Beaver County Treatment Court



Participant Handbook

This Handbook belongs to: _____

WELCOME

Hello and welcome to the Beaver County Treatment Court Program! At this point in time, you have already made the decision to enter our Program to move towards obtaining and maintaining long-term recovery. We understand that many factors in your life have led you to where you are now, and that things may seem overwhelming at the moment. But know this - we are here to support and guide you throughout this process.

Before we dive into the contents of this Handbook and the program itself, we wanted to make sure you are aware of a few important things:

- You may already be able to see – Treatment Court is unlike any other court experience.
- Our goal and the reason that we exist is to help you. This looks different for each and every participant.
- We truly want to keep you out of jail and clear your record of the case that brought you here.
- If you need help finding and keeping a stable place to live, we will do our best to assist.
- When the time is right, we will help you find gainful employment.
- Our Team will be by your side every step of the way.
- We *will not* give up on you - don't give up on yourself!

Right now, this may sound too good to be true, but in all actuality, it is true. It's the way this program has been designed. We only ask three things of our participants:

- You have to *SHOW UP*.
- You have to *TRY*.
- You have to *BE HONEST*.

We have sat across from many people who were once in your shoes – feeling overwhelmed, unwilling to change, or unsure if changing was even possible. That's okay! If you show up to your appointments and Court, together we will deal with the rest. With time and effort, things will fall into place. Our Team is ready to help you, even if you don't think you are ready.

If you are struggling, resume using, or feel like you just can't do it anymore, be honest and tell us. As long as you *SHOW UP, TRY,* and are *HONEST*, we will do everything possible to overcome the challenges you face.

We look forward to working with you and seeing your success!

The Beaver County Treatment Court Team

YOUR HANDBOOK

This Handbook is designed to answer any questions you may have and provide overall information about the Beaver County Treatment Court Program, or BCTC Program. You will be expected to follow the terms of the Program given by the Treatment Court Judge, and comply with the case plans developed with your Probation Officer and treatment team. This Handbook will detail expectations of you and will provide additional general Program information.

(**Please Note**: The information contained in this Handbook may be subject to change. You will be kept informed of any changes as they occur and will be expected to comply with all changes.)

WHAT IS TREATMENT COURT?

The Beaver County Treatment Court Program is a five phase, intensive supervision Program for non-violent adults, who have been charged and plead guilty to all charges and/or stipulate to alleged revocation violations filed against them. Each phase is designed to help participants gain the skills they need to be successful. The Treatment Court Program is a collaborative effort among the Treatment Court Team members, who will together seek out and provide a variety of programming and consistent supervision, geared toward supporting and helping participants maintain a stable and sober life.

The BCTC Program is not a "get-out-of-jail-free card" or an easy program to get through. Participation in the program requires a serious commitment to living a stable and sober life. The Program can be completed in a minimum of 15 months, but most participants will complete the program in the 18 to 24 month range. The Team and treatment providers will equip participants with the tools necessary for success, but it is up to the individual participant to put those tools to use, both now and in the future. The road will not be easy, but with the support of the Treatment Court Team, participants can and will be successful.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the BCTC Program is to advance public safety, reduce recidivism, lower costs to our community, and improve individual and community health by providing intensive, integrated, evidence-based Court supervision and comprehensive treatment services for individuals suffering with addiction and/or mental health issues.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The BCTC Program is intended to utilize comprehensive and individualized treatment services, on a cost-effective basis, for a higher success rate of recovery and maintained focus on wellness. The Treatment Court Program goals are as follows:

- Improve treatment outcomes for individuals with a substance use disorder and individuals with mental health issues
- Develop and implement a comprehensive treatment plan that is specific to the treatment needs of each program participant
- Reduce recidivism among Treatment Court participants and promote public safety through intensive court supervision
- Reduce costs to the community by providing an alternative to long-term incarceration for offenders who successfully graduate from the Treatment Court program
- Provide ancillary and collateral services to equip participants with the necessary resources to recovery, maintain wellness, and become a productive member of their community

TREATMENT COURT TEAM

CORE MEMBERS

Honorable Deborah Lancos DeCostro
Judge
Beaver County Court of Common Pleas

Jennifer Snyder
Treatment Court Coordinator

CJ Hunt
Probation Officer
Beaver County Adult Probation and Parole

Attorney Connor Battin
Assistant District Attorney
Beaver County District Attorney's Office

Attorney Leo Bouwers
Assistant Public Defender
Beaver County Public Defender's Office

Tracy Irwin
BCBH – Beaver County Drug & Alcohol

Matt Stahoviak
BCBH – Mental Health Professional

TEAM MEETINGS & STATUS HEARINGS

TEAM MEETINGS

The Treatment Court Team meets on a weekly basis, as permitted by the Court schedule, prior to Treatment Court Status Hearings. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the progress of each participant. The discussion includes, but is not limited to: drug test results, attendance with scheduled appointments, participation and cooperation with treatment and ancillary services, employment, and/or any other requirements that have been imposed. In addition, any violations or compliance issues will be noted, and sanctions and incentives will be determined. The Team also reviews any pending applicants and discusses eligibility of those individuals. Team Members are also free to present any other questions or concerns they may have regarding other aspects of the Beaver County Treatment Court Program.

STATUS HEARINGS

Status Hearings are held on a weekly basis, as permitted by the Court schedule, following the Treatment Court Team Meetings. During these hearings, the Treatment Court Judge speaks with each individual participant about any changes, updates, issues, or concerns since their last court hearing before the Judge. During these court proceedings, sanctions and incentives may be imposed, as deemed appropriate. Status Hearings are held in open court and all participants are present in the Courtroom during the Judge's discussion.

REVIEW HEARINGS

If at any time a participant is in non-compliance with the Treatment Court Program rules, the Treatment Court Judge may schedule a Treatment Court Review Hearing. At this Hearing, the prosecutor, defense counsel, and Probation Officer will meet with the Treatment Court Judge to discuss appropriate action to take in regards to the case. These Hearings are held before the Treatment Court Judge and will be scheduled as the Court calendar permits. If a participant is incarcerated, a hearing will be held in a timely manner to ensure that the due process rights of the participant are observed.

PARTICIPANT CONTRACT

Participants will be provided with a copy of the Participant Contract that was signed upon entry into the BCTC Program. The Participant Contract has the rules and conditions that govern the Treatment Court Program. By signing this Contract upon entry, the participant indicates that they understand and agree to abide by all rules and conditions. Failure to abide by these rules and conditions may result in appropriate action being taken, up to and including termination from the Treatment Court Program.

GROUPS & PEER SUPPORT

PARTICIPANT GROUP

Participant Group is a group for Treatment Court participants and alumni that is run by the Treatment Court Coordinator. The group meets once a month and the content may include various activities in the community or practical lessons of life skills.

PEER SUPPORT MEETINGS

Community-based peer support meetings have been proven to be a key component in the recovery process. Participants in the BCTC Program are expected to attend meetings when deemed appropriate. Participants may choose whichever meeting and structure that is appropriate for them, including Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Celebrate Recovery, Smart Recovery, etc. Specific frequency of attendance will be determined by the Drug and Alcohol Case Manager, who will notify the Team of the requirement established for each individual. No more than half of the required meetings may be attended online without prior permission. Participants are required to track meeting attendance by use of the Meeting Signature sheet – online meetings will be confirmed by other means.

COURTROOM ETIQUETTE

Although Treatment Court proceedings are less formal than traditional Court proceedings, the following rules will be in effect in regards to Courtroom behavior. Failure to comply with these rules for Courtroom etiquette will result in the participant being sent home, counting the hearing as an unexcused Court absence. Appropriate sanctions will subsequently be imposed.

- Participants must show respect, stay alert, pay attention, and remain quiet during court proceedings.
- Participants must arrive at the Courthouse no later than *15 minutes before Court start time* and be seated when Court begins. Chronic tardiness will not be tolerated for any reason.
- Participants are strongly encouraged to bring family or peer support to Status Hearings. If you are bringing young children to Court, please ensure that another adult is available to remove them from the Courtroom, if necessary.
- Participants are required to dress appropriately for Court and must adhere to the following:
    - No spaghetti straps or tank tops, no muscle shirts, or shirts that expose the midriff
    - No shirts with obscene words or pictures (including drug or alcohol themes)
    - No unbuttoned shirts
    - No hats, caps, or bandanas
    - No shorts or tight-fitting pants

- Electronic devices and phones must be turned completely off and are not to be used in the Courtroom.
- No food or drinks are permitted in the Courtroom.
- Chewing gum, tobacco, and nicotine products are not to be consumed used in the Courtroom.
- Participants will remain in the Courtroom until Court is called to recess. If extenuating circumstances exist, for which someone must be excused early, they must notify the Probation Officer and/or Treatment Court Coordinator prior to Court. Transportation issues or scheduling conflicts are not cause to be early dismissed.

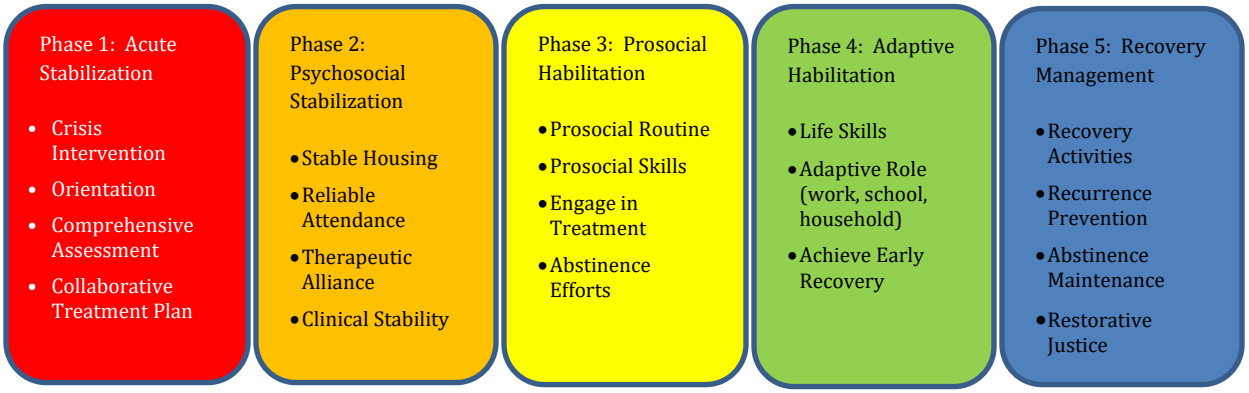
ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE POLICY

Participants are required to attend all Court sessions, appointments, and treatment sessions as scheduled, and are expected to be there on time. Failure to appear or being chronically late for any scheduled appointments will result in appropriate sanctions being imposed. If you need to reschedule an appointment, you must notify the person with whom you have the appointment at least 24 hours in advance.

Work, schedule conflicts, and transportation issues are not an excuse for missing or rescheduling an appointment. In the event of a medical issue or other true emergency, participants must submit documentation, in writing, to their Probation Officer no later than 48 hours after the missed appointment or Court appearance. Failure to do so may also result in a sanction.

PHASES

Treatment Court participants are to engage in a five-phase treatment model, designed to transition the individual to living a stable life. Each phase of the program has specific elements and program criteria that must be completed prior to advancing phases. The Probation Officer will discuss these requirements in more detail at the start of each phase. The boxes below describe general goals of each phase. An individualized treatment plan will be established for each participant, based upon needs. Discretion to make any changes remains with the Treatment Court Team.



PHASE ADVANCEMENT

The Treatment Court Team reviews and determines phase advancement based upon the individual participant's progress. If the participant will be phased-up, it will occur at the next court session, barring any significant infractions within that period of time.

GRADUATION CRITERIA

Participants must meet the following minimum criteria in order to successfully complete Beaver County Treatment Court:

- Successful completion of all program requirements
- Compliance with payment plan establishment with the Clerk of Courts
- Continued recovery during the final phase of the program
- No missed court dates, treatment sessions, or case management appointments within the last phase of the program
- A positive recommendation by the Treatment Court Team members
- Completion of an aftercare plan with case manager
- Completion of graduation application

When a participant is considered eligible for graduation, the Probation Officer will provide the participant with an "Application for Graduation". This application will consist of a series of questions regarding the participation within the program and the progress the individual has made.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

Upon completion of the BCTC Program, whether successful or unsuccessful, the Treatment Court Coordinator will conduct an exit interview with the participant. The interview will be documented; however, the participant's identity will remain anonymous. The interview will consist of questions that will help the Team review the program's effectiveness. Participants are urged to provide honest feedback during this interview, and their answers will have no bearing on their case.

EMPLOYMENT

The schedule of the participants in the beginning stages of the Program is extremely busy and rigorous, and during this time (Phases 1 and 2), employment is *strongly discouraged*. If a participant must work in order to support themselves and/or others in their household, they must discuss it with their Probation Officer prior to accepting a job. The Probation Officer will discuss this matter with the other Team Members. Hours may be limited.

Due to the inability to work, participants are not required to make payments on outstanding Court costs/fines/restitution in the Beaver County Court of Common Pleas until they enter Phase 2 of the Program and are encouraged to gain employment. This moratorium of payments does not apply to Court costs/fines/restitution owed in other counties, and/or child support.

INCENTIVES & SANCTIONS

INCENTIVES & SANCTIONS

Incentives are used as means to increase engagement, reinforce prosocial behavior, and develop new skills. Incentives are meant to help participants understand what positive behaviors look like, and to promote engagement in treatment and program requirements. Some target behaviors that are reinforced through incentives can include: showing up, timeliness, honesty, negative drug screens, phase promotion, treatment progress, sobriety milestones, helping others, recovery support achievements, and prosocial achievements. Incentives may include, but are not limited to: fishbowl drawing, gift cards, certificates, weekly All-Star List, entries into a quarterly drawing, and judicial accolades.

Sanctions are utilized to decrease, or stop, undesired behaviors. Participants are educated upon admission to the program of the consequences for non-compliant behaviors. Non-compliance is addressed in Court with the appropriate graduated sanction. Sanctions increase in severity for failure to abstain from drug use, attend required treatment, absconding, or failure to comply with supervision and/or program rules. Sanctions are distributed according to proximal and distal behaviors. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to: community service hours, curfew, and house arrest. Incarceration can be used as a sanction in response to serious infractions,

illegal activity, or continued non-compliance that has not been corrected with other mechanisms available to the Team.

SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS

Formerly known as therapeutic responses and supervision responses, service adjustments address the underlying case for a certain behavior, treat the behavior, and aim to teach new skills. They are designed to help the participants understand the need to change, how to change, and how to learn new behaviors. It is important to note that therapeutic responses are not therapy or counseling. Therapeutic responses can be utilized as a response to both positive and negative behaviors, and may include, but are not limited to the following: clinical re-assessment, level of care change (based on re-assessment), essays, oral presentations, thinking report, behavior chain, homework, and volunteer hours.

Supervision conducted by the Probation Officer and Case Manager provides crucial information about an individual's behavior and progress, while holding the participant accountable. These responses can be implemented in response to positive and negative behaviors. Supervision responses can include, but are not limited to: increase or decrease in Court appearances, home/office visits with probation, and/or drug testing. It can also include GPS monitoring/house arrest and implementation of a curfew in response to negative behavior.

SUPERVISION PROTOCOL

Supervision is a shared responsibility among all Treatment Court Team members, and is achieved through effective collaboration, decision-making, and rapid response to conditions that may lead to relapse, mental health deterioration, or further criminal activity by program participants. Unique to the Treatment Court model is the active and personal involvement of the Treatment Court Judge on a weekly basis with each program participant.

The primary responsibility for day-to-day supervision of the program participants rests upon the Probation Officer. The Probation Officer will develop an individualized supervision plan with each participant enrolled in the program. Working in collaboration with the Treatment Court Team, the Probation Officer will meet with each participant on a regularly scheduled basis and report his or her status at the weekly Treatment Court Team meeting. The Probation Officer will be responsible for random drug testing, monitoring compliance with phase requirements, as well as submitting weekly reports for review at Team Meetings.

All members of the Treatment Court Team will keep the Probation Officer informed of any conditions that might negatively impact the capacity or ability of the Treatment Court Program to successfully monitor and supervise participants.

DRUG TESTING PROTOCOL

Frequent and random drug screening is a critical component to the BCTC Program. Participants may be tested on scheduled appointment dates, prior to Treatment Court Status Hearings, or they may be called in randomly through phone calls, text messages, or the color-coded system.

Non-compliance with testing, such as failure to report, failure to produce a urine sample, or use of adulterated substances are considered a positive screen, and reported to the Treatment Court Judge. Refusal to submit to drug screening is considered a positive result. Confirmed adulterated drug screens result in a Treatment Court Review Hearing and possible termination from the Program.

To promote the validity of the sample, all urine collection will be observed by a staff member. The observer will give specific instructions to the participant on how to give a urine sample.

The participant will be screened for several drugs of abuse, including alcohol (ETG and breath testing) and prescription medications. Results of all drug screens are recorded at the time of testing. Any participant that denies positive test results may be asked to complete a confirmation urine screen, which will be laboratory tested.

Participants taking prescription medications must provide documentation from the prescribing doctor that confirms the medication is necessary for treatment. If the participant fails to provide this information, any positive test result, regardless of legal prescription, will be sanctioned in the same manner as all positive tests. Upon admission into the program, or at any point in time during participation in the Program, the participant must provide complete medical information including the name of the medication, how it is administered, milligrams, amounts, and times of administration, along with a copy of prescriber information.

RANDOM DRUG TESTING

The BCTC Program uses a color-coded system for random drug testing. A color is assigned to the participant and based off of the current phase in the Program. Specific information regarding random drug testing and is provided to participant at their intake appointment and is also found in the Participant Handbook.

MEDICATION & MEDICATED ASSISTED TREATMENT

The use of any prescription or physician-authorized substances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis within the BCTC Program, and may require additional assessments, reviews, or screenings by medical and/or mental health professionals to determine suitability for the interested individual. Participants are advised to disclose all prescriptions and authorized substances in advance to their Probation Officer or Case Manager, in order to avoid any disruption or delay into the Treatment Court Program. Participants taking prescription medications must provide proof from the prescribing

doctor that the medication is necessary for treatment. If the participant fails to provide this information, positive drug tests – regardless of legal prescription, will be sanctioned in the same manner as all positive drug tests. The participant must provide complete medical information with the name of the medication, administration of medication, milligrams, amounts, and times of administration, and a copy of the prescriber information, upon admission or at any time during participation in the Program.

FEES & FISCAL MANAGEMENT

In order to participate in the program, a one-time Beaver County Treatment Court fee, in the amount of $600, is assessed. In addition to this fee, standard court costs, fines, restitution, and a $25/month administrative fee are assessed. When directed by the Probation Officer, participants will enter a payment plan with the Clerk of Courts. Compliance with a payment plan is required for graduation.

Participants may also be responsible for any electronic monitoring costs associated with their case, which may include current per diem fees and/or replacement of lost or damaged equipment.

If a participant is terminated from the BCTC Program, regardless of the reason, all costs and fees paid to the date of termination are non-refundable. In the event of termination or withdrawal, all unpaid costs and fees outstanding at the date of termination or withdrawal are due and payable; these will be added to any outstanding costs, fees, and/or restitution at the time of sentencing.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

When a participant has a complaint or feels their rights are being violated as a result of their participation in the Beaver County Treatment Court Program, they may initiate the grievance process by submitting a complaint, in writing, to the District Court Administrator, 810 3rd Street, Beaver, PA 15009.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How long will I be in this program?

A: This program is designed to last 18 to 24 months, but it may take longer depending on individual needs and progress. Time may also vary depending on the graduation schedule for the time you are scheduled to graduate.

Q: I don't want to be in Treatment Court anymore. Can I get out of the program?

A: We don't want to see anyone leave the program, but sometimes, the program is not best suited for everyone. Participation in the Treatment Court Program is entirely *voluntary* and you may voluntarily withdraw at any time, by completion of a "Voluntary Withdraw Colloquy". You must consult with your defense counsel prior to submitting this form. When voluntarily withdrawing from the program, the guilty plea entered at the time of admission into the program will stand, and a sentencing recommendation or probation/parole violation recommendation will be submitted to the Judge by the Assistant District Attorney.

Q: I missed my random drug test – now what?!

A: Breathe – this is not the end of the world. Call your Probation Officer IMMEDIATELY. The missed drug test will still be counted as a positive screen, but reaching out and being honest is the first step to getting back on track.

Q: My employer doesn't want me to leave for appointments, Court, or drug testing. What should I do?

A: Court appearances, appointments with probation and case management, treatment sessions, and random drug testing are all required for participation in the Program. When you indicate to your Probation Officer that you have possible employment, you may request for your Probation Officer or the Treatment Court Coordinator so they may explain the program requirements to them. If you are employed, there is flexibility to decrease your Court appearances so that you are not required to attend weekly (unless otherwise instructed). Your Probation Officer is also able to provide a work excuse for Court appearances and appointments. Prospective employers that are not willing to be flexible with the demands of the Program should be taken into consideration by the participant, as repeatedly missing appointments, Court, drug testing, and other appointments may lead to incarceration and/or removal from the Program.

Q: I am struggling – behaviorally and/or returned to use – but I am afraid I will go to jail. What should I do?

A: *Show up* and *be honest*. Go back and read the "Welcome Letter" on the first page of this Handbook. Honesty will always be the best policy when it comes to the Beaver County Treatment Court Program. Honesty is the biggest component to achieving success. If you are struggling with use, call your Drug and Alcohol Case Manager IMMEDIATELY to discuss if a higher level of care is necessary. After you speak with your Case Manager, call your Probation Officer and discuss the situation with them (or better yet, call while you are with your case manager). The Treatment Court Team is here to help you so that instances of use and relapse decrease in frequency, and teach you the skills needed on how to avoid them in the future. In the event that use does happen, our goal is to help you learn how to deal with it. The Treatment Court Team understands that use is going to happen, but how you react to it is what makes all the difference. While we cannot promise you that you will not be incarcerated due to the use, it is highly dependent on how you handle the situation, what Phase you are in, and how many occurrences of use there have been. In these situations, our goal is to do whatever we can to avoid incarceration, yet keep you safe.

RESOURCES

Treatment Courts, also called Problem-Solving Courts, operate across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and throughout the United States. There are many different types of Problem-Solving Courts, including Drug Treatment Courts, Mental Health Courts, Veterans Courts, Domestic Violence Courts, Wellness Courts, Family Courts, Tribal Wellness Courts, DUI Courts, and Re-Entry Courts.

PACP
Pennsylvania Association of Treatment Court Professionals

Website: https://patcp.org/

Website: https://www.pacourts.us/judicial-administration/court-programs/drug-courts

ALL RISE
NADCP
National Association of Drug Court Professionals

Website: https://www.nadcp.org/

NDCI
NATIONAL DRUG COURT INSTITUTE

Website: https://www.ndci.org/

TREATMENT COURTS ONLINE
The National Training System for Treatment Court Practitioners

Website:
https://treatmentcourts.org/

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Beaver County Treatment Court Participant Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read the contents and understand the rules of the program set forth in this Handbook and in the Participant Contract, which I previously signed. I agree to the requirements of the Program and possible consequences of not complying with the rules, regulations, and directives of the Treatment Court Team, and/or Orders of the Court.

Participant Signature	**Witness Signature**
Printed Name	**Position**
Date	**Date**