

WILLIAMSON COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT COURT



“LEAVE NO VETERAN BEHIND”

POLICIES AND PROCEDURE MANUAL



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MISSION

The Mission of the Williamson County Veterans Treatment Court (WCVTC) is to enhance public safety and empower veterans to be productive members of the community by providing a judicially supervised, therapeutic Court that ensures accountability and recovery.

FORWARD

The purpose of this document is to provide general standards and practices for the Veterans Treatment Court located in Williamson County, Texas. Although this document is written primarily for the benefit of WCVTC team members, it will be beneficial to anyone who is interested in the operation of the program. This manual address elements essential to the court's operation but is not an exhaustive reference. It will be considered fluid and will undergo review and modification periodically.

This manual is designed to:

- Concisely inform the reader concerning the establishment of WCVTC.
- Establish and clarify roles, duties, and procedures for WCVTC team members.
- Assist WCVTC team communication with one another; with participants and with members of the community.
- Outline the steps through which WCVTC participants must proceed to complete the program.

INTRODUCTION

Williamson County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation and is adjacent to Ft. Hood, which is one of the largest military installations in the country. With an estimated veteran population of 34,000 taken during the 2017 U.S. Census, there continues to be an increasing number of justice-involved veterans, many who are suffering from mental health and substance use disorders. In 2019, 41% of the 814 veterans arrested in Williamson County, were alcohol or drug related. 8% of veterans arrested for alcohol and drugs in 2019, were also arrested during the same incident for family violence. Data from RAND Corporation and the UCLA Department of Psychology shows that military men and women after exiting the military, have a higher rate of divorce than comparable civilians. Family members of military members can also experience PTSD symptoms that can include depression, anxiety, and substance abuse problems.

Many veterans are known to have a warrior's mentality and often do not address their treatment needs for physical and psychological health care. Often those who are referred to the WCVTC are homeless, helpless, in despair, suffering from alcohol or drug addiction, and have serious mental illnesses. Their lives have been spiraling out of control. Without the collaboration of the VA Health Care Network, the Veterans Treatment Court, volunteer Veteran mentors and a coalition of community health care providers, many would continue to have their illnesses untreated and would

suffer the consequences of the traditional criminal justice system of jail or prison. This collaboration of unique partners affords the opportunity for these Veterans to regain stability in their lives, to have their families strengthened, to have housing for the homeless, and to have employment for the employable. The WCVTC seeks to accept these Veteran offenders who meet treatment court criteria and are willing to enter the program as part of the judicial process.

The WCVTC is designed to provide an alternative to the traditional method of adjudicating. It is led by Judge Laura Barker and supported by a team of professionals from the legal, law enforcement, and treatment communities. The program is designed to facilitate the rehabilitation of Veterans accused or convicted of misdemeanor and felony offenses that meet criteria. All participants will have offenses which, in their totality, provide the WCVTC at least 12 months of jurisdiction, but could be extended depending upon the treatment needs of each Veteran participant.

Currently, WCVTC's target population is high risk/high needs and low risk/high needs veterans. The WCVTC uses the Risk and Needs Triage (RANT) assessment tool along with the PHQ-9 for depression, GAD-7 for anxiety, PCL-5 for PTSD and Audit C for alcohol as pre-screening tools. The Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS) is done once the participant comes into the program to provide additional information to the Program Case Manager to tailor supervision and treatment on an individual basis while protecting public safety.

Participants are carefully screened and must meet eligibility criteria. They are required to address their chemical dependency and/or mental health issues, resolve their legal obligations and obtain/maintain employment or schooling. They will also be required to make regular court appearances, meet with licensed probation officers, case management, submit to frequent and random drug testing, and advanced alcohol testing and monitoring equipment. The court will also direct its efforts toward changing offender behavior, addressing transportation and licensing issues, and focusing on the rights of any victims.

The goal of the WCVTC is to reduce recidivism of eligible misdemeanor and felony offenses by identifying those individuals who require mental health or substance abuse treatment and placing them in an appropriate continuum of treatment.

The WCVTC relies heavily upon the cooperation of community stakeholders. Even though the WCVTC team includes many entities within the Williamson County community, there are others who might share goals that are common to those of the program. Additional assistance is always welcome. There is a standing invitation to all community stakeholders to join this endeavor.

TEN KEY COMPONENTS OF VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS

WCVTC has adopted with slight modifications the essential tenements of the TEN Key Components as described in the U.S. Department of Justice Publication entitled "Defining Drug Courts: The Key

Components”, (Jan. 1997). Brief descriptions of these modifications are listed in the key components that follow this introduction. Although there are differences between drug courts, mental health courts and Veterans Treatment Courts, the Key Components provides the foundation in format and content for the Essential Elements of each of these courts.

Key Component #1: *The Veterans Treatment Court integrates alcohol, drug treatment, and mental health services with justice system case processing.*

Williamson County’s Veterans Treatment Court promotes sobriety, recovery, and stability through a coordinated response to the Veteran’s dependency on alcohol, drugs, and/or management of their mental illness. Realization of these goals requires a team approach. This approach includes the cooperation and collaboration of the traditional partners found in drug treatment courts and mental health treatment courts with the addition of the Veteran Administration Health Care Network, Veterans and Veterans family support organizations, and Veteran volunteer mentors.

Key Component #2: *Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants’ due process rights.*

To facilitate the Veterans’ progress in treatment, the prosecutor and defense counsel shed their traditional adversarial courtroom relationship and work together as a team. Once a Veteran is accepted into the treatment court program, the team’s focus is on the Veteran’s recovery and law-abiding behavior—not on the merits of the pending case.

Key Component #3: *Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the Veterans Treatment Court program.*

Early identification of Veterans entering the criminal justice system is an integral part of the process of placement in the Veterans Treatment Court program. Arrest can be a traumatic event in a person’s life. It creates an immediate crisis and can compel recognition of inappropriate behavior into the open, making denial by the Veteran for the need for treatment difficult.

Key Component #4: *The Veterans Treatment Court provides access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, mental health and other related treatment and rehabilitation services.*

While primarily concerned with criminal activity, substance abuse, and mental illness, the Veterans Treatment Court team also considers co-occurring problems such as primary medical problems, transmittable diseases, homelessness; basic educational deficits, unemployment, and poor job preparation; spouse and family troubles—especially domestic violence—and the ongoing effects of war time trauma.

Veteran peer mentors are essential to the Veterans Treatment Court team. Ongoing Veteran peer mentor’s interaction with the Veterans Treatment Court participants is essential. Their active, supportive relationship, maintained throughout treatment, increases the likelihood that a Veteran will remain in treatment and improves the chances for sobriety and law-abiding behavior.

Key Component #5: *Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing.*

Frequent court-ordered substance abuse testing is essential. An accurate testing program is the most objective and efficient way to establish a framework for accountability and to gauge each participant's progress.

Key Component #6: *A coordinated strategy governs the Veterans Treatment Court responses to participants' compliance.*

A Veteran's progress through the treatment court experience is measured by his or her compliance with the treatment regimen. The Veterans Treatment Court rewards cooperation as well as responds to noncompliance. The Veterans Treatment Court establishes a coordinated strategy, including a continuum of graduated responses, to continuing drug use and other noncompliant behavior.

Key Component #7: *Ongoing judicial interaction with each Veteran is essential.*

The Judge is the leader of the Veterans Treatment Court team. This active, supervising relationship, maintained throughout treatment, increases the likelihood that a Veteran will remain in treatment and improves the chances for sobriety and law-abiding behavior. Ongoing judicial supervision also communicates to Veterans that someone in authority cares about them and is closely watching what they do.

Key Component #8: *Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness.*

Management and monitoring systems provide timely and accurate information about program progress. Program monitoring provides oversight and periodic measurements of the program's performance against its stated goals and objectives. Information and conclusions developed from periodic monitoring reports, process evaluation activities, and longitudinal evaluation studies may be used to modify the program.

Key Component #9: *Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective Veterans Treatment Court planning, implementation, and operations.*

All Veterans Treatment Court staff should be involved in education and training. Interdisciplinary education exposes criminal justice officials to Veteran treatment issues, and Veteran Administration, Veteran volunteer mentors, and treatment staff to criminal justice issues. It also develops shared understandings of the values, goals, and operating procedures of both the veteran administration, treatment, and the justice system components.

Education and training programs help maintain a high level of professionalism, provide a forum for solidifying relationships among criminal justice, Veteran Administration, Veteran volunteer mentors, and treatment personnel, and promote a spirit of commitment and collaboration.

Key Component #10: *Forging partnerships among the Veterans Treatment Court, Veterans*

Administration, public agencies, and community-based organizations generate local support and enhance the Veteran Treatment Court effectiveness.

WCVTC integrates alcohol drug treatment services with justice system case processing. Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights and need for treatment. Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the program. They are provided access to a continuum of alcohol, drug and other related treatment and rehabilitation services. Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and drug testing and a coordinated strategy governs responses to participant compliance. Ongoing judicial interaction with each drug court participant is essential and monitoring and evaluation measures the achievement of program goals and gauges effectiveness. Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations. Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generate local support and enhances drug court effectiveness.

FUNDING

The WCVTC program began in January of 2015. Williamson County applied and was awarded through the State of Texas the Governor's Office a grant in the amount of \$140,000 for the implementation of the Williamson County Veterans Treatment Court. This funding was reduced in 2016 in the amount of \$104,000. A second grant from the Texas Veterans Commission was awarded in 2017 in the amount of \$30,000 for implementation of direct individual and family counseling. Grant extensions were sought and granted as the funding has been used conservatively and supported.

In 2020, Williamson County applied and was awarded through the Bureau of Justice Administration a federal grant in the amount of \$241,370 for three (3) years. For the past several years, the WCVTC has decreased jail costs, law enforcement contacts and recidivism, as established by program evaluations. In October 2020, the WCVTC established a program fee in the amount of \$250.00 to be paid by the participants in the program. This program fee will continue to offset a significant portion of the program's cost.

WCVTC PROGRAM DESIGN – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

WCVTC will improve the criminal justice processing of targeted offenders and assist them to become sober, productive, law-abiding citizens. Every community stakeholder will be invited to unite to address substance use and mental health issues among eligible misdemeanor and felony offenders. The following goals are used to guide us to the mission:

1. WCVTC will foster communication and collaboration among criminal justice entities, substance use treatment providers, education officials, social services and interested community stakeholders.

2. WCVTC will construct a completed case-processing plan from program entry to graduation.
3. Participants in the court program will be assessed for psychological, chemical dependency, and other issues that can be addressed through various types of treatment and supportive services.
4. Assessments of the Veteran will be done by the Program Case Manager and an individualized case plan will be developed.
5. 100% of WCVTC participants will receive intensive court supervision including regular hearings, tracking of progress, and progressive sanctions for failures.
6. Participants receiving program services will reduce the frequency of alcohol and other drug use as measured by urinalysis and other testing results.
7. 95% of the eligible participants will complete the program successfully.
8. 100% of the participants who successfully graduate will have a long-term relapse prevention plan.
9. The WCVTC is minimally a 12-month Program that is broken up into five phases. The exact length of time in the program is determined by each participant's needs, progress towards successful implementation of the veteran's treatment and plans, nature of the offense, and arrest history.
10. 95% of participants will successfully complete inpatient or outpatient substance use treatment and/or mental health treatment.
11. WCVTC will measure success by the number of participants that graduate from the program and by increasing the number of enrolled Veterans who can receive valuable and needed services.
12. Graduates with less than a high school degree will earn a GED.
13. 90% of the participants who graduate from the program will be arrest free within 1-year post-graduation.
14. To increase savings to the taxpayer by reducing costs to the criminal justice system.
15. 100% of all participants in the court will be matched with a Veteran mentor.

By employing the services of an independent researcher to provide process and outcome evaluations, WCVTC will determine if predicted goals have been achieved.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT COURT STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

WCVTC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The WCVTC is a viable and appropriate alternative to incarceration for certain criminal defendants. Decisions will be made objectively and balanced with the mission to keep the community safe. The WCVTC has established eligibility requirements based on the target population and in accordance with current Federal and Texas Statutes.

The WCVTC has two tracks available for Veterans and is designed to facilitate the rehabilitation of Veterans accused or convicted of misdemeanor and felony offenses that meet criteria. All participants will have offenses which, in their totality, provide WCVTC at least 12 months of jurisdiction, but could be extended depending upon the treatment needs of each Veteran participant. The two tracks available are the Pre-trial Diversion Track or the Probation Track. The court program may offer veterans an opportunity to avoid prosecution and a criminal conviction if eligible for the Pre-Trial Diversion Track. The track will be determined by reviewing the nature of the arrest and the Veteran will be informed of the track available to them prior to their decision to participate in the court.

The WCVTC is a five-phase, highly structured program, lasting for a minimum of 12 months. Individual progress will vary. Each phase consists of specified treatment objectives and specific requirements for advancement into the next phase. Phase one is the Stabilization and Orientation stage lasting a minimum of 60 days. Phase two is the Treatment phase and is a minimum of 60 days. Phase three is the Pro-Social phase and is a minimum of 60 days. Phase four is the Adaptive Habilitation phase and is a minimum of 90 days and Phase five is the Continuing Care phase and is a minimum of 90 days. Each phase builds upon the previous phase so the participant will have a sound foundation, once he/she completes the WCVTC.

The WCVTC accepts all military branches-including reserves, National Guard and Active-Duty military service members who are charged with a crime in Williamson County and the crime charged is appropriate for the WCVTC.

The criteria for eligibility include the following:

- You must be at least 18 years of age.
- You have received an honorable or general under honorable conditions discharge. Other discharge conditions are considered on a case by case basis.
- You have received a mental health diagnosis that has materially affected your criminal conduct for which you are being charged OR considering the circumstances of your conduct, personal and social background, and criminal history the WCVTC is likely to achieve the

objective of ensuring the public safety through rehabilitation of the Veteran in the manner provided by Texas Penal Code, Section 1.02 (1).

Disqualifying Factors: Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis to determine the extent and circumstances surrounding the disqualification factors versus the need to participate in the program. Those cases declined for acceptance into the WCVTC program will be retained by the Court Coordinator. Notice will be given to the prosecution and defense of the determination.

Veteran offenders with significant criminal and traffic histories will be reviewed individually to determine the offender's situation and circumstances of the record.

Disqualification considerations include:

- Limited court jurisdiction, less than 12 months jurisdiction.
- No gang affiliation.
- Prior or current enrollment in drug court.
- Sex offenses.
- Significant drug related charges.
- Highly resistant to changing their behavior despite previous interventions and/or punishments or severe criminal thinking.
- Out of state residents.
- Significant mental illness (DSM-V Axis I mental illness or behavioral disorder) that would prevent the individual from being able to engage in treatment recommendations.

Confidential Informants: In as much as the activities associated with being a “confidential informant” who works for law enforcement are contrary with the goals of a WCVTC participant, a person actively engaged with law enforcement, as a confidential informant, is not eligible to be a WCVTC participant. A person who has been a confidential informant in the past, but is not actively a confidential informant, is indeed eligible to participate in the program. Law enforcement is requested to assist the program in following this provision.

Opt-Out Provision: There is an “opt-out” provision for WCVTC participants. If a participant wishes to withdraw from the program, he or she may do so voluntarily. Following withdrawal from the program, the participant's case will be reinstated on the traditional docket and will proceed to appropriate disposition in the referring court.

REFERRAL/SCREENING/INDUCTION

Referrals to the WCVTC Program are made by judges, the VA, treatment providers, prosecuting or defense attorneys, supervision officers, detention facilities, other Veterans Treatment Court staff or by self.

PROCESS

- The Veteran will submit to the WCVTC an application for consideration into the WCVTC.
- Admissions to the WCVTC is not automatic and assistance with an attorney in preparing your application is recommended, but not required.
- Completed applications, a copy of applicant's DD214 or Orders, and a Release of Information is submitted to the Program Case Manager and forwarded to the County Attorney's Office for review to determine applicant's eligibility based upon criminal history and current charges.
- The Program Case Manager will schedule and meet with applicant to go over the treatment court requirements.
- The Program Case Manager will meet with applicant to schedule substance abuse and/or mental health assessment evaluations.
- Applicants who have completed their assessment evaluations will have an individualized treatment care plan developed by the Program Case Manager.
- If program criteria are met and the applicant is accepted into the WCVTC the case is transferred to the WCVTC.

COURTROOM STANDARDS

Court Coordinator: The Court Coordinator shall keep the WCVTC Judge aware of administrative procedures that affect WCVTC. The coordinator shall ensure all WCVTC cases are processed in an efficient manner and manage the court docket. The coordinator apprises the administrator for scheduling of plea in dates and off-docket requests for staffing or court dates. The court coordinator keeps track of paperwork that is generated daily for the WCVTC. This position is responsible for taking brief minutes during staffing.

Participant's Drug Use: WCVTC court team members have agreed to limit the use of positive urinalysis results and participant admissions to drug use to agree upon treatment responses and consequences within the scope of the WCVTC program as opposed to being the impetus for new law violations. The intent is to change the Participant's substance use behavior as opposed to burying the defendant with additional charges. This simply recognizes the fact that individuals with addictions may relapse. Use of illegal substances is in no way condoned by the program. The contrary is true. Continued substance use is an acceptable reason for the Court Judge to expel a participant from the program. Nonetheless, the intent is to retain the participant in substance use treatment.

Dress Code: WCVTC participants are expected to dress appropriately in court. Men must wear

pants of appropriate length and fit, shirt and shoes. Women must wear pants or skirts of appropriate length, a modest top and shoes. Tight and/or low-riding pants, see-through blouses, mini-skirts, “crop tops”, tube tops, bathing suit tops and halter tops are examples of unacceptable attire. Clothing bearing drug or alcohol related themes or promoting, or advertising alcohol or drug use is not allowed. No gang colors or gang clothing shall be worn in court. No sunglasses, bandanas or hats are to be worn inside the courtroom. The intent of this dress code is to promote participants to respect themselves and the Court. The program’s focus should not be how a participant dresses as much as it should concentrate on a participant’s progress toward meeting goals that involve a law-abiding, drug-free lifestyle. Team members are held to a higher standard than participants.

Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, and the Bailiff: While in the courtroom, participants will place their silenced cell phones/electronic devices on silent for the duration of the court proceedings. Team members will be required to turn their cell phones to silent. A bailiff will be present in the courtroom and responsible for maintaining order and control. It will be the bailiff’s responsibility to inform all treatment court participants and spectators in the courtroom that cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off or on silent.

Participant Behavior: While in court, participants are expected to remain seated and quiet until called upon. The Judge will be addressed with respect. Unless approval to leave is given, participants will remain for the entire proceeding. No children shall be allowed in court without receiving prior permission from the Judge. Congratulations, support, and cheering are encouraged in the courtroom in recognition of participant’s successes.

Confidentiality: All treatment-related documents, in accordance with federal, state, and local law, will be maintained to ensure that the privacy and the identity (for research purposes) of the individual WCVTC participants are protected. All WCVTC participants will be asked to sign a *Consent to Release Information* in accordance with confidentiality regulations. An identification number will be assigned to each participant for use in conducting research and evaluations.

Grievances: All parties participating in the WCVTC have the right to express concerns, recommendations, and grievances. In addition, all parties have the right to request and receive responses via a procedure of due process. Anyone who wishes to file a complaint or grievance may do so without fear of negative repercussions. Grievances should first be submitted in writing to the Specialty Court Program Coordinator (405 Martin Luther King St., Box 4, Georgetown, Texas 78626), or by email (Brenda.staples@wilco.org). Oftentimes, the complaint or grievance can be explained or corrected. However, you also have the right to submit your complaint or grievance directly to the Office of Court Administration, by email Anissa.johnson@txcourts.gov, by phone (512-936-0288), by fax (512-463-1648) or by mail (Office of Court Administration, Attn: Anissa Johnson, PO Box 12428, Austin, TX 78711).

COURT FEES

All WCVTC participants are required to pay a minimum program fee as mandated by the WCVTC Judge. Each participant will be required to pay a \$250.00 program fee, which will be made in monthly payments towards the cost of the program operations. All program fees must be paid in full to fulfill the requirements for graduation unless otherwise ordered by the WCVTC Judge. If participants are unable to afford the program fee the Probation Officer will assist the participant in arranging community service in lieu of the program fee. One hour of community service will equal \$10.00.

INCENTIVES, SANCTIONS AND THERAPUTIC RESPONSES

Incentives: WCVTC will use incentives and sanctions with program participants to assist them in leading law-abiding, drug-free lifestyles. Incentives are used to encourage participants to accomplish goals that they have established for themselves. Team members are encouraged to find reasons to encourage program participants. They are also encouraged to be creative when recommending possible incentives as behavior modification. The list below includes examples of incentives and some reasons to apply them. **The list is not exhaustive.**

Examples of Incentives

- *Praise and Encouragement*
- *Decreased Court Appearances*
- *Social Engagement and Outings*
- *Phase Advancement*
- *Celebration with Food for Phase Ups*
- *Certificates*
- *Reeducation of Supervision*
- *Graduation Ceremonies and award*
- *Travel Approvals*
- *Reduced Community Service Hours*
- *Community Activities*
- *Reduced Sanctions*
- *Drawings for Gift Certificates*
- *Called First and Leave Early*
- *Sports/Concert Tickets*

Reasons for Incentives

- *Consecutive Days of Sobriety*
- *Completion of Phases*
- *Obtaining Employment*
- *Advancing Educational Status*
- *Obtaining Driver's License*
- *Assisting Others*
- *Perfect Attendance with Participation*
- *Outstanding Accomplishment*
- *Surpassing Minimum Requirements*
- *Family Involvement in Treatment*
- *Full Compliance*
- *Full Disclosure of Violation Behavior*

Sanctions: The use of sanctions is necessary to change participant behavior in meaningful ways. When applied appropriately, sanctions may keep a participant from unnecessarily spending time in jail. The threat of sanctions is expected to assist WCVTC participants in becoming successful. As a result of substance use, participants may have lost respect for themselves and they have lost the support of their family and friends; therefore, the use of incentives and sanctions can motivate

participants to succeed. Team members are encouraged to recommend sanctions, which conform to WCVTC's goal of promoting a law-abiding, alcohol & drug-free lifestyle. Examples of sanctions and the reasons for sanctions that the Court Judge may impose are listed below. **The list is not exhaustive.**

Examples of Sanctions

- *Judicial Warning or Admonishment*
- *Curfew*
- *Written Assignment*
- *Reading Assignment*
- *Relegation to Previous Phase*
- *Electronic Monitoring*
- *Fines*
- *Spending Day in Courtroom with Judge*
- *Increased Drug Testing*
- *Increased Community Service Hours*
- *Revocation*
- *Increased Supervision*
- *Increased Court Appearances*
- *Incarceration in County Jail*
- *Expulsion/Termination from the Program*

Reasons for Sanctions

- *Missed Treatment Events (unexcused)*
- *Missed Supervision Contacts (unexcused)*
- *Failure to Abide by Curfew*
- *Negative Attitude*
- *Positive UA's*
- *Adulterated and/or Diluted Urine Samples*
- *Missed 12-Step / Recovery / Self-Help Meetings*
- *Missed Court (unexcused)*
- *Late for Court (unexcused)*
- *New Charges*
- *Missed UA's*
- *Failure to Provide Adequate urinalysis Sample*

Therapeutic Responses: Although requiring participants to complete additional treatment requirements, such as additional groups or individual sessions will appear to the participant as if it is a sanction, the WCVTC team is encouraged to consider such a step as a necessary treatment response. The team should avoid recommending such a response for punitive reasons. Examples of therapeutic responses are below. **The list is not exhaustive.**

Examples of Therapeutic Responses

- *Additional Self-Helps*
- *Paper*
- *Higher Level of Care*
- *Adding Another Treatment Modality*

Reasons for Therapeutic Response

- *Additional Mental Health Resources are needed*
- *Not being able to meet financial obligations*
- *Relapse*
- *Admitted use of Drugs and/or Alcohol*

- *Financial Study*
- *Admitted- Struggling/Dealing with Issues*
- *Failing to Meet Treatment Plan Goals*
- *Positive Drug Test*

*****INCREASED TREATMENT RESPONSES ARE NOT SANCTIONS*****

TREATMENT STANDARDS

Comprehensive Treatment: WCVTC will make available to participants a comprehensive treatment continuum from qualified providers. Frequent judicial intervention and participant treatment retention is key to the program's success. VA and other contracted substance abuse/mental health treatment providers will provide treatment services for WCVTC participants. Other providers are invited to assist program participants by making ancillary services available to them. The expectations and responsibilities of the primary treatment provider are spelled out in the treatment contract.

Residential Treatment: If it becomes necessary for a participant to enter residential treatment, the participant will be subject to the rules, regulations, and practices of that program.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE/DESIGN

The WCVTC team will consist of the County Court Judge, a Court Coordinator, a Program Case Manager, a Prosecutor from the Williamson County Attorney's Office, two Program/Defense attorneys, two probation officers from Adult probation, Licensed Addiction Counselors and representatives from the Local Mental Health Authority, VA Representatives, and a Mentor Coordinator. Most team members have attended both local and national training related to treatment and Veterans' courts offered by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.

Process: The Program Case Manager will schedule an intake screening orientation to verify information and answer questions about the WCVTC and then conduct an initial assessment to establish the applicant's level of addiction and to verify program appropriateness.

The prosecuting attorney will review the case file to determine the State's position on allowing the applicant to enter the treatment court program. If the applicant qualifies for and opts to enter WCVTC, the Court will require successful completion of the WCVTC program as part of any sentence imposed following a plea of guilty to the offense charged or following an admission of guilt in a revocation proceeding.

Staffing: The WCVTC team will staff to assess what level of treatment will best meet the applicant's needs and make recommendations to the Judge. If residential treatment is a needed component of an individual's program, their treatment plan will include the requirements of that

program. Upon release from a residential program, participants will continue participation in the program as directed by the Court and treatment team. If not admitted into a residential treatment program, Veterans will participate in a multi-component, outpatient program which includes developing a treatment plan, drug testing, counseling, recovery support services, recovery support/self-help meetings, and working with a mentor. A case management strategy will also be developed in conjunction with the treatment plan. Ineligibility for VA services will NOT prevent participation.

Plea into WCVTC: A court hearing is scheduled for the applicant to plea into the WCVTC. Once accepted into the program, the participant will meet with the probation officer to receive and review program orientation materials and establish the participant's living and employment status. Participants will undergo an initial alcohol/drug test and receive a number for random drug testing. Participants will be introduced to the WCVTC defense attorneys and the Veteran mentor.

Counseling: Substance use counseling is comprised of two separate formats: individual and group. As part of a treatment plan, participants will be required to participate in both types of counseling if it is appropriate. Together they are designed to develop self-awareness, self-discipline, and coping mechanisms necessary to maintain sobriety. Additional treatment such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) groups, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) treatment, anger management, parenting, Yoga, Art Therapy, Equine Therapy, or any other topic the treatment team recognizes as needed, may also be required. Attendance at both individual and group counseling sessions will be reported to the Judge for ongoing monitoring of progress. Prior permission must be obtained from the probation officer or treatment provider to be excused from any counseling sessions.

Treatment Phase: While in the treatment court, participants will move through five phases. Typically, the orientation/ first phase and second are the most intensive and will focus on detoxification, intensive outpatient treatment, and stabilization. The third phase will focus on aftercare and ancillary treatment needs. The fourth phase focuses on relapse prevention and the fifth phase will focus on recovery and sobriety maintenance.

Participants advance through each phase by maintaining sobriety and completing program requirements. Participants will complete various weekly steps or tasks such as a minimum of two clean alcohol/drug tests, maintaining employment, paying their fees, and participating in required treatment sessions and self-help meetings. As part of the program requirements, each may also complete traffic school, credit counseling, volunteer hours, moral recognition therapy, parenting class and any courses required by the treatment provider, judge, or team.

The WCVTC team will meet prior to the twice monthly court sessions. At that meeting, the team will evaluate each participant's progress and, in a non-adversarial setting, determine whether the Veteran is moving towards treatment goals and is compliant in the program, and review the individualized treatment plan for each Veteran. The team will consider incentives for those who are compliant and possible sanctions or therapeutic responses for those who are not.

Recovery Support/Self Help Meeting: Participants are required to attend recovery support/self-help meetings. The frequency of required attendance is determined by risk/need assessment, progress in the program and phase level. Attendance is an important part of the recovery process. Self-help meetings familiarize the individual with the recovery support/self-help philosophy and help to create social bonds with other recovering veterans. Proof of attendance must be provided the probation officer.

Drug Testing: Participants will be tested for drug and alcohol use at random times throughout the entire treatment process. Participants will be tested a minimum of two times weekly. The Judge will have access to all drug test results, including any failures to test, and may order a drug test at any time. Relapse may occur in recovery; however, a positive, dilute, or missed test will result in a court-imposed sanction. Tampering with any drug test will be deemed a positive test and may result in program termination. The Judge will review all overall performance in the program; repeated offenses may result in progressively severe sanctions.

Travel Requests: Travel privileges will not be granted during the first phase of the WCVTC. A detailed written notice must be submitted to the probation officer **two weeks prior to the requested travel** for consideration and approval by the Court for all other phases of the WCVTC.

Notice must be given as early as possible for work or emergency related travel requests. The work or emergency related travel requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is not a guarantee it will be granted.

All requests will include: Departure and return date and time, reason, full address, route, how the participant will travel, and copies of any reservations or orders. Additional requested information, additional UA's, and additional monitoring equipment may be required for all granted travel requests.

Mentors: Participants are assigned a volunteer Veteran mentor from the community to support efforts to create a better life. Mentors are matched to participants by the Mentor Coordinator with input from the treatment team.

The role of the Veteran mentor is to “Leave No Veteran Behind”, to act as a coach, guide, role model, advocate, and a support person for the individual Veteran participants with whom he/she is working. Mentors understand the roles of other support team members and “fill the gap” to help keep participants moving successfully toward completing the WCVTC program. Their mission is to ensure that every participating Veteran receives the services they require by helping them navigate the system. See **WCVTC Mentor Manual** for information regarding the mentor program.

For further clarification please reference the **Williamson County Veterans Treatment Court Participant Handbook**.

Evaluation: WCVTC will monitor its success with an independent evaluator, who will conduct regular assessments of the program. The WCVTC evaluation plan includes two aspects: 1) an ongoing process evaluation to determine if the program is meeting its goals and objectives; and 2) an

outcome evaluation gathered by administering pre and post-tests to measure specific variables of each WCVTC applicant and participant. The evaluator will utilize a database and Full Court DIMS, to analyze and report on goal attainments and performance measures. Written reports will be provided to the team on an annual basis.

Using the data collected by the evaluator and the reports generated from that data, the WCVTC team will adapt its practices as needed to better meet the needs of the participants and to enhance the court's underlying goal of public safety. The policies and procedure manual and strategic plan will be modified in accordance with evaluator's recommendations.

GRADUATION AND TERMINATION

Graduation: A program participant will be eligible to graduate upon approval of the Treatment Court Judge, who will base her decision on the input from the team. Graduation from the program requires completion of five phases, program fee, restitution, if applicable, development of relapse prevention or continuing care plan that is presented to the team and a minimum of three (3) consecutive months of sobriety and performance of volunteer hours.

Termination: The participant may be terminated from WCVTC if they do not comply with the treatment program. Although a relapse is not absolute grounds for termination, a continual inability to meet treatment goals will result in expulsion. There are several grounds for possible termination. These include:

- Failure to engage in the recommended treatment program.
- Failure to make progress in treatment areas as evidenced by ongoing maladaptive behaviors.
- New criminal charges.
- Corrupting or negatively influencing other WCVTC court participants.
- Tampering with a UA sample.
- Repetitive dishonesty.
- Threatening other participants or treatment team members.

If the decision is made to terminate participation in WCVTC, a show cause / probation termination hearing will be offered to the Veteran and scheduled as applicable. Those Veterans that are terminated may incur further legal consequences from the court holding jurisdiction. Likewise, a veteran who chooses to opt out of the WCVTC will be offered a hearing, which will be scheduled. In case of both termination and opt out, WCVTC fees that have been collecting are forfeited.

ROLE OF THE VTC JUDGE AND OTHER COURT ENTITIES

WCVTC Court Judge: The effective leadership and direction of the Court Judge shapes the success of the Veterans Treatment Court program.

- The Judge participates fully as a Veteran court member, committing to the program mission and goals and works a lead partner to ensure success.
- The Judge initiates the planning process by bringing together the necessary agencies and stakeholders to evaluate current court processes and procedures and collaborates to coordinate innovative solutions. The position allows for the Judge to lead the facilitation and coordination of the Veteran's Treatment Court objectives and goals, allowing each team member to participate fully in the design and implementation of standards and practices.
- The Judge is knowledgeable about addiction and is aware of the impact that substance abuse has on the court system, the lives of offenders and their families and the community at large. The Judge offers and participates in regular cross-training of team members with community representatives and assists in creating community interest in and support for the treatment Court.
- The Judge leads the team to educate the community on program goals and standards and develops community resources to address participant's ancillary needs.
- The Judge develops a working relationship with the program participant, monitors his or her progress and addresses personal and ancillary issues without losing the aura of judicial authority.
- The Judge is the primary force in keeping the treatment court participant motivated to complete his or her program.
- The Judge benefits participants by allowing them to view both positive and negative feedback directed toward treatment court peers.
- The Judge maintains the responsibility of keeping a non-adversarial atmosphere in the Treatment Court to help ensure that all team members keep the Treatment Court goal of rehabilitation and accountability a top priority.

Veteran's Program Case Manager: Participates fully as a Treatment Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Receives referrals from the Courts, Defense Attorneys, Prosecuting Attorneys, discusses expectations with clients and family members.
- Solicits input from family members, prior treatment providers, Veterans' Administration, and program officials.
- Manages the referral process for Program applicants by conducting Program overview for all referred participants; schedules and confirms assessments; interviews and completes the initial assessment process; records results in DIMS and provides initial report to the Treatment Court Coordinator.

- Compiles a written report of findings including recommendations; evaluates the information and makes decisions within established policies and standards.
- Provide crisis intervention services; maintains case files, intakes, and contact logs as well as the offender's statistical database accurately and in a timely manner.
- Keeps current on applicable laws and regulations, as well as clinical developments within a professional area of knowledge; maintains professional levels of communication with internal and external contacts.
- Interview, screen, and gather demographic information on offenders whose charges qualify for the treatment court program.
- Conduct follow-up screenings of Treatment Court participants.
- Briefly explain treatment court program to interested offenders.
- Review the weekly records of those arrested for eligible charges and notify the County or District Attorney's Office of offenders who meet basic eligibility requirements.
- Assist participants with life skills such as time management, job hunting, and budgeting.
- Research employment and community service opportunities for participants.
- Maintain paper and electronic files on participants.
- Attend treatment team meetings.
- Builds partnerships with community organizations to develop referral sources.
- Conducts initial and follow-up screenings of Treatment Court Participants.

Veteran's Court Coordinator: Participates fully as a Treatment Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Coordinates and participates in WCVTC pre-hearings, hearings, team meetings and Steering Committee meetings.
- Manages daily operations and filing systems. Creates dockets, prepares reports for staffing meetings, and assures timely dissemination of compliance information.
- Identifies WCVTC problem areas and recommends possible solutions.
- Participates in performing statistical analysis and program evaluation of WCVTC.

- Participates in the collection of data and the maintenance of the DIMS (Court Case Management) software used by WCVTC.
- Assists in developing the team resource strategy to acquire funding, assists in preparing grant applications and builds linkages by supporting team in community outreach activities.
- Monitors grant deadlines and requirements.
- Creates supporting materials and disseminates them to stakeholders and service providers.
- Creates and distributes marketing materials.
- Creates and disseminates program materials to participants.
- Assists in compiling, writing, editing, and updating Treatment Court policy and procedures and program manuals.
- Informs WCVTC team members of Treatment Court-related news and training opportunities.
- Periodically evaluates WCVTC operations using the Ten Key Components of Veteran Treatment Courts and communicates his or her findings to the Treatment Court Team.

Veteran's Treatment Court Prosecutor: Participates fully as a Veterans Treatment Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Appears in court on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month to represent the County in all Treatment Court pre-hearings and hearings.
- Participates in bi-monthly staffing meetings, advocating in a non-adversarial manner for effective sanctions and incentives for program compliance or lack thereof.
- Ensures community safety concerns by maintaining eligibility standards while participating in a non-adversarial environment focusing on rehabilitation and accountability.
- Immediately screens possible participants and makes referral to WCVTC Court to determine eligibility.
- Discusses Veterans Treatment Court referrals with the appropriate Assistant County Attorney; files plea agreement specifying Veterans Treatment Court.
- Participates in regular cross-trainings to ensure knowledge of gender, age and cultural issues and addiction so that he or she may apply that knowledge appropriately.
- Files necessary legal documents.

- Acts as a spokesperson for the Veterans Court program, contributing to and participating in the education of the community, peers, colleagues, and the judiciary.

Program Attorney/Defense Counsel: Participates fully as a Veteran's Treatment Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Evaluates the offender's legal situation and ensures that the participant's legal rights are protected.
- Effectively advises each participant of their legal rights, legal options, treatment options, program conditions and sentencing outcomes while developing a relationship with the participant that promotes the Participant's long-term best interests.
- Appears in court on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month to represent the County in all Treatment Court pre-hearings and hearings.
- Participates in bi-monthly staffing meetings, advocating in a non-adversarial manner for effective sanctions and incentives for program compliance or lack thereof, and promoting a sense of a unified team presence.
- Participates in regular cross-trainings to ensure knowledge of gender, age and cultural issues and addiction so that he or she may apply that knowledge appropriately.
- Encourages the participant to be truthful with the judge and treatment staff, informing each Participant that she will be expected to speak directly to the judge, not through an attorney.
- Files necessary legal documents.
- Reviews arrest warrants, affidavits, charging documents and other relevant information and reviews all program documents including waivers and written agreements.
- Acts as a spokesperson for the Veterans Court program, contributing to and participating in the education of the community, peers, colleagues, and the judiciary.

Community Supervision / Probation Officer: Participates fully as a Veterans Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Participates in bimonthly staffing meetings, providing progress reports, making recommendations, and identifying supervision and ancillary service needs.
- Advocates for effective sanctions or incentives for program compliance or lack thereof.
- Provides coordinated and comprehensive supervision to minimize participant manipulation

and splitting of program staff. Coordinates continuum of care through regular contact with the treatment provider.

- Develops effective measures for drug testing and supervision compliance report that provide the team with sufficient and timely information.
- Conducts field visits, office visits and treatment visits.
- Primarily responsible for the collection of urinalysis samples.
- Determines if participant is engaging in criminal activity and reports same to court.
- Assists in compiling and collecting Veteran Court information for statistical analysis.
- Coordinates with ancillary entities, including health and mental health services, victims' services, housing, entitlements, transportation, education, vocational training, job skills training and placement to provide a strong foundation for recovery.
- Prepares sentencing-related documents as required by the Judge.
- Maintains compliance with all Department of Correction's policies and procedures.
- Acts as a spokesperson for the Veterans Treatment Court program, contributing to and participating in the education of the community, peers, and colleagues.
- Participates in regular cross-trainings to ensure knowledge of gender, age and cultural issues and addiction so that he or she may apply that knowledge appropriately.

Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist and Treatment Provider: Participates fully as a Veteran Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist and Treatment providers' responsibilities entail administrative activities, clinical supervision, and counseling services.
- Participates in bimonthly staffing meetings, providing progress reports, making recommendations, and advocating for effective sanctions and incentives for program compliance or lack thereof.
- Ensures that participants are screened and evaluated for substance abuse in a timely manner. The assessment will include medical history, employment history, criminal history, educational history, drug abuse history and psychosocial evaluation. May also include mental health assessment.
- Makes appropriate referrals to residential treatment with coordination through Community Compliance Officer.

- Develops program materials appropriate to the participant population.
- Develops appropriate treatment plans, continuing care plans and aftercare plans.
- Make appropriate referrals to community resources and notify the Treatment Court members.
- Conducts group, individual, and family treatment.
- Provides written and verbal progress reports.
- Ensures that all files are maintained in accordance with program policies and procedures, and federal and state requirements for outpatient and continuing care programs.
- Maintains confidentiality of records and ensure professional and ethical standards of practice.
- Attends in-service training and continuing education conferences.
- Provide all statistics as required by the grant.
- Provide and participate in cross-training relating to addiction, alcoholism, and gender, age, and cultural issues.
- Acts as a spokesperson for the Veterans Court program, contributing to and participating in the education of the community, peers, colleagues, and the judiciary.

Veterans Court Law Enforcement Representative: Participates fully as a Veteran Court Team member, committing himself or herself to the program mission and goals and working as a full partner to ensure success.

- Participates in bimonthly staffing meetings.
- Assists the treatment court team in monitoring of participants.
- Will designate specific officers to perform the service for the term of this Agreement and will assign a representative to participate as an active member of the WCVTC Team.
- Provide appropriate information and insight from the law enforcement community's perspective regarding treatment court participants.
- Will help to identify potential and eligible treatment court participants.
- Will advocate for effective incentives and sanctions during staffing.
- Serves as a liaison between the treatment court team and the community and provides information to the treatment court team on community issues related to alcohol and drug use.

- Provides information and support to participants in the community, encouraging them to succeed in the treatment court.
- Contributes to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
- May assist with home visits and curfew checks.

Program Evaluator

- Capture Program data.
- Provide data to assist with ongoing funding strategies.
- Provide cost/benefit study.

All Veteran Treatment Court Team Members:

- Perform as a “Team” in a non-adversarial approach to make recommendations regarding Participants and program progress in a manner that effectively achieves the program’s goals.
- Meet at a minimum bimonthly for staffing meetings to provide input to the Judge regarding participant progress and the application of incentives and consequences.
- Attend on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month Veteran Court hearings.
- Participate in other pre-screen staffing and staffing meeting as necessary.
- Assist in program development issues.
- Assist in identifying, coordinating, and participating in training opportunities.
- Assist in creating and modifying Veteran Court policies, procedures, manuals, and publications.
- Locate and recommend utilization of ancillary community resources.
- Assist in the collection of Veteran Court Program data.
- Identify and train individuals to act as back up staff when needed.
- Act as ambassador and information conduit from Veteran Court to other staff within each member’s own entity.
- Participate in speaking engagements to community-based organizations as necessary to forge positive relationships between the program and the community.

- Make decisions regarding the participant's continued enrollment in the program based on performance in treatment rather than solely on the legal aspects of the case.
- Monitor quality of treatment services.
- Collaborate in a flexible, positive manner to develop an effective and efficient program.

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Meetings, - At the discretion of the Veteran Court Judge, meetings involving all Veteran Court Team Members and representatives of ancillary services will be convened for the purposes of training, problem solving and settling questions concerning the program's processes.

Applicant – Veterans who have applied to the Veterans Treatment Court but are not accepted into the program. Applicants before consideration will need an intake screening and assessment evaluations.

Breath-check – A compact portable alcohol monitoring device with random check-in testing using a smart phone.

Community Service- An activity completed by program Participants for an approved not-for-profit organization whereby the community benefits. Community service work can be used as a regular component of WCVTC or as a sanction for non-compliance.

Community Supervision Officer (CSO) / Probation Officer (PO) - A designated community supervision/ probation officer who is assigned supervisor responsibility of program Participants.

Family Counseling Session – A therapeutic treatment session for program Participants and their families or significant others. The treatment provider is expected to encourage frequent and consistent participation.

Group Counseling Session – A counseling session involving only program Participants and a qualified clinician who facilitates. Sessions will last a minimum of ninety (90) minutes. Group size will not exceed eighteen (18) Participants without the approval of the Veteran Court Team. To maximize program effectiveness, groups will be conducted on the days and times that are deemed necessary by the Veteran Court Team to include evenings. Qualified clinicians must use research-based treatment modalities that have been proven to be effective. Some examples include: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Restructuring, Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), Relapse Prevention and Relapse Support.

Hearing – judicial review that involves the review of the veteran's progress in the program provides an opportunity for the veteran to converse with the Judge, and for the Court to formally apply incentives and sanctions and determine continued participation in the court.

Individual Counseling Session - Counseling session facilitated by a qualified clinician with only one Participant. The duration of an individual counseling session will be no less than thirty (30) minutes.

Examples of some of the issues that sessions might address are needs assessment, treatment plans, continuing care plans, stopping illegal substance abuse, impaired functioning, stopping illegal activity, family relationships and social relationships.

Interlock Device (IID) – is an in-car breathalyzer that prevents a user from starting a vehicle until a breath alcohol test is taken.

Life Skill Classes are designed to assist program Participants to function in society more readily. Topics include but are not limited to proper hygiene, interviewing for employment, parenting, pregnancy, childcare, nutrition, and personal finances.

Participant – A veteran who was accepted and pled into the Veterans Treatment Court.

Plea-In – This is when the Applicant goes before the Judge and is accepted into the Veterans Treatment Court.

Portable Alcohol Monitor (PAM) – is an in-home monitoring device that is a portable alcohol monitoring device. They are commonly court-ordered as an alternative to the ignition interlock for offenders who do not drive or own vehicles.

Pre-Screen Staffing – is a meeting that takes place to discuss new applicants' status, treatment plan, track and determine if the Applicant is a good candidate for the Veterans Treatment Court.

SCRAM: a continuous, remote alcohol monitoring testing system that utilizes an ankle bracelet.

Staffing – A meeting that takes place prior to hearings that includes Veteran Treatment Court Team members. The purpose of staffing is to review Participant progress and compile written progress reports and to make recommendations concerning the possible use of incentives and sanctions.

Veteran Treatment Court Team – The Veteran's Court Team comprises the Court Judge, Court Coordinator, a county prosecutor, Defense attorney, Community Supervision/Probation Officer, Treatment Provider Representative, local law enforcement representatives, and Veteran Justice Outreach Specialist. The Veteran's Court Team comprises persons that typically address the program's day-to-day activities.

Support Groups – a group that may or may not be faith based in nature that supports mental, emotional, physical, social, or spiritual recovery from substance abuse or mental health issues. Examples may include Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Grief Group, bible study groups etc.

Veteran: an individual who has served or is serving in the US Armed Forces, regardless of discharge status.

Veteran Mentor: A community member who has served in the US Armed Forces who volunteers time to participants in the capacity of advocate, resource identifier, active listener, 'battle buddy', and friend.

DRUG TESTING POLICY

Purpose: Participants of the WCVTC may be addressing substance use problems. Drug testing is necessary to determine effectiveness of treatment plans as determined by presence/absence of drugs/alcohol. Drug testing is also used to as one measure to gauge risk posed to the community. Drug testing assists participants in remaining drug free.

Policy: The WCVTC has outlined the following drug testing policy.

- Positive urinalysis test result indicates the use of a substance.
- All drug tests used shall be from the same manufacturer.
- Urinalysis samples may be shipped for confirmation if the sample result is positive for a substance.
- Drug tests will be administered even if the Veteran admits to drug usage prior to testing.
- If an analysis is positive, the participant will be given the chance to admit to drug usage. If the participant admits to drug usage the drug test may be sent in for confirmation and it may be at the expense of WCVTC.
- If the participant denies drug usage, the drug test will be sent in for confirmation and if the confirmation is positive for drug use, **the participant will be responsible for the cost of the confirmation test.** If the confirmation is negative for drug use, WCVTC will incur the expense.
- A required urinalysis sample that is missed is considered a positive drug test.
- A positive urinalysis test may result in a sanction which may include but is not limited to a treatment response.
- Tampering with a drug test, using adulterants, smuggling in another person's urine, etc. are considered a positive drug test and extra sanctions may apply.
- Providing urinalysis samples are a requirement of participation in the WCVTC. The samples are required to be observed by program staff.
- Program personnel will remain in direct visible contact with the urinalysis sample until the drug test is administered or the sample is secured in laboratory shipping standards by the participant.
- The initial drug tests will be administered immediately following court induction or immediately upon release from custody. A full panel drug screen will be performed.
- In the case of positive samples, levels will be monitored until the Veteran is clean.

- Veterans will not be informed of the number of drug tests they will be required to perform.
- Random drug tests will occur throughout the duration of a participant's program in accordance with best practice guidelines, remaining steady throughout their program.

ALCOHOL AND MEDICATION POLICY

Purpose: WCVTC believes that the answer to most problems is not found in the form of alcohol or other medications. Veterans in WCVTC may be addressing substance use problems. Introduction of alcohol and other drugs into their bodies can result in severe physiological, psychological, and legal consequences. Understanding that most people have a need to take prescription and over the counter medications at some point in their life, WCVTC has developed the following policy for participants. This policy is intended to remain clear concerning the use of alcohol by program participants as well.

Policy: WCVTC has outlined the following policy for alcohol and medication. An additional addendum is included for medications that can be taken without approval.

Alcohol: No program participant is permitted to consume alcohol while in the program. Furthermore, participants may not enter an establishment whose primary purpose is to sell or distribute alcohol.

Over the Counter Medications: Participants are encouraged to resolve ailments through alternative methods to using medications. Prior to using any over the counter medication, participants are required to discuss it with their treatment counselor and probation officer. Participants may not take medications that contain ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, phenylpropanolamine, or alcohol. Examples of these medications are Sudafed, Nyquil, Contac, Sine-Off and Allerest. This is not a complete listing. Participants are encouraged to read the label and ask the pharmacist for medications that do not contain these substances. Some over the counter medications that do not contain these substances are aspirin, ibuprofen, and acetaminophen. Anyone taking over the counter medications should read and follow the directions on the label.

Physicians: Participants are encouraged to receive medical treatment from a qualified medical doctor as needed. Participants are required to disclose their substance abuse history to their physician so that the physician can best address the patient's needs. "Doctor shopping" or using multiple physicians to obtain prohibited medications is prohibited.

Prescription Medications – Program participants must register any prescription or over the counter medication with their treatment counselor prior to taking the medication except in a life-threatening situation. The participant is required to inform their treatment counselor as soon as possible after taking such medications in a life-threatening situation. If participants are prescribed medications by a

doctor, they are required to take the medication as prescribed. Narcotic medication is prohibited in the WCVTC.

A candidate for the program will not be permitted to enter the program if they are using a mood-altering prescription medication or one that will test positive on a drug test. The candidate may become eligible if they stop using the medication in question under the supervision of their doctor, or if their doctor prescribes another medication that is not mood altering and will not test positive on a drug test.

If a participant must take a prescription medication that will test positive on a drug test for a limited period, the participant's clean day count will be suspended while they are taking the medication. Such an event should occur infrequently. Maintaining sobriety is most difficult for an addicted person when they must take mood-altering medications, even for a short period of time. Pain medication is particularly problematic. There are many prescription medications that are effective, not mood altering and will not test positive on a drug test. Most antibiotics fit into this category.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

AGREEMENT between the Williamson County Veterans Treatment Team and its Representing Agencies/Businesses.

The parties to this Agreement endorse the mission and goals of the treatment court in order to enhance public safety, ensure participant accountability, and reduce the cost to society. By addressing criminal thinking, substance/alcohol use disorders, trauma, and mental and physical health, the participants will realize improved quality of life. The parties recognize that for the goals and mission of the treatment court to be successful, cooperation and collaboration must occur within a network of systems.

The parties to this Agreement understand that the confidentiality of participants' alcohol and drug treatment records are protected under Federal regulations: Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records, 42 CFR Part 2 and the HIPPA Privacy Rule, 45 CFR 160, 162, and 164. The parties agree to comply with all confidentiality requirements.

PROGRAM GOALS

Improve the lives of participants with substance use disorders in the criminal justice system through the integration of intensive supervision, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health services, alcohol and drug testing, and case management services with criminal justice system processing.

The parties agree that the program will follow the *10 Key Components of Drug Courts* in which the respective agencies will work cooperatively. They are:

1. Drug courts integrate alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing.
2. Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.
3. Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the drug court program.
4. Drug courts provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug and other related treatment and rehabilitations services.
5. Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing.
6. A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participant compliance.
7. Ongoing judicial interaction with each drug court participant is essential.
8. Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness.
9. Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations.
10. Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court effectiveness.

INDIVIDUAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES AND STAFF COMMITMENTS

Treatment Court Judge

1. The Judge will ensure a cooperative atmosphere for attorneys, probation officers, law enforcement, and Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist and Treatment Providers to stay focused on the task of providing participants with treatment and rehabilitation opportunities.
2. The Judge will ensure the integrity of the treatment court is maintained by having an understanding of the program's policies and procedures.
3. The Judge will participate as an active member of the Staffing Team and will chair the treatment court team.
4. The Judge will assist in motivating and monitoring the participants of the treatment court.
5. The Judge will gather information from the treatment court team and make all final decisions on incentives and sanctions that effect the participants.
6. The Judge will act as a mediator to develop resources and improve interagency linkages.
7. The Judge will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
8. The Judge encourages participants to succeed, treats participants fairly, and with respect and is not intimidating.
9. The Judge emphasizes treatment throughout the participant's time in the treatment court.

Ethical Considerations

- The Judge must show impartiality
- The Judge must be aware of ex parte communication
- The Judge must demonstrate judicial authority
- The Judge must not give up their final decision-making authority
- The Judge must recognize constitutional rights and follow appropriate legal processes

Treatment Court Coordinator

1. Coordinates and participates in WCVTC pre-hearings, hearings, team meetings and Steering Committee meetings.
2. Manages daily operations and filing systems. Creates dockets, prepares reports for staffing meetings, and assures timely dissemination of compliance information.
3. Participates in performing statistical analysis and program evaluation of WCVTC.
4. Participates in the collection of data and the maintenance of the DIMS (Court Case Management) software used by WCVTC.
5. Assists in developing the team resource strategy to acquire funding, assists in preparing grant applications and builds linkages by supporting team in community outreach activities.
6. Creates supporting materials and disseminates them to stakeholders and service providers.
7. Creates and distributes marketing materials.
8. Creates and disseminates program materials to participants.
9. Assists in compiling, writing, editing, and updating Treatment Court policy and procedures and program manuals.

10. Informs WCVTC Team members of Treatment Court-related news and training opportunities. Organizes and arranges training opportunities for the project teams.
11. Periodically evaluates WCVTC operations using the Ten Key Components of Veteran Treatment Courts and communicates his or her findings to the Treatment Court Team at treatment court team quarterly meetings.
12. Coordinates and plans commencement ceremonies for the specialty courts.
13. Plans, organizes, and participates in special projects, including outreach efforts, public speaking, and special activities for program participants.
14. Coordinates with Auditor's office to prepare required grant reports, compiles statistical information to monitor grant compliance, and assists with monitoring of budgets.
15. Research funding sources for program sustainability.
16. Performs special duties as assigned.

Ethical Considerations

- The Coordinator must be knowledgeable of each team members ethical boundaries and how they are incorporated into the treatment court.

Treatment Court Program Case Manager

1. Receives referrals from the Courts, Defense Attorneys, Prosecuting Attorneys, discusses expectations with clients and family members.
2. Solicits input from family members, prior treatment providers, Veterans' Administration, and program officials.
3. Manages the referral process for Program applicants by conducting Program overview for all referred participants; schedules and confirms assessments; interviews and completes the initial assessment process; records results in DIMS and provides initial report to the Treatment Court Coordinator.
4. Compiles a written report of findings including recommendations; evaluates the information and makes decisions within established policies and standards.
5. Provide crisis intervention services; maintains case files, intakes, and contact logs as well as the offender's statistical database accurately and in a timely manner.
6. Keeps current on applicable laws and regulations, as well as clinical developments within a professional area of knowledge; maintains professional levels of communication with internal and external contacts.
7. Interview, screen, and gather demographic information on offenders whose charges qualify for the treatment court program.
8. Conduct follow-up screenings of Treatment Court participants.
9. Briefly explain treatment court program to interested offenders.
10. Review the weekly records of those arrested for eligible charges and notify the County or District Attorney's Office of offenders who meet basic eligibility requirements.
11. Assist participants with life skills such as time management, job hunting, and budgeting.
12. Research employment and community service opportunities for participants.
13. Maintain paper and electronic files on participants.
14. Attend treatment team meetings.

15. Builds partnerships with community organizations to develop referral sources.

Ethical Considerations

- The Program Manager must be knowledgeable of each team members ethical boundaries and how they are incorporated into the treatment court.

Treatment Court Prosecutor

1. The Prosecutor will be assigned to the treatment court for the term of this Agreement and will participate as an active member of the Staffing Team and the Steering/Planning Team.
2. The Prosecutor will assist in identifying defendants arrested for specific offenses that meet program eligibility requirements.
3. The Prosecutor may help resolve other pending legal cases that affect participants' legal status or eligibility.
4. The Prosecutor will participate as a Team member during pre-court staffings and advocate for effective incentives and sanctions for program compliance or lack thereof.
5. The Prosecutor will participate as a Team member, operating in a non-adversarial manner during court, to promote a sense of a unified Team presence.
6. The Prosecutor will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
7. The Prosecutor agrees that a positive drug test or open court admission of drug possession or use will not result in filing of additional charges.
8. The Prosecutor makes decisions regarding the participant's continued enrollment in the program based on performance in treatment rather than on legal aspects of the case, barring additional criminal behavior.

Ethical Considerations

- The Prosecutor must make decisions to protect public safety
- The Prosecutor must advocate for the victims' interest

Treatment Court Defense Attorney

1. The Defense Attorney will be assigned to the treatment court for the term of this Agreement and will participate as an active member of the Staffing Team and the Steering/Planning Team.
2. The Defense Attorney will advise the defendant as to the nature and purpose of the treatment court, the rules governing participation, the consequences of abiding or failing to abide by the rules, and how participating or not participating in treatment court will affect his/her interests.
3. The Defense Attorney will participate as a Team member, operating in a non-adversarial manner during court, to promote a sense of a unified Team presence.
4. The Defense Attorney will review the participant's progress in the program and advocate appropriately for effective incentives and sanctions for program compliance or lack thereof.
5. The Defense Attorney will ensure the constitutional rights of the participant are protected.

6. The Defense Attorney will advocate for the participant's stated interests.
7. The Defense Attorney will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
8. The Defense Attorney explains all the rights that the participant will temporarily or permanently relinquish.
9. The Defense Attorney explains that because criminal prosecution for admitting to substance or alcohol use in open court will not be invoked, the participant is encouraged to be truthful with the team.

Ethical Considerations

- The Defense Attorney must demonstrate integrity to the Participant
- The Defense Attorney must protect attorney/client privilege
- The Defense Attorney must ensure the Participant's due process rights are protected

Treatment Court Probation Officer

1. The Probation Officer will be assigned to provide comprehensive case management and field supervision of treatment court participants for the term of this Agreement and to participate as an active member of the Staffing Team and Steering/Planning Team.
2. The Probation Officer will use a validated criminogenic risk/needs assessment tool to be conducted during the referral process to ensure the treatment court is serving the appropriate target population.
3. The Probation Officer will provide coordinated and comprehensive supervision and case management to include telephone contact, office/home/employment visits, as well as random field visits to participants' homes.
4. The Probation Officer will develop effective measures for alcohol and drug testing and supervision compliance reporting that provide the treatment court staffing team with sufficient and timely information to implement sanctions, incentives, and therapeutic interventions.
5. The Probation Officer will monitor/assist the participant compliance and progress to the adherence of the Judgement and Sentence order and program requirements.
6. The Probation Officer will participate in pre-court staffing and will provide updates on all active participants and advocate for effective incentives, sanctions, and therapeutic interventions during staffing.
7. The Probation Officer will coordinate the utilization of community-based services such as health and mental health services, victims' services, housing, entitlements, transportation, education, vocational training, and job skills training and placement to provide a strong foundation for participants.
8. The Probation Officer will utilize and deliver cognitive-behavioral interventions to address criminal thinking and increase a readiness for change.
9. The Probation Officer will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
10. The Probation Officer will develop a written case plan and update based ongoing risk and need assessment.

Ethical Considerations

- The Probation Officer must make decisions to protect public safety

- The Probation Officer must inform the court of non-compliance with judicial orders in a timely manner

Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Court Provider

1. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will participate fully as a Team member, for the term of this Agreement and will work as a partner to ensure the success of treatment court participants.
2. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will operate in conjunction with the treatment court team for the assessment and placement of participants in the appropriate level of care to meet their treatment needs.
3. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will utilize a validated clinical screening and assessment tool to ensure appropriate placement of participants.
4. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will provide progress reports to the Team prior to staffing, so the Team will have sufficient and timely information.
5. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will advocate for effective incentives, sanctions, and therapeutic adjustments during staffing.
6. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will provide information to the Team on assessment, basis of alcohol/substance use, the impact of treatment on the participant, and the potential for relapse.
7. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will ensure all confidentiality forms are signed with the Participant and the team.
8. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
9. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider manages the delivery of treatment services and administers behavioral or cognitive-behavioral treatments that are documented in manuals and have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.
10. The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider provides clinical case management, provides relapse prevention and continuing care and develops a continuing care plan with participants.

Ethical Considerations

- The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider must keep its integrity to the Participant
- The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider must have a valid release of information executed before sharing patient information
- The Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist or Treatment Provider only needs to share information that is pertinent to court requirements (i.e.; attendance, testing results, where Participant is in treatment, changes in Participant treatment)

Treatment Court Law Enforcement

1. Law Enforcement will assist the treatment court team in monitoring of participants.
2. Law Enforcement will designate specific officers to perform the service for the term of this Agreement and will assign a representative to participate as an active member of the WCVTC Team.
3. Law Enforcement will identify appropriate representatives to participate in the bimonthly court staffing meetings to provide appropriate information and insight from the law enforcement community's perspective regarding treatment court participants.
4. Law Enforcement will help to identify potential and eligible treatment court participants.
5. Law Enforcement will advocate for effective incentives and sanctions during staffing.
6. Law Enforcement serves as a liaison between the treatment court team and the community and provides information to the treatment court team on community issues related to alcohol and drug use.
7. Law Enforcement will provide information and support to participants in the community, encouraging them to succeed in the treatment court.
8. Law Enforcement will contribute to the education of peers, colleagues, and the judiciary in the efficacy of treatment court.
9. Law Enforcement may assist with home visits and curfew visits.

Ethical Considerations

- Law Enforcement must protect public safety
- Law Enforcement is sworn to uphold the law and serve their community

In creating this partnership and uniting around a single goal of addressing an underlying problem affecting our community, we pledge to enhance communication between courts, law enforcement, advocacy groups, and treatment programs. Through this linkage of services, we expect greater participation and effectiveness in addressing treatment court participants involved in the criminal justice system.

All parties agree to be represented in the treatment court team. The treatment court team will be responsible for modifying and amending this Agreement. The treatment court team will address problems and issues as identified and develop policy and program modifications.

AGREEMENT MODIFICATIONS

Any individual agency wishing to amend and/or modify this Agreement will notify the coordinator of this issue(s). The coordinator will present the issue(s) to the Steering Team for the purpose of modifying and/or amending the Agreement. The issues will be decided by consensus (if possible) or by simple majority, if not.

TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

Individual agencies contemplating termination of their participation in this Agreement shall first notify the coordinator of their concerns. The coordinator shall attempt to resolve the program to

ensure continuation of the treatment court. If the coordinator is unable to resolve the concern, the issue(s) will be presented to the Steering Team to reach a resolution. If unable to resolve the problem, the individual agency or department can exercise its right to terminate this Agreement by notifying all other agencies in writing a minimum of sixty (60) days prior to such termination.

IN WITNESS THEROF, the parties have caused their duly authorized representative to execute this Agreement.



Judge / Laura Barker

11/18/2021

Date



Specialty Court Program Coordinator / Brenda Staples

21. 11. 18

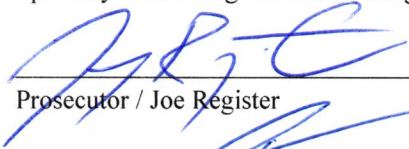
Date



Specialty Court Program Case Manager / Erin Lucas

11/18/21

Date



Prosecutor / Joe Register

11/18/2021

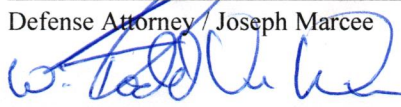
Date



Defense Attorney / Joseph Marcee

11/18/2021

Date



Defense Attorney / Todd Ver Weire

11-18-2021

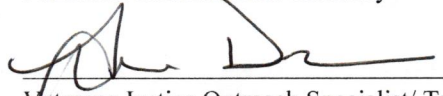
Date



Probation Officer / Mike Holladay

11.18.2021

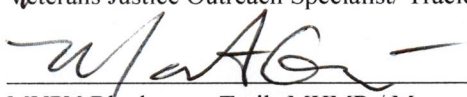
Date



Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist/ Tracie Dick

11/18/21

Date



MVPN Bluebonnet Trails MHMR / Marcos Garcia

11-18-21

Date



CSCD Court Services Supervisor / Jess O'Brien

11-18-21

Date



Director of Jail Diversion / Jonathan Lemuel

11-15-21

Date

Williamson County Veterans Treatment Court Pre/Post Program Survey

The Williamson County Veterans Treatment Court Project Team has a goal of helping veterans or current members of the U.S. armed forces get back on track being integral and productive members of our community. The Project Team wants to know if our program is meeting the needs of our participants. You will be asked to complete the following short survey upon entrance and completion of the program with *1 meaning I strongly disagree and 10 meaning strongly agree.*

1. I have a stable and safe place to live.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2. My physical wellness (nutrition, exercise, sleep, and substance use) is important to me and I take proper care of my body for optimal health and functioning.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

3. My emotional wellness allows me the power to understand and express feelings.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. I can form supportive and interdependent relationships with others.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

5. My finances are in good order and I am able to meet my and / or family' s needs through successfully managing my financial resources.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

6. I have satisfaction in my occupation and/ or educational path and have set realistic career goals that help me find meaning and enrichment in my life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7. I live a purposeful life, am part of a healthy community and make positive contributions to society.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Comments:

Thank you for your participation and help in improving the program for other veterans. "Leave No Veteran

Behind!"

VETERANS COURT STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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Military Veteran Peer Network

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Marcos.Garica@bbtrails.org

Addendum #1

Approved Over the Counter (OTC) Medication List

The following medications are approved for Veterans Court participants to take without prior permission from their treatment provider and/or probation officer. **ONLY THE VETERANS PROGRAM DIRECTOR CAN APPROVE MEDICATION. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VETERANS PROGRAM COURT FOR ALL MEDICATION APPROVALS!!** These medications must be taken at the appropriate dosage listed on the drug's label or a positive urine test could result. **DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN THE DOSAGE INDICATED ON THE LABEL!**

If you have any questions, please contact your probation officer and/or treatment provider for clarification. **EACH DRUG LISTED BELOW MUST BE TAKEN AS LISTED AND WITHOUT ANY OTHER ADDITIVES (i.e., NO TYLENOL COLD OR TYLENOL NIGHTTIME).**

PAIN: (none of the following can be the PM formula)

Acetaminophen 500 mg, 1 or 2 tablets every 4-6 hrs.

Ibuprofen 200-800mg, every 4-6 hours as needed

Aspirin

Excedrin Migraine

STOMACH:

Mylanta

Milk of Magnesia

Pepto Bismol

ANTACIDS:

Zantac

Pepcid

Prilosec

Tums/Rolaids

FLU SYMPTOMS:

Theraflu

Alka-Seltzer

COUGH/COLD:

Delsym (non-alcoholic/pediatric)

Mucinex (cannot be D or DM)

& thermal patches

Icy Hot muscle rub

& thermal patches

JOINT PAIN:

Tylenol Arthritis

Ben Gay muscle rub

ALLERGIES: (none of the following can be the D or DM formula)

Claritin

Allegra

Benadryl

VITAMINS:

Multivitamins

Prenatal vitamins

Addendum #2

FOOD, DRINKS, OR ITEMS THAT MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF ALCOHOL

To avoid any difficulties or problems with your testing device be mindful of eating any foods or drinking any liquids that may have any trace amounts of alcohol that would render a failing test. To do this, a participant should: (1) know all ingredients of foods or drinks, **READ LABELS**; (2) not eat or drink anything five minutes before testing; (3) and clean out mouth by rinsing with water before testing.

It is important to follow the steps listed above. Below are examples of items to avoid which may contain trace amounts of alcohol:

- Alcohol based Mouth Wash and Toothpaste
- Sugarless Gum
- Alcohol Based Sweeteners
- Certain Energy Drinks or Bars
- Hand Sanitizer
- Kombucha
- Certain Peanut Butters
- Fermented Soda Drinks
- Nyquil
- Ripe or fermented Fruit or foods
- “Alcohol Free” Beer or Wine (which may contain up to 0.5% alcohol by volume)
- Foods Cooked with or Contained with Alcohol (studies have shown that 25% of alcohol may remain after one hour of cooking)
- Nutritional supplements taken as liquid or by dropper.

PRODUCTS THAT CONTAIN CANNABIDIOL, CBD, THC, OR SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA ARE PROHIBITED FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE DWI/DRUG COURT PROGRAM

These products are not regulated by the FDA and may contain the active ingredient in marijuana or other substances which could result in a positive drug test. The Participant is responsible for all positive drug tests which result from the use of such products. Participants are prohibited from the use of marijuana and CBD products even if they may be traveling in an area where such products may be legally used.