

# Collin County

## Adult Mental Health Program

### Policies and Participant Handbook



Honorable Jennifer Edgeworth  
219<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Honorable Lance Baxter  
County Criminal Court #3

## **Introduction**

The handbook is designed to explain the program policies and procedures and our expectations of every program participant. The foundation of the Adult Mental Health Program is based on three essential values: Dignity & Respect for self and others; Personal Responsibility; and Honesty. The mission of the Adult Mental Health Court Program is to reduce recidivism by emphasizing treatment, stability, and accountability.

## **Program Structure**

As a participant, you will be expected to comply with directives from your Supervision Officer, comply with the tasks identified on your Integrated Treatment Plan (ITP), and follow the instructions given in the Adult Mental Health Court Program. The ITP will be created by the Mental Health Professional during your initial evaluation and will include different goals and objectives that you will be required to complete during treatment. Your treatment plan may change during the program in order to address your needs and provide resources as needed. Some examples of objectives identified on the ITP may include: 1) participant will attend at least engage in Mental Health services: counseling and/or treatment; 2) participant will maintain sobriety from all mind-altering substances, including alcohol, and submit negative drug tests throughout the duration of the program; 3) participant will take all mental health medications as prescribed by their psychiatrist; and 4) participant will attend Adult Mental Health Court settings as directed by the Court.

Your Supervision Officer will monitor your progress while you are in the program and you will be required to attend bi-weekly office visits. *You will also be required to call in every Monday in order to check in and let the team know how you are doing.* You will also be required to attend court two times per month while you are in Phase One and Phase Two and one time per month while you are in Phase Three. During court sessions, you will meet with the presiding Judge of the program in order to discuss your progress towards your treatment goals and the program requirements.

## **Program Duration**

The Adult Mental Health Court Program is an average of twelve (12) months with an extensive follow up. The time period in the program will be determined by your needs and your progress throughout treatment. You will be required to enter a judicial confession accepting responsibility for the offense in order to be admitted into the program. Once you complete the program successfully, your case(s) will be dismissed and they will be eligible for an immediate expunction. If you do not complete the program successfully, your case(s) will be remanded to the court of origin.

### **Criteria for Participation**

- Participant must have a mental health diagnosis as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual or Mental Disorders (DSM 5); Diagnosed mental disorder includes these conditions but are not limited to: \*Schizophrenia, \*Post traumatic stress disorder, \*Bipolar, Major Depression, \*Schizoaffective, \*Pervasive developmental disorder, \*IQ of 70 or greater and others.
- Participant must be willing to participate in the program. AMHC is a voluntary program
- Charges must be filed with the courts. Only pending charges will be considered for entry into the program. Participants currently on community supervision (deferred or adjudicated probation) will not be eligible for Mental Health Court.
- Participants with charges pending in a county other than Collin County will be required to provide a verifiable agreement with the prosecutor in that county that the pending offense will not be resolved by a plea for probation during the duration of the Mental Health Court Program.
- Participants with substance use issues must be willing to acknowledge the problem and must not have a prevailing substance use issue which would interfere with mental health treatment.

### **Reasons for exclusion from program**

Severe mental or emotional problems not stable on medication at the time of admission, requiring inpatient mental health care, and participants whom have a history of manufacturing and/or distribution of illegal and synthetic drugs (drug dealing). Applicants with a current DWI-related offense, applicants with any history of deferred adjudications or convictions of "3G" offenses, a prior conviction for manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance, or any history of offenses of a sexual nature will not be approved for the Mental Health Court Program.

### **Program Agreement**

- Admit commission of offense, and agree that this admission may be used against you in court as provided by law.
- Waive your rights to a speedy indictment, if charged with a felony offense, and to a speedy trial as provided for under the Code of Criminal Procedure of Texas, and the Texas and United States Constitutions.
- Do not commit a criminal offense while in the program or after completing the program.
- Do not consume alcohol or any illegal drugs.
- Submit to random and frequent drug testing
- No contact with persons of disreputable or harmful character.
- Cooperate with mental health treatment and/or counseling as recommended.
- Take all mental health medications as prescribed by your prescribing physician.
- Complete treatment requirements as outlined by the treatment plan.
- Keep all appointments and attend all compliance hearings as scheduled.
- Keep program staff informed of your current address and telephone number.
- Consent to release of health and mental health information as permitted under Texas law.

- Acknowledge that failure to comply with any term of this agreement will cause the State to withdraw from this agreement and proceed with prosecution of this offense.
- Acknowledge that the successful completion of the diversion agreement shall cause the State of Texas to dismiss the charges in this matter.

### **Phase System of the Mental Health Treatment Court Program**

The Collin County Mental Health Diversion Program has a phase system that consists of three different phases, each of which will take you approximately three to four months to complete. Phase progressions will be unique to each participant in the Adult Mental Health Program. The AMHC Team will staff each individual's treatment needs to determine if they are equipped to progress to the next phase. The ultimate goal is for each participant to improve quality of life with long-term stability.

#### **Requirements while in AMHC – all phases**

- Engage in and maintain excellent attendance with mental health services (counseling and/or treatment).
- Submit to random drug testing as ordered by the Supervision Officer or Court.
- Attend all AMHC Court settings, all reports with the Supervision Officer, and all treatment appointments.
- Commit no new offenses or have any new arrests.
- Abstain from the use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, or any other mood altering substances (including CBD and Delta-8)
- If able, obtain/maintain excellent attendance with school or employment requirements.

#### **Phase 1- Intervention and Maintenance**

The purpose of Phase 1 is to provide the most rigorous interventions into the participant's life. Each participant's needs are different and the Integrated Treatment Plan (ITP) will reflect these individual needs.

The primary focus of Phase 1 will be to encourage and enforce compliance with the participant's mental health treatment to include the initial mental health screening as well as individual and/or group counseling.

The overall goal of Phase 1 is for the participant to demonstrate both a desire and an ability to participate in treatment, counseling, maintain medication compliance along with drug and alcohol abstinence.

#### **The following Goals and Requirements must be met in Phase 1 before advancing to Phase 2.**

- Coordinate special needs (housing, finances, budgeting, medical, clothing, etc.)
- If able, participant will work towards obtaining employment and/or attending school and/or community involvement
- Participant will establish goals for both the Program and life goals
- Identify strengths and barriers to treatment and address these with the AMHC team
- Work with the AMHC team and Mental Health Professional to develop a treatment plan
- Become stabilized on medication and take as prescribed
- To be eligible for phase progression, must be in compliance with each of these requirements for at least 90 days.

## **Phase 2- Active Recovery**

The purpose of Phase 2 is to continue the treatment process from Phase 1 and to make treatment progress.

The primary focus of Phase 2 will be progression to stability from Phase 1; the participant is to continue to progress in mental health treatment and counseling as indicated by treatment provider collaterals and progress notes. We should see a gradual stabilization of participant's family, living, work and financial situation during this phase (including an increased support system).

The overall goal of Phase 2 is for the participant to demonstrate an increased ability to remain in treatment, continue with all prescribed medication and maintain stability within the family and community.

### **The following Goals and Requirements must be met in Phase 2 before advancing to Phase 3.**

- Demonstrate medication compliance for 3 to 6 months to promote mood stability.
- Continued compliance with the program agreement.
- Participate in treatment as outlined on the treatment plan.
- No inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations within the last 3 months.
- Maintain sobriety from all illegal drugs and alcohol for at least 3 months.
- Regular attendance at court sessions.

## **Phase 3- Preservation and Reintegration**

The purpose of Phase 3 is for the participant to reach sustained stability and to successfully complete any required treatment programs. The goal is to see a reduction in criminogenic needs. Participant will continue medication maintenance and remain compliant with all program requirements. This is the last phase before the participant reintegrates into society without the assistance of the Adult Mental Health Court.

The primary focus of Phase 3 is to ensure the continued stability of the participant in order to prepare the participant for his/her reintegration into the community. The focus is a tapering off of interventions by the AMHC and for the participant to utilize the tools learned during the program to reintegrate into the community without supervision.

The overall goal of Phase 3 is for the participant to demonstrate a continued ability to remain in treatment, remain sober and maintain stability within the family as well as the community. Phase 3 will also afford the participant an opportunity to fulfill any remaining requirements of the Adult Mental Health Court.

### **The following Goals and Requirements must be met in Phase 3 before Graduation.**

- Demonstrate medication compliance for at least 6 months to promote mood stability.
- Complete treatment goals on the treatment plan.
- No inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations within the last 4 months.
- Completed Transition to Discharge Plan.

### **Graduation Requirements**

- Clear demonstration that you have been fully engaged in your treatment and completed all program requirements.
- Compliance with medication management and mental health services
- Continued demonstration of ability to maintain long-term sobriety.
- Employed or working toward finding work or applying for/receiving disability benefits.
- Completed Transition to Discharge Plan.

### **Court Appearances**

Adult Mental health Court dockets are scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of each month. Participants will be expected to be punctual and provide advance notifications of absences, and dress appropriately. You must respect others during court proceedings, no smoking or weapons allowed. Absences without prior notice may result in sanctions.

### **Reporting Expectations**

In order to provide support to the participant and family we ask that the participant be honest in reporting their progress at home, work, school and in the community. Their progress will also be monitored using checklists at every level that will help guide their way through each phase of the program. The checklists will be their road map to program completion.

### **Random Drug Testing**

The goal of the mental health court program is to provide the participant the support and tools needed to lead a clean and sober life. The Adult Mental Health Court will collect drug-testing fees from the participant to cover the cost of drug and alcohol screenings. The participant will be tested regularly, according to the treatment plan, to determine the presence of illicit drugs/alcohol or any mood altering substances. Any unfavorable drug tests may have a negative impact on phase progression. Continued drug use may be grounds for removal from the program.

### **Authorizations for Treatment**

All treatment-related documents will be handled to ensure that the privacy and identity are protected. The participants will be asked to sign consents to release information, which allows the AMHC team to monitor the progress throughout the participants' time in the program.

## Incentives

Incentives will be given to participants deserving of special recognition for achievements and/or progress while in the Adult Mental Health Court. Any member of the Treatment Team can make recommendations for incentives.

### **Examples of Incentives:**

- Judicial recognition
- Reduced court appearances
- Reduced reporting to the Supervision Officer
- Praise/Applause
- Excused from Court early
- Graduation certificates

## Sanctions

Sanctions can be either rehabilitative, punitive, or both. The Adult Mental Health Court follows a progressive sanction model and incorporates sanctions that are both punitive and rehabilitative in nature which include judicial sanctions, supervision sanctions, and therapeutic sanctions.

### **Examples of Judicial Sanctions:**

- Increased contact with the Judge
- Jail Time

### **Examples of Supervision Sanctions:**

- Verbal reprimand
- Community service hours
- Increased contact with Supervision Officer and/or Court
- Return to previous Phase

### **Examples of Therapeutic Sanctions:**

- Essay assignment
- Address Judge/Peers in court
- Extension of time in Phase
- Increased individual counseling (needs to be authorized by Supervision Officer)

## **Removal**

If progressive sanctions are ineffective at correcting behaviors that are inconsistent with program requirements, the Mental Health Court team will review the participant's status to determine removal from the program. Grounds for removal may include, but are not limited to, persistent attendance issues (treatment, probation, court appearances, drug tests), repeated drug or alcohol use, or commission of a new offense.



**Contact Information**

**Program Coordinator**

Donald Bell  
(214) 491-4802  
dabell@collincountytx.gov

**Supervision Officer**

Michelle Garcia  
(972) 548-3841  
mgarcia@collincountytx.gov

**Court Locations**

**Felony Cases:**

Judge Jennifer Edgeworth, 219<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Russell A. Steindam Courts Building  
2100 Bloomdale Road, Suite 20132  
McKinney, TX 75071

**Misdemeanor Cases:**

Judge Lance Baxter, Collin County Court at Law 3  
Russell A. Steindam Courts Building  
2100 Bloomdale Road, Suite 10256  
McKinney, TX 75071



### **Specialty Courts Ombudsman Program**

The Collin County Adult Mental Health program does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and age. The Collin County Adult Mental Health program provides interpreter services per Collin County CSCD policies. Complaints alleging discrimination may be filed by contacting the Ombudsman.

The purpose of the Ombudsman is to serve as a central point of contact for any complaints or concerns regarding specialty court programs in Texas. If you have a problem or complaint about a specialty court, we encourage you to first discuss your complaint with the person, program, or office involved. If you need to contact the Ombudsman, the information can be easily found at the AMHC Office.

**Collin County  
Adult Mental Health Court Program**

**Participant Acknowledgement of Handbook**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge I have received a copy of the Adult Mental Health Court Program (AMHC) Participant Handbook.

I understand and agree to remain under the supervision of the Adult Mental Health Court Program **UNTIL FURTHER ORDERS OF THIS COURT**. I acknowledge that I have read and understand my responsibilities and duties discussed in this Participant Handbook. I agree to abide by each and every rule.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
AMHC Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date