



**DAUPHIN COUNTY
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
MENTAL HEALTH COURT**



PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

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Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas Mental Health Court. This Handbook is designed to answer your questions and provide overall information about the Mental Health Court Program.

As a participant, you will be expected to be open, honest, truthful and to follow the instructions given in Mental Health Court by the Judge and comply with the treatment plan developed for you by your Treatment provider and Mental Health Court Team.

This Handbook will describe what is expected of you as a Mental Health Court participant. It will review general program information.

Overview

The Dauphin County Mental Health Court provides intensive supervision, judicial monitoring, and access to treatment for offenders whose crimes are related to their severe mental illness.

Mental Health Court coordinates appropriate and varying levels of treatment to its participants, including mental health, drug and alcohol, vocational, educational, life skills training, and other services to address issues which can contribute to mental illness and criminal behavior.

By participating in Mental Health Court, an offender can become a productive, responsible citizen and the community will become a safer place in which to live.

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COURT AND JUDICIAL SUPERVISION

You will be required to appear regularly in Mental Health Court to discuss and review your progress. If you cannot make your court date, you MUST call your probation officer, case manager or the coordinator as soon as possible to request permission to miss it. If you do not come to court, the Mental Health Court Judge may issue a Bench Warrant for your arrest.

During your participation in this program, the Judge and team will encourage and reward you when you are doing well in the program and will impose sanctions for not following rules and guidelines.

Incentives may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal recognition from Judge/team.
- Certificates of Recognition.
- Phasing up incentive.
- Recovery Points.
 - Used to purchase items such as gift cards from the "Recovery Store".
- Gift cards.
 - Such as \$5, \$10 or \$15 to a restaurant or store.
- Gift Certificates.
 - Such as \$5 off of fines, report first at court/leave early, or virtual check in.

Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- More frequent reporting to probation officer or to drug testing.
- Electronic Monitoring
- SCRAM
- Additional community service, volunteer, or program hours.
- Complete writing assignments/essays.
- Increase in reporting requirements to probation officer, case manager, and/or court sessions.
- Repeat one or more phases.
- Varying lengths of incarceration at Dauphin County Prison.
- Program termination/removal from Program.

DAUPHIN COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS MENTAL HEALTH COURT
PARTICIPANT CONTRACT

The Court has conditionally released you into the Dauphin County Mental Health Court (MHC) Treatment as a condition of supervision. You are required to comply with the contract specifications as listed below. Additionally, you are required to comply with the Mental Health Court Rules and Regulations of Adult Probation and Parole Services as approved by the Court of Common Pleas.

1. I understand that the validity of this contract is conditioned upon my eligibility for the Mental Health Court Program. If at any time after the execution of this agreement and in any phase of the Mental Health Court Program, it is discovered that I am, in fact, ineligible to participate in the program, I may be immediately terminated from the program and sentenced at the discretion of the presiding judge. In the case of a guilty plea, I will not be allowed to withdraw my previously entered plea of guilty unless my ineligibility is based on facts or information which should have been known to the prosecutor prior to Mental Health Court admission, or upon constitutional grounds.

2. I understand that if I enter this program and fail to complete it, I may be barred from future participation in Mental Health Court.

3. I understand that participation in Mental Health Court involves a minimum time commitment of twelve (12) months and may include an aftercare component ranging from twenty-four (24) to thirty-six (36) months.

4. I understand that during the entire course of the MHC Program, I will be required to attend court sessions, treatment sessions, submit to random drug testing, remain sober and refrain from incurring new criminal charges. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations imposed by the MHC Team. I understand that if I do not abide by these rules and regulations, I may be sanctioned and/or terminated from the program. For the purposes of regular Mental Health court review hearings, I agree to waive my right to have my attorney of record present. I understand that my case may be discussed without my attorney or the prosecutor present.

5. I understand that sanctions may include incarceration, increased supervision,

increased court appearance, increased drug testing, remaining in a particular phase, demotion to a previously completed phase, and/or other sanctions as may be deemed necessary by the MHC Team. Failure to complete a sanction or assignment may result in additional sanctions and/or termination from the program.

6. I agree to cooperate in an assessment/evaluation for planning an Individualized Supervision/Treatment Plan which may include but not limited to housing, therapy, drug/alcohol treatment, medications, and structured programming. I understand my treatment plan may be modified by the treatment provider or the MHC Team as circumstances arise, and I agree to comply with the requirements of any such modifications.

7. I understand that by participating in a therapeutic and problem-solving court, the presiding judge may initiate, permit, or consider *ex parte* communication while assuming a more interactive role with me, treatment providers, social workers and the members of the MHC Team. As a participant of a therapeutic and problem-solving court, I consent to the possibility of *ex parte* communication during my involvement in the MHC program.

8. I agree to inform any law enforcement officer that contacts me that I am in MHC. I understand that I may not work as a confidential informer with any law enforcement agency while I am participating in the MHC program, nor may I be made or encouraged to work as a confidential informant as a condition of my full participation in the MHC program. I may not participate in MHC if I am currently an affiliated gang member.

9. I must provide copies of all of my prescriptions to my probation officer and case manager. Any change in my medication regimen must be communicated to my Probation Officer and Case Manager within 24 hours.

10. I may be limited or prohibited from taking narcotic-based or addictive medication while in this program.

11. The use of non-prescribed or illegally obtained medications or controlled substances (as defined in the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act), or any use of medications (mind- or mood-altering substances) in violation of MHC policy may result in sanctions or removal/termination from the MHC program. The use of synthetic marijuana will result in immediate discharge from the MHC

program.

12. I understand that participating in Mental Health Court requires me to be drug and alcohol free at all times. I will not use alcohol or have alcohol in my place of residence. I will not associate with people who use or possess drugs, nor will I be present while drugs are being used or possessed by others. I understand that I will be subject to frequent drug and alcohol testing and a condition of my participation is providing such samples any time they are requested.

13. I will not leave any treatment program without prior approval of my treatment provider and the MHC Team.

14. I will sign releases of information for treatment providers to include those added at any point while in Mental Health Court.

Mental Health Court Rules and Regulations

1. I will comply with my Individualized Supervision/Treatment Plan. I understand that the Probation and Parole Regulations of Dauphin County Adult Probation & Parole Services, the terms of the Mental Health Court Participant Contract, and the Mental Health Court Rules and Regulations are part of my Individualized Supervision/Treatment Plan.

2. I will participate in any and all evaluations deemed necessary by the Mental Health Court Treatment Team, including but not limited to mental health evaluations, drug and alcohol evaluations, and evaluations for specific modes of treatment or treatment programs. I will comply with any directives or recommendations for counseling, therapy, medications, or other forms of treatment that may be identified or recommended following an evaluation.

3. I understand that treatment directives and recommendations are part of my Individualized Supervision/Treatment Plan. I will promptly inform the Mental Health Court Treatment Team of any changes in my treatment and any requests I make to my treatment providers for changes in my treatment (including, but not limited to, changes in medications prescribed for me). I will not change treatment providers without notice to and approval from the Mental Health Court Treatment Team.

4. I will take all medications prescribed for me and will do so in accordance with the instructions and directions of the prescribing treatment provider.

5. I will abstain from the consumption of alcoholic beverages. I will not have alcoholic beverages in my place of residence. I will not patronize or be employed at an establishment that sells alcoholic beverages unless approved by the Mental Health Court Treatment Team.

6. I will abstain from usage of illegal substances. I understand that I am subject to the drug testing policy of Dauphin County Adult Probation & Parole Services, and that my failure to provide a drug testing sample or failure to appear for drug testing when required to do so will be treated as a positive test result and a violation of my Individualized Supervision/Treatment Plan.

**COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, DAUPHIN COUNTY,
ADULT PROBATION & PAROLE SERVICES
Probation and Parole Regulations**

Participants may be subject to any or all of the following conditions as imposed by the Judge at sentencing. Below is a summary of the conditions participants may be required to abide by:

1. Do not violate and State, local or federal penal laws. In addition to enacted offenses under the respective Crimes Codes and municipal ordinances, it includes but not limited to, Protection From Abuse orders, Contempt orders or any such duly entered Court orders. You must notify your Probation/Parole Officer immediately upon being arrested. Refrain from overt and assaultive behavior that threatens or presents clear and present danger to yourself or others.
2. Maintain regular employment. If you become unemployed, promptly notify your Probation/Parole Officers. Comply with any request to obtain new employment, or to verify your present employment. Make monthly payments on fees, fines, costs, and restitution, so that they are paid in full at least two (2) weeks prior to the expiration for your period of probation/parole, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.
3. Attend education or vocational training and obtain GED.
4. Complete _____ hours of community service at a location approved by Probation Services.
5. As part of your court ordered evaluation(s) and treatment, you may be required by your Adult Probation/Parole Officer to comply, participate and assist in all aspects of the evaluative process. Authorize all medical releases necessary to aid in the evaluative as well as ongoing treatment, which includes your Adult Probation Officer so that they are abreast of your progress and needed support or restrictions. Any imposed treatment restrictions and/or requirements of ongoing treatment are included as conditions of your probation or parole and their conditions of supervision. Successful completion of said programming is required.
6. Successfully complete Inpatient at _____.
7. You may not possess, use, or have available to your control, or have in your place of residence or vehicle (owned or currently in use thereof), any firearms (handguns, rifles, shotguns, etc.), ammunition, and other dangerous weapons.
8. Make monthly payments on restitution so that the balance is paid in full within 2 weeks of your maximum term of supervision.
9. Must notify your assigned Probation/Parole Officer of any change in address or employment within 72 hours of said change.

10. Report as directed to the Adult Division of Probation Services and be prompt with your appointment. You must contact an Adult Probation Supervisor, (717) 780-6900, within fifteen (15) days of signing the acknowledgement at intake, at which time you will be advised of your assigned supervising Probation/Parole Officer. Follow the Probation/Parole Officers' instructions and advise.
11. You must not have any contact with your victim(s) or your victim(s) family. This includes direct and indirect contact, written correspondence, telephone contact or contact through a third party. You must immediately report to your Parole Agent and any incidental contact you have with any victim(s) or prohibited persons. Contact, for the purpose of this Condition and all other Conditions, is defined as follows: (1) actual physical touching; (2) writing letters, sending messages, buying presents, sending email or other use of social media, sending instant messages, sending text messages, calling on a telephone/cell phone/blackberry; (3) and verbal communication, such as talking, as well as nonverbal communication, such as body language (waving, gesturing, winking), sign language and facial expressions.
12. Submit to random and scheduled substance abuse screenings as directed by your assigned Probation/Parole Officer and refrain from ingesting any illegal substances. You may not use, possess, or manufacture any illegal drugs(s) or controlled substance(s), including, but not limited to synthetic marijuana, without a valid prescription or Medical Marijuana card.
13. Make monthly payments on fines so that the balance is paid in full within 2 weeks of your maximum term of supervision.
14. Received a Rehabilitative, Therapeutic, Occupational, Risk assessment (ORAS) and attend all recommended sessions stemming therefrom. Based on a review of that assessment, you may be directed by your Adult Probation/Parole Officer to attend and complete any of the following providers and their direction, of which you must comply
 - Concept 90
 - Geo Group
 - Other Service Provider may apply
15. An approved residence must be a dwelling suitable for human habitation. A post office designation is not acceptable, nor is any mobile vehicle or structure not affixed to land or lot. You must reside at your Approved Residence. You must not sleep or stay overnight at any other address or location without prior written permission your assigned Adult Probation/Parole Officer.

At the first scheduled home visit, a walk-through of the residence/property where you reside will be conducted to obtain a sketch of said residence/property. You must permit the Probation/Parole Officer to conduct the walk through. At subsequent visits to your residence/property, a basic walk through may be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that evidence of a violation of these rules is inside the residence/property. You may not move or change your approved residence without notifying your Probation/Parole

Officer. You must permit the Probation/Parole Officer of any alternate locations you may be residing. You must get written permission from your Probation/Parole Officer prior to traveling more than fifty (50) miles outside of Dauphin County.

16. Drug trafficking restrictions are imposed due to the circumstances of your offense and history. You are not permitted to own or possess police scanners or any other device capable of intercepting law enforcement communication. You may not have in your possession cash in excess of \$ 75.00 without validation of its source (paystub, ATM receipt, etc.). During supervision, a curfew may be imposed for up to 30 days by your assigned Probation Officer.

You may possess a cellular phone under the following conditions:

1. You may possess only one phone.
2. Your assigned Probation Officer must have the cellular phone number.
3. Should you change your number; you must provide that new number to your Probation/Parole Officer within 48 hours.
4. You must allow Adult Probation to view your phone (i.e. text messages, picture gallery, etc.) to check for any drug activity.
5. You must answer your cellular phone when called.

17. Special Conditions: _____.

YOUR PROBATION OFFICER WILL PROVIDE AN OFFICAL COPY OF YOUR CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION UPON BEING SENTENCED INTO THE PROGRAM.

MENTAL HEALTH COURT - Medical Marijuana Policy

Participants seeking entry into the Dauphin County Mental Health Court are strongly encouraged, due to the nature of the disease of addiction and the effects of medication on the brain, to consult with their treating physician and/or psychiatrist to seek non-addictive medications with no abuse potential to treat serious health conditions. The following are procedures that participants must follow to be placed, and remain, on prescription medications or medical marijuana.

Participants must identify one primary health care provider (PHCP) to coordinate health care needs and sign appropriate release for the Mental Health Treatment Court Team. The PHCP will be responsible for managing all the prescription medications with the exception of those participants being treated by a psychiatrist.

Participants must notify the Mental Health Treatment Court Team if they are prescribed or administered prescription drugs, medical marijuana, or any mood altering or controlled substance. Participants must also provide a copy of any prescription or certification to the Mental Health Treatment Court Team by the next scheduled court date and keep the medication in its original prescription container. In addition, the participant should expect verification (e.g., pill counts) to be completed by Adult Probation, either at random or if the Mental Health Treatment Court Team feels it is necessary.

Participants must fill all their prescription medications at one pharmacy. The participant must provide a quarterly printout documenting new prescriptions and/or refills from that pharmacy to the Mental Health Treatment Court Team.

Participants may be prohibited from using medical marijuana if it: (1) substantially impacts or interferes with other therapeutic treatment needs while in the program; and (2) the need for medical marijuana does not outweigh the substantial impact or interference.

Participants must obtain their medical marijuana from one dispensary. The participant must provide a quarterly printout documenting medical marijuana purchases from that dispensary to the Mental Health Treatment Court Team. Participants must consume and store medical marijuana in a manner provided by statute. Participants should expect compliance checks of their medical marijuana by Adult Probation, either at random or if the Mental Health Treatment Court Team feels it is necessary.

Participants must follow all laws for how medical marijuana is to be ingested. Participants must follow all policies and procedures set forth by Dauphin County Probation and Parole's Medical Marijuana Policy.

PROGRAM PHASE REQUIREMENTS

PHASE I:

- ✦ Report for Intake (Cross Systems Collaboration Meeting).
- ✦ Attend Mental Health Court weekly.
- ✦ Meet with assigned probation officer a minimum of once per week.
- ✦ Meet with assigned case manager a minimum of once per week.
- ✦ Adhere to approved Supervision and Recovery plans.
- ✦ Complete psychiatric evaluation.
- ✦ Attend all scheduled treatment appointments.
- ✦ Take all medication as prescribed.
- ✦ Participants with a co-occurring disorder must attend approved drug and alcohol counseling treatment.
- ✦ Comply with drug and alcohol testing (urine drug screens/breathalyzer) as directed.
- ✦ Remain free from the use of illicit substances.
- ✦ Complete 40 hours of a daily structured activity as directed; this could include: employment, volunteering, exercise regimen, mental health or recovery community support groups, and social programs. (Sanction hours do not count toward these hours.)
- ✦ Complete a Crisis Plan.
- ✦ Obtain stable housing.
- ✦ Obtain stable income.
- ✦ Establish payment plan and begin making payments.
- ✦ Other requirements made by team on an individual basis.

PROGRAM PHASE REQUIREMENTS

PHASE II:

- ✦ Attend Mental Health Court bi-weekly.
- ✦ Meet with assigned probation officer a minimum of once per week.
- ✦ Meet with assigned case manager a minimum of once per week.
- ✦ Adhere to approved Supervision and Recovery plans.
- ✦ Attend all scheduled treatment appointments.
- ✦ Continue to take all medication as prescribed.
- ✦ Participants with a co-occurring disorder must attend approved drug and alcohol counseling treatment.
- ✦ Comply with drug and alcohol testing (urine drug screens/breathalyzer) as directed.
- ✦ Remain free from the use of illicit substances.
- ✦ Complete 60 hours of a daily structured activity as directed; this could include: employment, volunteering, mental health or recovery community support groups, and social programs. (Sanction hours do not count toward these hours.)
- ✦ Maintain stable housing.
- ✦ Maintain stable income.
- ✦ Continue payment plan and making payments.
- ✦ Other requirements made by team on an individual basis.

PROGRAM PHASE REQUIREMENTS

PHASE III:

- ✦ Attend Mental Health Court tri weekly.
- ✦ Meet with assigned probation officer a minimum of once every two weeks.
- ✦ Meet with assigned case manager a minimum of once every two weeks.
- ✦ Continue to adhere to approved Supervision and Recovery plans.
- ✦ Attend all scheduled treatment appointments.
- ✦ Continue to take all medication as prescribed.
- ✦ Participants with a co-occurring disorder must attend approved drug and alcohol counseling treatment.
- ✦ Comply with drug and alcohol testing (urine drug screens/breathalyzer) as directed.
- ✦ Remain free from the use of illicit substances.
- ✦ Complete 80 hours of a daily structured activity as directed; this could include: employment, volunteering, mental health or recovery community support groups, and social programs. (Sanction hours do not count toward these hours.)
- ✦ Maintain stable housing.
- ✦ Maintain stable income.
- ✦ Continue payment plan and making payments.
- ✦ Identify a graduation or mentoring project, based upon strengths and interests per Mental Health Court Supervision plan.
- ✦ Other requirements made by team on an individual basis.

PROGRAM PHASE REQUIREMENTS

PHASE IV:

- ✦ Attend Mental Health Court once a month.
- ✦ Meet with assigned probation officer a minimum of once per month.
- ✦ Meet with assigned case manager a minimum of once per month.
- ✦ Continue to adhere to approved Supervision and Recovery plans.
- ✦ Attend all scheduled treatment appointments.
- ✦ Continue to take all medication as prescribed.
- ✦ Participants with a co-occurring disorder must attend approved drug and alcohol counseling treatment.
- ✦ Comply with drug and alcohol testing (urine drug screens/breathalyzer) as directed.
- ✦ Remain free from the use of illicit substances.
- ✦ Complete 100 hours of a daily structured activity as directed; this could include: employment, volunteering, mental health or recovery community support groups, and social programs. (Sanction hours do not count toward these hours.)
- ✦ Maintain stable housing.
- ✦ Maintain stable income.
- ✦ Continue payment plan and begin making payments.
- ✦ Complete payment of any restitution
- ✦ Complete graduation or mentoring project.
- ✦ Other requirements made by team on an individual basis.

COURTROOM ETIQUETTE AND DRESS CODE

There are to be no exchanges of money-loaning or gifting-between participants.

COURTROOM ETIQUETTE

- When you speak to the Judge, address him as "Judge Dowling" or "Your Honor".
- No talking or disruptions when seated.
- You may not leave the courtroom for any reason during unless given prior permission by the Judge.
- No chewing gum, eating candy or bringing food or beverages into the courtroom.

COURTROOM DRESS CODE

- No sleeveless shirts, strapless or halter tops.
- No shirts with obscene words, pictures, or language/ pictures of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
- No sagging pants (pants that hang below the waist).
- No unbuttoned shirts.
- No shorts, even in the summertime.
- No hats, caps, bandanas, or sunglasses.
- No gang attire or colors of any kind.
- If a participant wear any of the above to the courtroom, they may be sent home and it will be counted as a court absence and appropriate sanctions imposed.

