

Collin County Adult Mental Health Program Policies and Participant Handbook



Honorable Jennifer Edgeworth
219th Judicial District Court

Honorable Lance Baxter
County Criminal Court #3

Introduction

This handbook explains the program policies, procedures, and expectations for every participant. The Adult Mental Health Court Program is built on three essential values: dignity and respect for self and others, personal responsibility, and honesty. Our mission is to reduce repeat offenses by focusing on treatment, stability, and accountability, while supporting participants in building healthier, more stable lives.

Program Structure

As a participant in the Adult Mental Health Court Program, you will work closely with your supervision officer, mental health providers, and the court team to support your success. Your Integrated Treatment Plan (ITP) will be created by a mental health professional during your initial evaluation. This plan will outline your personal goals and steps needed to help you reach them. The plan may change over time to meet your needs and connect you with helpful resources.

Examples of treatment plan goals may include:

- Attending and participating in mental health services, counseling, or other treatment
- Maintaining sobriety from alcohol, recreational drugs, CBD, and delta products, and providing negative drug tests throughout the program
- Taking mental health medications exactly as prescribed by your psychiatrist
- Attending all Adult Mental Health Court hearings as directed.

Your supervision officer will monitor your progress and provide ongoing support throughout the program. In Phases 1 and 2, you will be required to attend office visits bi-weekly, and in Phase 3, once per month. Court appearances will be held twice a month during Phase 1, along with Recall Docket, and once per month during Phases 2 and 3.

During court sessions, you will meet with the program's judges to review your progress, celebrate successes, confirm compliance with program requirements, and address any areas where additional support may be needed.

Program Duration

The Adult Mental Health Court Program is designed to support your recovery, stability, and success. The program duration is between 9 months and 2 years, the exact length depends on your individual needs, progress in treatment, and engagement with the program.

To enter the program, you must accept responsibility for the offense(s) through a judicial confession. Upon successful completion of the program, your case(s) will be dismissed. After dismissal, the program will file the necessary paperwork to make all records related to the arrest(s) eligible for expungement. If you do not complete the program, your case(s) will be returned to the original court for resolution through traditional court proceedings.

Criteria for Participation

To participate in the Adult Mental Health Court Program, you must meet the following criteria:

- **Mental Health Diagnosis** – You must have a diagnosis listed in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders* (DSM – 5). Eligible diagnoses include, but are not limited to: Bipolar Disorder, Major Depressive

Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Schizoaffective Disorder, and Schizophrenia.

- **Voluntary Participation** – This program is voluntary. You must agree to follow all program requirements and actively participate.
- **Pending Charges in Collin County** – You must have pending charges filed in Collin County Courts. Only pending charges will be considered for entry.
- **Residency Requirement** – You must live in Collin County. This refers to the physical address where you are currently staying.
- **No Current Community Supervision** – You cannot be on deferred or adjudicated community supervision (probation or parole).
- **Addressing Substance Use** – Any substance use concerns must be addressed so they do not interfere with your mental health treatment.

Eligibility Limitations

Some situations or past offenses prevent a person from being accepted in the AMHC. You may not be eligible if:

- You have severe mental or emotional challenges that are not stable on medication at the time of admission or require inpatient mental health care.
- You have a history of manufacturing or distributing illegal or synthetic drugs
- You have a current DWI – related charge
- You have a history of deferred adjudication or convictions of 3G offenses
- You have a prior conviction for manufacturing or delivering a controlled substance
- You have a history of or current sexual offense.
- You have pending charges or outstanding warrants in other jurisdictions.

Program Agreement

By entering the Adult Mental Health Court Program, you are agreeing to the following:

- **Legal Agreement** – You agree to admit to the offense and understand that this admission may be used against you in court as allowed by law. You also agree to waive your right to a speedy indictment (if charged with a felony) and your right to a speedy trial under the Code of Criminal Procedure of Texas, and the Texas and United States Constitutions. Admit commission of the offense(s), and agree that this admission may be used against you in court as provided by law.
- **Lawful Conduct** – You will not commit a new criminal offense while in the program or after completing it.
- **Sobriety** – You will abstain from alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, prescription medication misuse, and recreational drugs.
- **Drug Testing** – You will participate in random and frequent drug testing.
- **Positive Associations** – You will avoid contact with people known to engage in harmful, criminal, or disreputable behavior.
- **Interactions with Other Participants** – For everyone's safety and success in the program, participants are not allowed to fraternize or form personal relationships with one another. This boundary helps reduce distractions and keeps the focus on your own recovery and progress.

- **Mental Health Treatment** – You will follow all recommended mental health treatment and counseling, take all prescribed medications as directed by your provider, and complete treatment requirements as outlined in your treatment plan.
- **Attendance and Communication** – You will keep all mental health and probation appointments, attend all scheduled court hearings, and keep program staff informed of your current address and phone number.
- **Information Sharing** – You consent to the release of medical and mental health information as allowed under Texas law so that the program team can best support your needs.
- **Understanding of Outcomes** – You understand that:
 - If you fail to comply with any term of this agreement, the State may revoke this agreement and proceed with prosecution of your case(s).
 - If you successfully complete the diversion agreement, the State of Texas will dismiss the charge(s) in this matter.

Phase System of the Adult Mental Health Court Program

The Adult Mental Health Court Program has three phases, each lasting a minimum of 90 days. How quickly you move through the phases depends on your needs, progress in treatment, and compliance with program requirements.

The AMHC team will regularly review your progress and determine when you are ready to move to the next phase. Our goal is to help you build the tools for longer-term stability and an improved quality of life.

AMHC Program Requirements – All Phases

While in the program, you must:

- Participate in mental health services and counseling as recommended, with consistent attendance
- Take your mental health medications exactly as prescribed by your psychiatrist
- Submit to random drug testing as ordered by your supervision officer or the court.
- Abstain from alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, prescription medication misuse, and recreational drugs.
- Attend all court hearings and supervision officer meetings in person (Zoom, phone, or other remote attendance is not allowed).
- Avoid any new arrests or criminal charges.
- If able, attend school or maintain employment with regular attendance.

Phase 1- Intervention and Maintenance

Phase 1 provides the most intensive level of support and structure to help you stabilize and begin your recovery journey. Your needs will be different from other participants, so your Integrated Treatment Plan (IEP) will be tailored specifically to you.

The main goal during Phase 1 is to connect you with the right mental health treatment, counseling, and resources, while supporting your stability and safety. This includes your initial mental health screening, medication management, and participation in individual and/or group counseling.

Goals for Phase 1:

- Show that you are willing and able to participate in treatment and counseling, with consistent attendance.
- Take medications exactly as prescribed.
- Maintain sobriety from alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, and recreational drugs.

Requirements to Complete Phase 1:

- Coordinate special needs such as housing, finances, budgeting, medical care, clothing, etc.
- With exception for extenuating circumstances, all travel requests during Phase 1 will be denied.
- If able, work towards getting a job, attending school, or participating in community activities.
- Set personal goals for both the program and your life.
- Identify your strengths and any barriers to treatment, and work with the AMHC team to address them.
- Work with your mental health provider and the AMHC team to develop your treatment plan.
- Be stable on medication and take as prescribed.
- To be eligible for phase progression, you must be in compliance with each of these requirements for at least 90 days.

Phase 2- Active Recovery

Phase 2 builds on the progress you made in Phase 1 and focuses on continued recovery and stability.

During this phase, you will continue treatment and counseling as outlined in your treatment plan. You should begin to see increased stability in your home life, finances, and relationships, as well as growth in your support network.

Goals for Phase 2:

- Remain in treatment and counseling, with consistent attendance.
- Continue taking all prescribed medications.
- Strengthen stability at home, in the community and in your finances.
- Maintain sobriety from alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, and recreational drug.

Requirements to Complete Phase 2:

- Show medication compliance for 3 – 6 months to support mood stability.
- Continue following your program agreement.
- Participate in all treatment as outlined in your treatment plan.
- Have no inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations for the last 3 months.
- With exception for extenuating circumstances, all travel requests during Phase 2 will be denied.
- Regularly attend all scheduled probation, mental health appointments, and court sessions.
- To be eligible for phase progression, must be in compliance with each of these requirements for at least 90 days.

Phase 3- Preservation and Reintegration

Phase 3 is designed to help you reach long-term stability and prepare for life after the program. This phase focuses on maintaining your progress while gradually reducing the program's level of supervision.

You will continue medication management, remain involved in treatment as needed, and use the tools you've gained to live successfully without ongoing court oversight.

During Phase 3, participants may submit travel requests. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the team, and you will be informed whether it is approved or not.

Goals for Phase 3:

- Continue stability in all areas of life.
- Complete any remaining program or treatment requirements.
- Strengthen your independence in the community.
- Maintain sobriety from alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, and recreational drug.

Requirements to Graduate:

- Demonstrate medication compliance for at least 6 months to support mood stability.
- Complete all treatment goals in your treatment plan.
- No inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations for the last 4 months.
- Complete your Transition to Discharge Plan.

Graduation Requirements

To successfully graduate from the Adult Mental Health Court Program, you must show that you have:

- Fully participated in treatment and completed all program requirements.
- Consistently followed your medication plan and attended mental health services.
- Maintain long-term sobriety.
- Been employed, actively seeking employment, or applied for/receiving disability benefits if unable to work.
- Completed your Transition to Discharge Plan.

Court Appearances

Adult Mental Health Court sessions are held the first and third Thursday of each month. You are expected to:

- Arrive on time and stay until dismissed
- Notify the program in advance if you cannot attend or are running late. Absences without prior notice may result in sanctions.
- Make sure your cellphone is silenced and put away. This helps minimize distractions and ensures that everyone can be fully present.
- Be respectful to everyone in the courtroom.
- Follow court rules: no smoking, hats, profanity or weapons.
- To help protect everyone's privacy and create a safe space, only participants are allowed inside the courtroom during sessions. Family members and friends are not permitted to attend. The only exception to this rule is graduation day, when loved ones are invited to join and celebrate your success.

Adult Mental Health Court and Probation Dress Code Guidelines

When you come to court, we want you to feel comfortable, respected, and prepared. The way participants dress in court helps set a tone of respect for the process and for everyone involved. To support this, we ask that you follow these guidelines:

- Participants must wear clothing that provides full coverage. Please make sure your shorts and pants fully cover your backside, and that shirts and tops provide coverage of your chest area. For the comfort and

respect of all in the courtroom, the following clothing items are prohibited: tube tops, backless tops, see-through clothing, clothing that exposes the midsection (crop top) or very low-cut tops.

- Clothing should not display any images or words related to drugs, alcohol, weapons, violence, or anything that could be offensive or disrespectful.
- Pants should be pulled up and secured with a belt if needed. Sagging pants are not allowed.
- Hats are not permitted in the courtroom.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.

Reporting Expectations

We encourage you to be open and honest about your progress at home, work, school, treatment, and in the community. Your progress will be:

- Reviewed regularly by the program team.
- Tracked using phase checklist, which act as your roadmap toward graduation.

Random Drug Testing

The goal of this program is to support a healthy, sober lifestyle.

- You may be tested regularly for alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, prescription medication misuse, and recreational drugs.
- Drug testing fees will only be collected from participants when grant funding is not available.
- Unfavorable test results can delay your phase advancement, and continued substance use may result in removal from the program.

Authorizations for Treatment

Your privacy and personal information are very important to us. All treatment-related documents will be handled with care to protect your identify and confidentiality. As part of the program, you will be asked to sign consent form that allow the AMHC team to receive updates from your treatment providers. These updates help the team understand your progress, provide the right support, and work with you toward your goals while you are in the program.

Incentives

Incentives recognize your progress and achievements. Any member of the AMHC team can recommend an incentive.

Examples of Incentives:

- Recognition from the Judge
- Reduced court appearances
- Reduced reporting to your supervision officer
- Praise or applause in court
- Early dismissal from court
- Phase Promotion and Graduation Certificates

Sanctions

Sanctions are used to address behaviors that do not meet program expectations. They may be rehabilitative, punitive, or both, and are given in a progressive manner.

Examples include:

- **Judicial Sanctions:** Increased meetings with the judge, or jail time.
- **Supervision Sanctions:** Verbal reprimands, community service hours, increased check-ins with your supervision officer or the court, placement on recall docket.
- **Therapeutic Sanctions:** Writing an essay, workbook assignments, speaking to the judge or peers in court, extending your time in a phase, or attending additional counseling (approved by your supervision officer).

Removal

If progressive sanctions do not resolve ongoing issues, the court team may review your status to determine whether you will be removed from the program. If you're removed from the program, you will not be eligible to reapply for Adult Mental Health Court.

Possible reasons for removal include:

- Repeated absences from treatment, probation appointments, court sessions, or drug testing.
- Ongoing usage of alcohol, CBD, delta products, marijuana, prescription medication misuse, and recreational drugs.
- Committing a new offense

Contact Information

Program Coordinator

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Supervision Officer

Michelle Garcia
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Court Locations

Felony Cases:

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

Misdemeanor Cases:

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



Specialty Courts Ombudsman Program

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

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

**Collin County
Adult Mental Health Court Program**

Participant Acknowledgement of Handbook

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

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

Participant Signature

Date

AMHC Staff Signature

Date