance monitoring of each participant along with coordinating the random alcohol and drug screens on a daily basis. The Coordinator makes recommendations, as well as presents each case in the Status Hearings.

### **Caseworker: Hancock County Job and Family Services**

The caseworker assists the treatment team with monitoring the parent's compliance on the agency case plan. The caseworker has the most contact with the parents outside of the program, including frequent home and office visits. The caseworker is in the best position to notify the Court of any compliance problems on the child protection case plan. The caseworker may also make recommendations for incentives and sanctions, program advancement, and graduation or termination.

### **Guardian Ad Litem**

The Guardian Ad Litem is an independent representative for the child(ren). They provide the voice of the child(ren) throughout the process. The role of the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) also becomes significant outside the family recovery docket if it is necessary for the Court to hear visitation, reunification, or other child protection issues on the regular dependency docket.

### **Licensed Treatment Providers**

Appropriately trained and licensed staff members of designated treatment agencies are responsible for the treatment element of the Family Dependency Treatment Court program. Clinicians from treatment agencies conduct treatment assessments, provide clinical diagnoses, and develop treatment plans for program participants. Treatment clinicians attend the treatment team meetings and status view hearings. The clinician provides progress reports to the treatment team and makes recommendations regarding rewards and sanctions, program advancement, and completion or termination from the program. Those who provide treatment for the specialized docket must be appropriately licensed and trained to deliver services.

### **Prosecutor/HCJFS or Child Protective Services (Now Known as Agency) Attorney**

The prosecutor usually has veto power regarding whether the parent enters the program. The prosecutor incorporates a non-adversarial approach while recognizing the distinct role of the prosecutor/agency attorney may file contempt charges as part of the sanctioning process. The role of the prosecutor also becomes significant outside the Family Dependency Treatment Court program at times which it is necessary for the Court to hear visitation, reunification, or other child protection issues.

## **What Happens During Treatment Team Meetings and Status Review Hearings?**

### **Treatment Team Meetings**

The Family Dependency Treatment Court team monitors your performance and progress through treatment team meetings. You have the right to request the attendance of your defense counsel during the portion of the treatment team meeting that concerns you. You are responsible for contacting your defense counsel with the request of attendance at the treatment team meeting.

Treatment Team meetings will take place prior to status review hearings every Thursday from 1:00 P.M. to 1:45 P.M. at the Hancock County Juvenile Court.

### **Status Review Hearings**

The Treatment Court Judge will have ongoing judicial interaction with you during regularly scheduled status review hearings. Status review hearings will be held in the presence of other program participants.

You are expected to appear at status review hearings so you are educated as to the benefits of complying with the Family Dependency Treatment Court docket and consequences for noncompliance.

You will appear before the Family Dependency Treatment Court docket judge weekly in the initial phase (Phase 1 or the Compliance Phase). As you progress, in later phases you shall appear regularly, as outlined in the attached phase requirement charts.

Every time that you appear in court, the Judge will give you Court orders. All Court orders will remain in effect until the Judge changes the orders. The Judge signs all entries and each participant receives a copy of the entry after each review. Each participant must sign an acknowledgement form after each review stating they received a copy of the entry.

If you fail to attend your scheduled status review hearing, you will be considered as "failure to appear" and an arrest warrant may be issued.

Status review hearings will take place before the Judge every Thursday at 2:00 P.M., until completed. The hearings are held at the Hancock County Juvenile Court.

### **Phases**

During the upcoming months, you will progress through various phases that will be individually determined according to your behaviors, choices, and your particular case situation. Your progression through the program is based on your performance in the treatment plan and compliance with phase requirements.

**Please be aware that phase progression is NOT based solely on pre-set timelines.**



All phases require that you begin treatment as soon as possible upon program entry and that you attend and participate thereafter. Furthermore, all phases require you to submit to at least three (3) random drug screens weekly, report for your scheduled review hearings, and meet all expectations and requirements as outlined in the phase chart.

## **Phases of Treatment**

### **Orientation Phase**

- Meeting with coordinator to review and complete the participation agreement and release of information forms.
- Reviewing the participant handbook.
- Attending initial specialized docket status review hearing.
- Introducing the participant to treatment team members, including: clinician(s), case manager(s), and others.
- Becoming familiar with the location of service providers and address any issues of transportation.
- Engaging in the treatment plan process.

### **Phase One- Compliance Phase**

Goals:

- Achieve abstinence.
- Achieve stabilization.
- Compliance with program expectations.
- Establish safety for family and dependents.

Expectations:

- Appear in status review hearings once per week.
- Provide drug/alcohol screens (minimum of three (3) times per week).
- Meet with Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator three (3) times per week.
- Follow case plan.
- Ongoing evaluations of needs, and address if necessary.
- Attend and participate in a minimum of three (3) pro-sober meetings per week.

- Attend and participate in treatment as recommended (minimum of nine (9) hours per week).
- Comply with all Court orders.
- Medication compliance.
- Participate in family team meetings.
- Cooperate with GAL, JFS, HCJFS.
- Cooperate with treatment.

#### Achievements

- Meet all Phase One Expectations.
- Written essay to identify goals and plan to reach them.
- Complete GAIN Assessment.
- Recommendation from Treatment Team.
- Twenty-one (21) consecutive days negative/clean/sober.

#### **Phase Two- Engagement Phase**

##### Goals:

- Maintain abstinence.
- Maintain stability and safety.
- Engage in the recovery process.
- Develop and participate in sober pro social activities.
- Enhance parenting skills.

##### Expectations:

- Appear in status review hearings every other week.
- Provide drug/alcohol screens (minimum of three (3) times per week).
- Meet with Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator three (3) times per week.
- Obtain a recovery coach.
- Develop an educational/vocational/employment plan.
- Begin to develop/re-establish sober peer relationships.

- Attend and participate in a minimum of three (3) pro-sober meetings per week.
- Follow case plan.
- Attend and participate in treatment as recommended (minimum of six (6) hours per week).
- Attend and participate in approved parenting program.
- Comply with all Court orders.
- Develop reliable and team approved transportation plan.
- Cooperate with GAL and HCJFS.
- Participate in family team meetings.
- Medication compliance.

#### Achievements

- Meet all Phase Two Expectations.
- Written essay of progress with goals and plan.
- Recommendation from Treatment Team.
- Thirty (30) consecutive days negative/clean/sober.

### **Phase Three- Growth and Development Phase**

#### Goals

- Maintain abstinence.
- Maintain stability and safety.
- Practice recovery tools.
- Capacity to support self and children.

#### Expectations

- Appear in status review hearings every three (3) weeks.
- Provide drug/alcohol screen (minimum of three (3) times per week).
- Maintain and keep contact with recovery coach.
- Attend and participate in minimum of three (3) pro-sober meetings per week.
- Meet with Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator two (2) times per week.
- Follow case plan.

- Medication compliance.
- Attend and participate in treatment as recommended (minimum of three (3) hours per week).
- Develop relapse prevention plan.
- Continue progress on educational/vocational plans.
- Continue to participate in sober activities.
- Maintain sober relationships.
- Work with family coach as needed.
- Comply with all Court orders.
- Cooperate with GAL, and HCJFS.
- Maintain team approved reliable transportation.
- Participate in family team meetings.

Achievements:

- Meet all Phase Three expectations.
- Written essay of relapse prevention plan and achievements.
- Recommendation from treatment team.
- Demonstrate capability to care for self and children.
- Sixty (60) consecutive negative days/clean/sober.

**Phase Four- Maintenance Phase**

Goals:

- Demonstrate recovery skills.
- Maintain stability and safety.
- Maintain capability to support self and children.
- Maintain relapse prevention plan.

Expectations:

- Appear in status review hearings one (1) time per month.
- Meet with Family Dependency Treatment Court Coordinator two (2) times per week.
- Provide drug/alcohol screens (minimum of three (3) times per week).

- Utilize relapse prevention plan.
- Attend and participate in a minimum of two (2) pro-sober meetings per week.
- Continue involvement with recovery coach.
- Continue with educational/vocational plan.
- Follow case plan.
- Maintain sober peer relationships.
- Engage in treatment/aftercare as recommended.
- Comply with all Court orders.
- Medication compliance.
- Work with family coach if needed.
- Sustain permanent housing.
- Maintain team approved reliable transportation.
- Participate in family team meetings.

#### Achievements:

- Meeting and maintain goals and expectations of Phase Four.
- Written essay of what changes have occurred, aftercare plan, and future story.
- Recommendation for graduation by treatment team.
- One Hundred, Twenty (120) consecutive days negative/clean/sober.

**Only the Judge determines when the participant has complied with the program requirements and successfully completed the program.**

#### **Graduation**

Graduation ceremonies are a celebration of the participant's successful completion of all Family Dependency Treatment Court requirements. The Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court celebration consists of a ceremony in open Court. The celebration provides a specific time for the team, the participant, the participant's family, and current program participants to acknowledge the work and success of the participant and to support the participant's future endeavors.

## **Aftercare**

Once a participant successfully completes all phases of Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court, the following requirements are expected:

- Continued abstinence.
- Keep child(ren) free from abuse and neglect.
- Participate in Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court follow up contacts and surveys.

## **Incentives**

Incentives are individualized according to the specific treatment plan and directly related to the participant's achievements as certain milestones of the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court treatment plan are obtained. Incentives are designed to reward hard work and compliance with program rules and phase expectations.

Examples of behavior that could be rewarded with incentives include:

- Attending all required Court hearings.
- Attending all required treatment appointments.
- Maintaining close and productive contact with Coordinator, case worker, and treatment provider.
- Reaching individual treatment objectives.
- Abstaining from alcohol and drugs, as evidenced by negative results.
- Engaging in vocational or education activities.
- Advancing in Family Dependency Treatment Court phases.
- Accomplishing any other milestone identified by the team.

The following are types of incentives that you may receive for good behavior:

- Gift Certificates.
- Achievement Certificates.
- Verbal praise from the bench.
- Recognition dinner.
- Decrease in frequency of meetings with Coordinator.

**Please remember that rewards and incentives are not mandatory for the Court to give to you and must be earned through your constant willingness to go that extra mile in your recovery and are given on a case-by-case basis. This program is designed to empower participants to solve their own problems utilizing strengths and resources in each household. Always keep in mind that the ultimate reward received if you complete Family Dependency Treatment Court can be you living a clean and sober life.**

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions are immediate, graduated, and individualized and are used as teaching and guidance for behavior improvement in response to a participant's non-compliance. Please note the response to non-compliance includes termination from the program.

Examples of non-compliant behaviors include:

- Failing to attend Court hearings, and treatment appointments.
- Failing to follow specialized docket rules.
- Failing to keep scheduled appointments with the Coordinator, case manager, or other team members.
- Not complying with other requirements of the treatment plan.
- Not complying with random alcohol and drug screens or testing positive for alcohol and drugs.
- Failing to improve troublesome behaviors.
- Failure to keep confidentiality of other participants.
- Failure to comply with sanctions.
- Obtaining new criminal charges.

Graduate responses to non-compliance will be based on the severity and circumstances surrounding the action and given on a case by case basis

Some examples of responses include:

- Verbal reprimand from the bench.
- Written essay/read and report in Court.
- Homework assignment.
- Increased reporting to Coordinator.
- Loss of privileges/group activity.

- Increased drug screens.
- Increased home visits.
- Daily reporting.
- Journal Writing.
- Any combination of sanctions.
- Community Service.
- Increased Court appearances.
- Reduction of phase level.
- Contempt.
- Termination from Treatment Court.

### **Termination**

Behaviors that could lead to unsuccessful termination include:

- Ongoing non-compliance with treatment or resistance to treatment.
- New criminal charge or serious violent activity.
- A serious Family Dependency Treatment Court docket infraction or series of infractions.
- Long term inability to provide negative drug and/or alcohol screens.
- New allegations of physical or sexual abuse of a child.
- Participant fails to embrace or engage in substance abuse recovery, good mental health, and personal growth.
- Participant continues willful non-compliance with program goals and expectations.
- Participant poses a risk of health and safety to other participants.

Effects of unsuccessfully termination include:

- Loss of eligibility for specialized docket
- Further legal action, including contempt and JFS filing a Motion for Permanent Custody.
- Depending on the circumstances, the participant may be subject to jail and other penalties.



## **Termination/Discharge Hearings**

You may be terminated or neutrally discharged from the Hancock County Family Dependency Treatment Court program upon recommendations by the Family Dependency Treatment Court team. The case will be set for a hearing and the team will present its recommendation to the Judge, who has discretion to decide termination from the specialized docket in accordance with the termination criteria.

## **Substance Use Monitoring**

You will be expected to submit to a drug screen on a random, weekly basis (minimum of three (3) times per week). You will submit to frequent, random, and observed alcohol and drug screens. All alcohol and drug testing is individualized based on your needs to include your primary substance of dependency, as well as a sufficient range of other substances.

The participant will contact the Coordinator daily to inquire whether or not they are expected to submit a screen that day. When the participant is informed that he/she needs to provide a sample, it is their responsibility to report for their drug screen.

At each treatment team meeting, the results of substance monitoring tests will be provided to all present team members. Testing positive will result in an immediate notification to the Judge and be immediately sanctioned.

The following acts will be treated as positive tests and immediately sanctioned:

- Failing to submit to a test.
- Submitting an adulterated sample.
- Submitting another individual's sample.
- Diluting the sample.

Being in possession of alcohol, illegal substances and/or paraphernalia is considered the same as using such substances and will be deemed positive and immediately sanctioned.

Please note: At the time of a positive test during intake, the results will be used as a baseline and will not be counted against you. If you relapse while in the program, the treatment team may consider an adjustment in treatment and/or the possibility of sanctions. The adjustment in treatment may include, but is not limited to, increased level of care, more frequent drug screens, increase number of required support group meetings and/or homework assignments. Any change in the treatment plan and/or sanction are enforced and reinforced by the Judge.

**If a participant tests positive on an alcohol or drug screen and wants to have the specimen re-tested for confirmation, the participant will find an independent lab to test the specimen at his or her own cost within ten (10) business days of testing positive (when denying use).**

**It should be understood that if the retest is determined positive, there will be an immediate court sanction. If the confirmation test confirms substance use, then a more severe sanction may be issued for the deception, as well as the standard sanction for testing positive.**

You are responsible for traveling to the requested location when asked to provide a drug screen. You will be expected to arrive promptly for drug testing. Drug screen must be submitted within thirty (30) minutes of notification.