

Charlottesville-Albemarle Family Recovery Court

# Participant Handbook



*The mission of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Family Recovery Court is to ensure that families are healthy, empowered, resilient, and thriving in recovery.*

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## Introduction

**Congratulations** on your selection for participation in the Charlottesville-Albemarle Family Recovery Court (FRC). The recommendation process is not an easy one, and your referral to the program speaks to our belief in your ability to successfully complete it. This overview is designed to help you decide whether to accept the referral, and if so, what you can expect while participating in the program.

Family Recovery Court can help you remain or reunite with your child(ren) by supporting you as you learn new skills and begin recovery. FRC is designed to provide the support you need to meet your goals and link you to appropriate services and supports to achieve and maintain a healthy, sober family lifestyle. **Each participant has an FRC team** that reviews parent participation, recommends services, and monitors ongoing progress. The core team includes: the Judge, Department of Social Services (DSS) worker, FRC Coordinator, FRC Case Manager, FRC Clinician, FRC Peer Support Specialist, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services (DARS), and treatment providers. Substance abuse treatment, intensive case management, counseling, and assistance with community resources are some of the services available to each family.

You should be aware that the Family Recovery Court **program is completely voluntary**. You can accept or decline participation in it. If you choose to participate in this program, you must be willing to commit to the entire program and abide by its rules, including its sanction and termination procedures. *The program is difficult*. It will often be inconvenient and will demand discipline and sacrifice. Regaining control of your life in body and in mind is worth your hard work and sacrifice. Your path through the program will be supported by people who not only care about your future, but have the expertise to help you change it.

You are strongly encouraged to **consult with your attorney** regarding participation in this program. Your attorney is invited and welcome to attend all FRC court hearings.

The Charlottesville FRC program is approaching twenty years of service in 2024. Originally founded by Judges Janene Shannon and Judge Edward Dej Berry (deceased). Judge Berry presided over FRC from 2004-2017, followed by Judge David Barredo from 2017-2022, and now Judge Areshini Pather presides over the program.

Lastly, the Family Recovery Court Program is **built on trust and credibility**. Your success in the program is tied directly to your *commitment to complete honesty and disclosure*. We expect that you will make some mistakes during your time in the program. However, even when you make mistakes, *you can always control your own truthfulness*. The presiding Judge's harshest sanctions are often reserved for those times when participants fail to tell the truth. Accepting responsibility for your mistakes will change your life; hiding your mistakes will only hold you back. We hope you choose to join the Family Recovery Court Program.

## Description of the Team

The Family Recovery Court program team consists of the presiding Judge, Region Ten CSB (Community Services Board) staff, DSS, CASA and various professional treatment providers. Other individuals may be asked to join the team from time to time as deemed necessary for assisting with fulfilling program goals for the participant. All team members play important roles as outlined below.

**Presiding Judge:** The presiding Judge will encourage you in your progress through FRC. You will appear before her/him on a regular basis to discuss your efforts. The presiding Judge will praise your good choices and will advise and sanction you when appropriate.

**DSS/Social Worker:** Your DSS/Social Worker is the person who referred you to FRC. They will monitor your progress and report to the Court the progress that you make and will ultimately make a recommendation as to what is best for your child(ren).

**Family Recovery Court Coordinator:** The Coordinator works closely with the entire team to ensure you receive the help that you need. S/he ensures the coordination of services. Along with the FRC administrative assistant they make sure that information about your progress is relayed to everyone involved in a timely manner and reported accurately.

**Case Manager:** Your case manager will coordinate and manage your participation in various rehabilitation and treatment programs and will be responsible for reporting to the presiding Judge and the team about your progress. S/he will meet with you at both regularly scheduled times and unscheduled times; s/he is your greatest resource. You will be assisted with job training, budgeting/financial management sessions, community service activities, and more.

**Peer Support:** Your peer support plays an active role in your rehabilitation. S/he believes that you can be successful. As part of the team, s/he will offer insight into ways the program can work best for you personally. You will be given guidance on finding a sponsor, community support and/or self-help groups. This person has been where you are in life.

**Clinicians/Therapists:** Throughout the Family Recovery Court program, you will be required to attend counseling sessions and substance abuse rehabilitation programs. The treatment providers who staff these activities are experts in providing the help you need, and they are trained to assist you to make better choices in your lifestyle. Treatment providers may recommend medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and help identify inpatient and/or outpatient centers you may need, and additional support services as appropriate.

**CASA Volunteer:** The individual from Court Appointed Special Advocates interacts with your children and is a keen observer and reporter of how things are going during parenting time.

**DARS:** The DARS (Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services) representative will help with educational and vocational services, as well as assistance with dental or medical needs.

## **Family Recovery Court Phase System**

The Family Recovery Court is divided into five separate phases. Each phase builds upon the previous one and has different requirements that must be met to advance to the next phase. The program typically takes 12- 18 months to complete. Your timely achievement of these requirements will ultimately determine the length of time in the program. The tasks listed below are the minimum requirements of each phase.

### **PHASE ONE**

The goal of Phase One is to become **oriented** and **engaged** with FRC. It is a minimum of 4 weeks.

*Begin substance monitoring (by getting the Sweat Patch placed) and continuous alcohol monitoring (SCRAM or breathalyzer)*

*Reoccurring meetings*

- ✓ Attend weekly FRC Court Reviews (Every Tuesday at 2:30pm)
- ✓ Identify a counselor for individual therapy, schedule and attend first appointment
- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with FRC Case Manager
  - Complete “What’s Your Story” assignment
- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with Peer Recovery Specialist
  - Complete Recovery Capital Assessment
- ✓ Identify three community-based support groups to attend

*Individual/Ongoing Tasks*

- ✓ Complete all paperwork and sign releases of information as needed
- ✓ Complete an initial roadmap plan with FRC team to discuss and decide what goals are important to you.
- ✓ As a result of initial ASAM, schedule individualized treatment plan recommendations (ex: IOP treatment group)

### **PHASE TWO**

The goal of Phase Two is to build **relationships** with your FRC team and **actively engage** in recovery. It is a minimum of 8 weeks.

*Continue substance monitoring (Sweat Patch) and alcohol monitoring (SCRAM or breathalyzer)*

- ✓ Continue to work towards recovery and sobriety by having at least 2 negative screens in a row before being able to phase up.

*Reoccurring meetings*

- ✓ Attend weekly FRC Court Reviews (Every Tuesday at 2:30pm)
- ✓ Actively engage with counselor in weekly meeting
  - Complete Relapse Prevention Plan
- ✓ Actively engage with FRC Case Manager in weekly meeting
  - Complete Time Management and Health assignment
  - Identify and Schedule appointment with Primary Care Physician

- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with Peer Recovery Specialist
  - Complete Recovery Capital Assessment
- ✓ Attend three community-based support groups every week
- ✓ As a result of your ASAM, participate in individualized treatment plan services (ex: Intensive Outpatient, residential treatment, etc.)

*Individual/Ongoing Tasks*

- ✓ Complete a 90-day roadmap with FRC team if appropriate while in Phase Two
- ✓ Identify a person from community support groups that could potentially serve as a mentor or sponsor

*In Partnership with DSS case plan*

- ✓ Participate in all activities and requirements as assigned by DSS
- ✓ Attend and engage in parenting and/or family time as scheduled
- ✓ If it is part of your case plan, actively engage with Parenting Coach as assigned.

**PHASE THREE**

The goal of Phase Three is to **establish consistency** and to begin to develop **insight and skills** related to recovery treatment. It is a minimum of 12 weeks.

*Continue substance monitoring (Sweat Patch) and alcohol monitoring (SCRAM or breathalyzer)*

- ✓ Continue to work towards recovery and sobriety by having at least 4 negative screens in a row before being able to phase up.

*Reoccurring meetings*

- ✓ Attend weekly FRC Court Reviews (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2:30pm)
- ✓ Actively engage with counselor in weekly meeting
- ✓ Actively engage with FRC Case Manager in weekly meeting
  - Complete Financial Budget assignment
  - Meet with financial advisor in connection with community partnership
- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with Peer Recovery Specialist
  - Complete Recovery Capital Assessment
- ✓ Attend three community-based support groups every week
- ✓ As a result of your ASAM, participate in individualized treatment plan services (ex: Intensive Outpatient, residential treatment, etc.)

*Individual/Ongoing Tasks*

- ✓ Complete a 90-day roadmap with FRC team if appropriate while in Phase Three
- ✓ Connect with and actively engage with community mentor or sponsor
- ✓ Begin to work the steps if participating in a 12-step program as part of recovery

*In Partnership with DSS case plan*

- ✓ Participate in all activities and requirements as assigned by DSS
- ✓ Attend and engage in parenting and/or family time as scheduled
- ✓ If it is part of your case plan, actively engage with Parenting Coach as assigned.

**PHASE FOUR** The goal of Phase Four is to **maintain progress** and begin to **demonstrate** recovery/parenting/mental health skills. It is minimum length of 12 weeks.

*Continue substance monitoring (Sweat Patch)*

- ✓ Continue to work towards recovery and sobriety by having at least 8 negative screens in a row before being able to phase up.

*Reoccurring meetings*

- ✓ Attend FRC Court Review (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2:30pm)
- ✓ Actively engage with counselor in weekly meeting
  - Review Relapse Prevention Plan
- ✓ Actively engage with FRC Case Manager in weekly meeting
- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with Peer Recovery Specialist
  - Complete Recovery Capital Assessment
- ✓ Attend three community-based support groups every week
- ✓ As a result of your ASAM, participate in individualized treatment plan services (ex: Intensive Outpatient, residential treatment, etc.)

*Individual/Ongoing Tasks*

- ✓ Complete a 90-day roadmap with FRC team if appropriate while in Phase Four
- ✓ Actively engage with community mentor or sponsor
- ✓ Actively participate in working the steps if participating in a 12-step program as part of recovery
- ✓ Actively search for or maintain employment, education, or benefits program
  - Meet with John Halpin of DARS to review employment options
- ✓ Attend at least 2 Alumni Group meetings
- ✓ Reach out to a new participant in FRC to share your experience and encouragement

*In Partnership with DSS case plan*

- ✓ Participate in all activities and requirements as assigned by DSS
- ✓ Attend and engage in parenting and/or family time as scheduled
- ✓ If it is part of your case plan, actively engage with Parenting Coach as assigned.

## **PHASE FIVE**

The goal of Phase Five is to **maintain recovery progress** and to **plan for the future**. It is a minimum length of 12 weeks.

*Continue substance monitoring (Sweat Patch)*

- ✓ Stay alcohol and drug free by having at least 8 negative screens in a row before graduation

*Reoccurring meetings*

- ✓ Attend FRC Court Review (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2:30pm)
- ✓ Actively engage with counselor in weekly meeting
- ✓ Actively engage with FRC Case Manager in weekly meeting
  - Complete Growth and Planning for the Future and Support System assignment
- ✓ Schedule and attend first weekly meeting with Peer Recovery Specialist
  - Complete Recovery Capital Assessment
- ✓ Attend three community-based support groups every week

- ✓ As a result of your ASAM, participate in individualized treatment plan services (ex: Intensive Outpatient, residential treatment, etc.)

*Individual/Ongoing Tasks*

- ✓ Complete a 90-day roadmap with FRC team if appropriate while in Phase Five
- ✓ Actively engage with community mentor or sponsor
- ✓ Actively participate in working the steps if participating in a 12-step program as part of recovery
- ✓ Maintain employment, education, or benefits program
- ✓ Attend at least 2 Alumni Group meetings
- ✓ Reach out to a new participant in FRC to share your experience and encouragement

*In Partnership with DSS case plan*

- ✓ Participate in all activities and requirements as assigned by DSS
- ✓ Attend and engage in parenting and/or family time as scheduled
- ✓ If it is part of your case plan, actively engage with Parenting Coach as assigned.

**Family Treatment Court Phase Promotion Criteria**

Throughout the FRC program, participants are expected to participate in all DSS, CASA, or service provider meetings as they are scheduled. Additionally, FRC participants are expected to follow any court orders such as protective orders, if applicable.



## **Program Expectations for FRC Participants**

Participation in Family Recovery Court is an opportunity for you to engage in life-changing recovery. The Court will hold you accountable and give you the opportunity, support, and structure needed to improve you and your family's lives. To achieve this, the following is expected of you:

- **HONESTY.** Be open and honest with yourself, the team, and everyone with whom you communicate. Never lie to the Judge or the other FRC Team members. Be open and honest with peers in recovery and in treatment groups. Even if you have something negative to report, it is always best to be honest.
- **RESPECT.** Be respectful in Court, in treatment, and with those around you. Maintain appropriate behavior. Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Court. This may result in termination from the FRC program.
- **PARTICIPATION AND GROWTH.** Attend and complete all individualized recommended treatment. This may include individual and group counseling, residential treatment, educational sessions, and sober-support meetings. If you leave treatment against the advice of the treatment center, additional treatment and/or responses may be imposed.
- **DEPENDABILITY.** Be on time to all scheduled meetings or events. Attend all parenting time; your child(ren) count on seeing you for scheduled visits and need you to show up. Attending treatment regularly is critical for your recovery. Report to your DSS Social Worker as directed. If you are sick and miss an appointment, you will be expected to provide a doctor's note.
- **PARENTING.** Be as involved with the care of your children as is allowed by the court and DSS case plan. Your child(ren) need your ongoing love, care, and support throughout this process and your active participation will help your entire family.
- **SUBSTANCE USE MONITORING.** You will be monitored for substance use through a sweat patch, SCRAM, or other monitoring tools. You are expected to have a sweat patch administered weekly. Do not tamper with either the SCRAM or the sweat patch. Missed or tampered screens will be considered a positive drug test.
- **COMMUNICATION.** Report changes in significant areas of your life, whether those changes are good, bad, or otherwise. Report when you get a job or change your employment. Report housing changes immediately. Progress in treatment is always worth reporting. Remember, the program will help you celebrate your achievements as well as address and support areas in need of improvement. **If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, you MUST contact your treatment counselor BEFORE a session is missed.**

## **Family Recovery Court Alcohol, Drug and Prescription Medication Policy**

Family Recovery Court is an abstinence-based program. The use of illicit drugs, some prescription drugs (such as benzodiazepines and opioids) marijuana, and alcohol is NOT allowed for participants in the program. If use of any of these substances occurs, it will be handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the specifics of the situation.

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### **Confidentiality**

It is essential that participants know that they can openly discuss personal or sensitive matters in court and in treatment group meetings without fear that they will hear about it from people not associated with the court. Because of this, it is expected that you will not share any Family Recovery Court information with anyone (friends or family). Violations of confidentiality will be taken seriously and may result in termination from Family Recovery Court.

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### **Medical Documentation**

If you miss a meeting, appointment, or court session associated with your FRC program because of a doctor's appointment, medical emergency or an appointment with another provider, you are required to provide written documentation to a member of the FRC team.

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### **Anti-discrimination Statement**

Family Recovery Court is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all participants and referred individuals. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated within our program, as we believe that every person deserves respect and equal treatment. Discrimination based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, or any other protected characteristic is strictly prohibited. This includes both overt acts of discrimination as well as subtle forms of bias or microaggressions. Our program is committed to providing equal opportunities for all individuals to participate and benefit from our services. Decisions regarding admission, treatment, and progression through the program will be made based on individual needs and goals, without regard to discriminatory factors.

In adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) will not be barred access to Family Recovery Court or prohibited from phasing up or graduating because of the participant's use of prescribed medications that aid in recovery from SUD. This includes the medications Methadone, Buprenorphine.

## **Community-Based Support Group Attendance**

1. All FRC participants must attend a minimum of **three (3)** community-based support groups per week.
2. All participants are required to submit attendance sheet or journal at weekly case management meeting. All information on the attendance sheet must be completed.
3. All participants will be required to find a sponsor or mentor and establish a home group, if applicable, within 60 days from the first roadmap meeting.

### **Some Examples of Pre-Approved Community-Based Support Groups**

Alcoholics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous

Celebrate Recovery

Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA)

Codependents Anonymous (CODA)

Moderation Management (MM)

Life Ring

Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS)

Recovery International

Rational Recovery

SMART Recovery

Women for Sobriety

Dual Recovery Anonymous

Double Trouble

Other groups which promote healthy, sober living may be approved by your team at your request. Examples of such groups include faith-based groups, book clubs, exercise/walking groups, crafting groups, etc. Please let a member of your team know if you would like a group or club to be considered for this requirement.

## What to Expect at Court

The Family Recovery Court team meets every week before court to discuss your progress toward meeting your treatment goals. During this time, any progress and challenges you have encountered will be presented and options will be reviewed. At the weekly hearings the Judge will discuss with each participant concerns or notable achievements, and you will have the opportunity to provide any updates or information you wish you share. The Judge will inform you of any recommendations made by your team. You are encouraged to express your thoughts and feelings about any recommendations during court. **If there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in any given month, FRC will NOT meet (you may still have treatment obligations on this day).**

## Rules for the Courtroom

- ✓ Be on time. You are expected to attend FRC hearings at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesdays.
- ✓ No electronic equipment is allowed in Court at any time (cell phones, cameras, etc.)
- ✓ No weapons of any sort are allowed in Court.
- ✓ Do not bring food or drink to Court.
- ✓ Do not chew gum in Court.
- ✓ Dress appropriately for Court. Clothing with obscene language or pictures referring to alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited.
- ✓ Use appropriate language. Address the Judge with Yes Sir/Ma'am, No Sir/Ma'am, Your Honor or Judge.
- ✓ Pay attention and do not interrupt others or have side conversations during Court.

## Responses to Behavior

Each time you come to court, the Court will receive an update about how you are doing and will respond accordingly. All FRC responses to behavior aim to improve parent and family safety and well-being. Responses are meant to reinforce behaviors that promote recovery, health, and safety, and help decrease behaviors that are not consistent with these goals. While responses may not be exactly the same for everyone, they will be individualized and fair. The Judge will explain the reasons for the response chosen.

The table below summarizes participant behaviors and possible responses.

<b>Successful Participant Behaviors</b>	<b>Possible Response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Attending court appearances</li> <li>* Negative urinalysis results</li> <li>* Attending and participating in treatment</li> <li>* Attending and participating in community-based support groups</li> <li>* Attending approved parenting time with child(ren) consistently</li> <li>* Complying with DSS case plan</li> <li>* Phase Promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Acknowledgment, praise by Judge</li> <li>* Applause</li> <li>* Earning Points</li> <li>* Decreased court appearances as you phase up</li> <li>* Decreased SCRAM testing</li> <li>* Phase advancement with certificate, gift card</li> <li>* Rewards such as gift cards, event passes, etc.</li> <li>* Ambassadorship</li> <li>* Graduation ceremony/party</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Behaviors Contrary to Program Expectations</b>	<b>Possible Response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Failure to comply with DSS case plan</li> <li>* Failure to attend visitation/parenting time</li> <li>* Unauthorized visitation</li> <li>* Leaving treatment against clinical advice</li> <li>* Missed appointments without a doctor's note or previously approved excused absence</li> <li>* Missed urinalysis or positive drug screen</li> <li>* Relapse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* New clinical assessment to determine appropriate treatment recommendations</li> <li>* Redirection from Court</li> <li>* Essay or assignment</li> <li>* Increased Court appearances</li> <li>* Increased Community Based Support Groups</li> <li>* Termination hearing</li> <li>* Termination from Family Recovery Court</li> </ul>

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### *What if I relapse? Will I be asked to leave Family Recovery Court?*

The Family Recovery Court team knows that relapse is a part of recovery. Relapse alone is not a reason to end a parent's participation in the program.

### *How long does it take to complete Family Recovery Court?*

We hope that parents successfully complete the Family Recovery Court program in about 12 months. Most parents are expected to complete the program in 18 months; however, some parents will take longer than 18 months.

### *What do I need to do in order to complete or graduate from the Family Recovery Court Program?*

There are five phases in Family Recovery Court, each with their own set of requirements. In order to advance to the next phase, you have to complete all requirements. You are expected to be fully compliant with all requirements of each phase for at least four weeks before you can move on to the next phase.

### *Does completing Family Recovery Court mean I am guaranteed to get my children back?*

FRC does not directly make decisions about your DSS case. The decision of your child's placement will be determined by your Foster Care Judge in the child's best interest based on many factors. The completion of FRC demonstrates to your team your progress, achievements, and dedication to recovery. It is expected that you will have gained critical insight and skills to live a healthy, sober lifestyle.

### *Can I stop participating in Family Recovery Court?*

You may request to withdraw from the program at any time unless a termination hearing has already been scheduled. Withdrawing from FRC may have consequences which should be discussed fully with your team prior to your decision. You may also be removed for violation of program rules or ongoing substance use/failure to commit to recovery.

### **FRC Team Contact Information**

FRC Coordinator: Brittney Rekrut (434)-235-3998 Email: [Brittney.rekrut@regionten.org](mailto:Brittney.rekrut@regionten.org)

FRC Admin/Data Analyst: Ms. M. 'Vicky' Lee (434) 987-7398 Email: [margaret.lee@regionten.org](mailto:margaret.lee@regionten.org)

FRC Case Manager: Ms. Kristin Manz (434) 981-6071 Email: [kristin.manz@regionten.org](mailto:kristin.manz@regionten.org)

FRC Clinician: Ms. Phoebe Jarmon (434) 459-9137 Email: [phoebe.jarmon@regionten.org](mailto:phoebe.jarmon@regionten.org)

FRC Peer Support: Ms. Angela Moss (434) 459 – 9302 Email: [angela.moss@regionten.org](mailto:angela.moss@regionten.org)

Region Ten CSB: (434) 972 - 1800

Charlottesville DSS: (434) 970 - 3400

Albemarle DSS: (434) 972 - 4010

I acknowledge receipt and understanding of this handbook on (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant: Print \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

FRC Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_