

Walworth County Family Treatment Court

Tier 1 and 2 Programs
Revised April 2020

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Welcome

Welcome to the Walworth County Family Treatment Court (FTC). If you are reading this handbook, it means you are thinking about or are participating in the FTC Program, due to your history of drug/alcohol use and the need for Walworth County to become involved with your family.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the information you need to be successful in the program. Should you decide to participate, you will be expected to adhere with the expectations outlined below, as well as any instructions given to you in court.

Because having your children in the home is a matter of their physical and emotional safety (as in any Children's Court case proceeding), the timing of their return is based on what is in their best interest and is not tied to any specific phase of the program. It is very important to understand that compliance with FTC program requirements does not guarantee that your children will be returned to you. There may be circumstances in which, even with full compliance, the Court determines that returning home is not in the best interests of the children**.**

Overview

The Walworth County Family Treatment Court is a collaborative effort between the Walworth County Courts, the Walworth County Department of Health & Human Services (WCDHHS), and other agencies to provide further assistance through the reunification process within a CHIPS case or safe case closure. Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS), Consent Decrees, and, Informal Disposition Agreements (IDA), are court cases that involve the health, safety and welfare of children. The purpose of the program is to provide you with the services and support you need to maintain sobriety and provide a safe and secure environment for your children. Most services are provided free of charge.

Participants are required to enroll in substance abuse and/or mental health treatment and develop a treatment case plan, submit to random drug testing, and attend frequent court reviews as directed. These requirements, along with any others imposed by the Court, will become part of your family case plan. The Court will closely monitor your compliance with these requirements and will respond accordingly. Compliance may result in rewards or incentives; non-adherence may result in sanctions.

The FTC program consists of five phases (which are explained in detail beginning on page 6) and takes a minimum of 14 months to complete. It may take longer for some participants, depending on their rate of progress.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Walworth County Family Treatment Court is to provide substance abuse treatment in a non-adversarial setting distinct and separate from the traditional criminal and juvenile justice systems. Family Treatment Court provides a comprehensive approach to individuals whose substance use has impacted their family. The central focus of the program is on treatment and recovery; however, the ultimate goal of the program is to help participants make changes in all aspects of their lives in order to achieve and sustain permanence and stability for their family.

Eligibility Criteria

To be determined eligible for Family Treatment Court, you must meet the following criteria:

- Have a pattern of alcohol or drug use.
- Have an open child welfare case in Walworth County.
- Meet with the Family Treatment Court Coordinator to complete an intake assessment.

The FTC Team Members

As head of the FTC team, the Judge will make all final decisions regarding your status in the program, with frequent and regular input from the other team members. The additional team members include:

- You (identified as the FTC participant or consumer)
- WCDHHS caseworker(s)
- AODA/mental health treatment representative(s)
- Judge(s)
- Corporation Counsel attorney
- Guardian Ad Litem (GAL)
- Parent's attorney
- Treatment Court Coordinator(s)
- Clerk of Courts representative(s)
- Child welfare case manager(s)
- Treatment provider (s)
- Contracted staff representative (s)
- Probation/Parole agent (s)

Your child welfare case manager will be your primary contact person during your involvement in the program. However, all members of the FTC team will play a role in your case, and all are committed to your success in the program.

Treatment Court Hearings

Frequent court appearances are a key part of the FTC program. These hearings, or status reviews, are typically held every two weeks, at least initially. As you progress through the phases, these reviews generally become less frequent. Before your FTC court hearings, the Judge reviews a progress report put together by the members of the team. This report will include information about your drug test results, participation and attendance in treatment, visits with your children, and your general progress toward your treatment plan goals. At your status review hearings, you will have the opportunity to inform the Judge of any problems you may be having. Your family case manager will let you know what time you need to come to court each session. Your court time will be identified based on screening results of your risks and needs.

WCDHHS & Treatment Plans

Both your caseworker and behavioral health treatment provider will work with you to establish treatment plans. These treatment plans will outline the specific requirements each agency expects you to follow. Because these agencies will work together to address your treatment needs, many of these goals and requirements will be the same. The WCDHHS parenting plan will identify any of the requirements not specifically related to substance abuse, such as participation in parenting classes or mental health treatment. The Court will order your compliance with all elements of the WCDHHS treatment plan, which will include all recommended treatment.

Program Basics

By following a few basic guidelines, you can greatly increase your chances of successfully completing the program. A few suggestions:

- Attend all court hearings, meetings, and appointments.
- Comply with the requirements of your WCDHHS treatment plan.
- Be honest! Although your honesty will not prevent a sanction from being imposed, it will help the team to consider the most effective response.
- Put effort into completing your obligations and responsibilities.
- Stay in touch with your caseworker and your attorney. Be sure they always have a current address and telephone number in case they need to reach you.
- Be as organized as possible. You will need to keep track of lots of meetings, court dates and appointments. A calendar or planner is very helpful.
- If you are not sure about any requirements or expectations, ask your caseworker or other FTC team member.

Confidentiality

State and Federal laws require that your identity and privacy be protected. In response to these regulations, the FTC has developed procedures that guard your privacy. You will be asked to sign an Authorization for Release of Information. This authorization is for the sole purpose of hearings and reports concerning your FTC case.

Drug Testing

Random drug and/or alcohol screening is a very important part of the program. While drug use is typically monitored through urine and/or breath testing, you may also be required to submit to other types of testing, including saliva tests (swabs). You will be expected to comply with any testing ordered by your caseworker or the Court.

Positive, missed, altered or refused tests will be considered positive and subject to sanction. Abnormal creatinine levels can indicate tampering or deliberate flushing. Samples with creatinine levels below 20 mg/dl or above 400 mg/dl will be considered invalid and subject to sanction.

You are ultimately responsible for ensuring the screens you provide are valid. You should be aware that prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and dietary or energy supplements can affect your test results. As such, it is strongly advised for you to learn how the ingredients of any given medicine or supplement might impact results before you start taking them. Ultimately, you are responsible for what you put in your body.

Prescription Drug Use

All participants will be expected to inform their health care providers, within our discretion, of their substance use concerns so that informed decisions can be made when prescription medications are being considered. If prescription medications are deemed necessary, participants should make every effort to obtain a non-narcotic alternative, if one is available. Participants will be expected to notify their caseworker within 24 hours of being placed on a prescription medication, or if any changes are made to existing prescriptions. Failure to do so will result in a sanction.

To ensure full disclosure, participants are required to provide their health care provider with the FTC Prescription Drug Form when attending medical or dental appointments, provided by the caseworker. This form contains the caseworker's contact information and requires the doctor's signature.

Participants with a history of abusing prescription drugs, or who have been prescribed potentially habit-forming medications, may be subject to additional requirements. These may include:

- Being restricted to one prescribing physician.
- Agreeing to work with your physician to discontinue use of a potentially habit-forming medication.

Assessments

The Walworth County FTC is continuously working on ways to improve the quality of the program for all participants. Therefore, it is important that the FTC team complete assessments with FTC participants to evaluate their individual progress and the progress of the program. These assessments will primarily be completed by meeting with the FTC Coordinator, and will occur at the initial intake appointment, at a 6 month follow up appointment, and upon discharge from the program. There are several other short assessments that participants will be asked to complete every 3 months to track individual progress.

Incentives & Sanctions

Each time you come to court, the treatment team will decide whether you will receive an incentive, a sanction, or neither. This decision will be based on several factors, including your attendance and participation in treatment, drug screen results, family time, and general progress in the program. While incentives and sanctions may not be the same for everyone, they will be fair, and the Judge will explain the specific reasons for the response chosen. Possible incentives include verbal recognition from the Court, applause, gift cards, and family-friendly activities.

There are times you may be asked to complete follow up assessments to review your individual progress and program progress. These follow up assessments are voluntary. If you complete assessments after being in the program for 6 months and upon discharge, you will be eligible to receive a $20 gift card.

Possible sanctions include verbal warnings from the Court, essay presentations, delay in phasing, being unable to draw for additional gift cards, community service, or increased drug testing. In the event you are given a sanction, its severity will depend upon several factors, including how long you've been in the program, your history of compliance or noncompliance, phase, previous sanctions imposed by the Court, and the nature of the infraction.

Participants will be asked upon entry if they have any medical issues that would preclude them from completing sanctions. If so, they will be required to provide medical documentation to their caseworker indicating the nature of the condition and any limitations associated with it.

Those ordered to complete community service must provide documentation of hours completed to the Court. This should be on agency letterhead and include service dates as well as the name of a person who can be contacted to verify the information.

Visitors in the Courtroom

To protect the privacy of all participants in FTC, no guests or visitors will be allowed in the courtroom while cases are being discussed unless approved by the FTC Judge. When FTC graduations occur, family members and/or friends of the participant graduating will be allowed into the courtroom for that participant's hearing time only.

Phases of the Program

There are five phases to the FTC program. There are no specific time frames about how long it takes to complete each phase. The amount of time it takes to complete each phase will depend on each participant's unique circumstances, as each phase is based on specific behavior changes. Typically, the program takes about fourteen months to complete. Your progress toward meeting specific phase requirements will be determined by the treatment team. The final decision regarding phase advancement is made by the Judge.

Phase I – Engagement

Requirements for Phase I:
This phase focuses on participant engagement, orientation, and stabilization.

- Attend all Family Treatment Court sessions bi-weekly
- Attend all court dates related to your CHIPS case
- Sign all necessary forms and releases
- Attend a behavioral health intake appointment and follow up appointment
- Demonstrate engagement in the program by attending at least 50% of your drug screens and family time visits
- Utilize formal supports to accomplish the above goals (examples include: family case manager, behavioral health treatment providers, MTM, VIP)
- Communicate honestly and timely with your family case manager and the Family Treatment Court team

Phase II – Motivation

Requirements for Phase II:
This phase focuses on clinical stabilization and healthy family interactions. You should begin to recognize the need for some change related to your recovery.

- Attend all Family Treatment Court sessions bi-weekly
- Consistently follow your family interaction plan including keeping your children safe and free from abuse/neglect
- Demonstrate a **minimum of 14 consecutive days of sobriety** by consistently attending drug testing

- Consistently attend weekly random drug and alcohol testing including daily call ins
- Actively work towards your treatment goals in therapy
- Consistently attend treatment appointments
- Take all medications as prescribed by your physician
- Communicate honestly and timely with your family case manager and the Family Treatment Court team
- Acquire approval and complete a "petition to phase" to be presented in court

Phase III – Behavior Change

Requirements for Phase III:

This phase focuses on motivation, insight, and skills to engage in activities that demonstrate your ability to recognize and respond to the safety and well-being of your children. This phase also focuses on making positive choices that support a recovery lifestyle.

- Attend Family Treatment Court sessions monthly
- Demonstrate a **minimum of 60 consecutive days of sobriety** by consistently attending drug testing
- Comply with weekly, random urinalysis, breathalyzer, and oral swab testing including daily call-ins
- Utilize treatment skills to engage in activities that support a recovery lifestyle
- Engage in family orientated activities with your children
- Identify barriers to reunification and develop a plan to overcome these barriers (examples include housing, employment, financial stability, risky acquaintances/friends, transportation)
- Develop an informal support network that will help you sustain your recovery
- Acquire approval and complete a "petition to phase" to be presented in court

P**hase IV – Generalization**

Requirements for Phase IV:

This phase focuses on your ability to demonstrate a solid foundation for stable recovery and permanence for your child/children. You will improve your life and that of your children by meeting the developmental needs of your child/children.

- Attend Family Treatment Court sessions monthly
- Demonstrate a **minimum of 90 consecutive days of sobriety** by consistently attending drug testing
- Comply with weekly, random urinalysis, breathalyzer, and oral swab testing including daily call-ins
- Attend all treatment appointments
- Demonstrate consistent and safe interactions with your child/children
- Actively work to overcome barriers to reunification and independence including but not limited to: stable housing, employment/financial stability, job skills, life skills, reliable transportation, education, and parenting skills
- Demonstrate involvement in your child/children's lives including but not limited to: involvement in their school, extra-curricular activities, medical and mental health appointments, and friends
- Acquire approval and complete a "petition to phase" to be presented in court

Phase V – Continuing Care

Requirements for Phase V:

This phase focuses on activities that ensure child safety, well-being, and permanence. You will be able to use your informal supports to continue to maintain a prosocial life, foresee your child/children's needs, and maintain stable recovery.

- Attend Family Treatment Court sessions monthly
- Demonstrate a **minimum of 90 consecutive days of sobriety** by consistently attending drug testing
- Comply with weekly, random urinalysis, breathalyzer, and oral swab testing including daily call-ins
- Attend all treatment and/or aftercare appointments and develop a plan to continue with supportive services
- Demonstrate the ability to utilize your informal support system
- Participate in and maintain sober family activities
- Maintain financial stability and independence to be able to meet the needs of your child/children
- Acquire approval to graduate from the FTC team

Petition to Phase

To continue on to phases 3, 4, 5, and graduation, you are required to submit a "petition to phase". There is a "petition to phase" template that you will receive from your family case manager or from the FTC Coordinator that has a list of questions you can answer that shows your progress in each phase. Once you are told you can petition to go to the next phase, you will complete the "petition to phase" and turn it in to your family case manager at least 2 days prior to court. The FTC will review your petition prior to court. At your court review session, you will share your petition and will be informed if your "petition to phase" will be accepted.

Graduation Criteria

Graduation from the FTC is an important event that demonstrates to the Court, the treatment team, and your family members that you have made significant changes in your life. Successful completion of the FTC is a major achievement!

Participants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for graduation:

- Successful completion of all 5 phases
- Completion of your treatment plan
- Completion of a long-term safety plan
- The ability to assist in a permanency decision regarding your child/children

Suspension from the Program

While the FTC is always willing to help you overcome barriers, there are certain events that may result in suspension from the FTC program. If you are suspended from FTC, you will be able to submit a written petition to the court to re-enter FTC. The FTC Judge

has the final say as to whether your petition to re-enter will be granted. Some examples of reasons participants may be suspended from FTC include:

- You fail to complete the assessment and evaluation with WCDHHS (or other approved agency) in a timely manner.
- You are incarcerated for an extended period of time.
- Evidence of ongoing drug use (as opposed to an occasional relapse.)
- A pattern of noncompliance that suggests you are either unable or unwilling to abide by program rules.
- You miss two consecutive FTC court sessions (this will result in automatic suspension)

** After two suspensions from FTC, if you want to petition to return to FTC for a third time, you will be required to attend two consecutive FTC sessions under a "probationary phase" before you will be admitted into phase 1.

Termination from the Program

While every member of the FTC team is committed to helping you successfully complete the program, there are certain events that can result in termination. If you are terminated from the program, you will not automatically lose your children. You will still have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Court that you can be a safe and stable parent. The following are reasons for possible termination from the FTC:

- Walworth County no longer has jurisdiction over the Children's Court case.
- You disappear (abscond) from WCDHHS supervision and fail to contact the department within 30 days of last contact.
- You are sentenced to prison.
- You are determined to have a condition that would prevent you from participating in or achieving benefits from the FTC's program.
- You fail to progress through the program phases in a reasonable period of time, as determined by the FTC team.
- Failing to attend court appearances (for reasons other than those beyond your control.)
- Evidence of ongoing drug use (as opposed to an occasional lapse.)
- A pattern of noncompliance that suggests you are either unable or unwilling to abide by program rules.

** Any participant who is suspended from FTC three times will be terminated and not permitted to re-petition to return to FTC unless approved by the FTC team.

Contact Information

If you're interested in becoming a part of our program or just have additional questions about the Walworth County Family Treatment Court, please contact 262-741-3200 and ask to speak with the Walworth County Department of Health and Human Services Family Treatment Court Coordinator.

My Family Case Manager:
Name: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email: _____

My Family Treatment Court Coordinator:
Name: Desi Bonngard, MS, LPC-IT
Phone Number: 262-741-3179
Email: dbonngard@co.walworth.wi.us
Address: 1910 County Road NN, Elkhorn, WI 53121

Southeastern Monitoring (SEM) Drug Testing Information:
SEM Office: 262-723-4849
Drug Testing Line: 262-753-2405
Web Check In: mycallin.com
Address: 7 W. Walworth, Elkhorn, WI 53121

Walworth County Health and Human Services:
Phone Number: 262-741-3200 (24/7 Crisis line)
Address: 1910 County Road NN, Elkhorn, WI 53121

Walworth County Family Treatment Court:
Location: 3rd Floor of the Courthouse (Branch 4)
Address: 1800 County Road NN, Elkhorn, WI 53121

My Attorney (if applicable):
Name:_____
Phone Number:_____

My Children's Placement Information (if applicable):
Placement Name: _____
Placement Contact Information: _____