

LANCASTER COUNTY JUVENILE DRUG COURT

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A Rehabilitation Program for Juvenile Offenders

Program Guide

WELCOME

Welcome to the Lancaster County Juvenile Drug Court. This handbook is designed to provide you with information about the Drug Court Program on how it works, what you are required to do, what you can expect to learn from the program and how it will benefit you to complete it.

You were placed in the Juvenile Drug Court because of a bad choice that you made, which got you into trouble and charged with a crime. What you decide from this point on will determine whether you continue on the same path that got you here, or start a new path to a better future. ***Our goal is to help you learn from your mistakes and offer you a choice of making the most of this opportunity so that you can make positive and lasting changes in your life.***

OVERVIEW

Lancaster County's Juvenile Drug Court Program is for youth who were involved in a crime related to drugs or alcohol, (such as possession, distribution, etc.) or who were charged with a crime and have a history of drug or alcohol abuse. The Drug Court is open to all youth who have been placed on probation through Family Court with The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), or who are first-time offenders and have been referred to Juvenile Arbitration with the 6th Circuit Solicitor's Office.

While in Drug Court you will be required to:

- Be drug tested frequently to monitor your ability to stay free of drugs & alcohol
- Attend weekly Group Counseling sessions and completing a workbook which will be assigned to you
- Attend Drug Court and appear before the Judge as scheduled to review your progress in the program
- Attend Family Group which will include your parents or caretakers to address any problems at home

If you are a first-time offender and in the ***Juvenile Arbitration Program***, successful completion of Drug Court will result in ***your charges to be dismissed***, but if you fail to complete Drug Court you will ***have to go to Family Court to be tried on your charges instead***.

If you are on ***probation with the Department of Juvenile Justice and under a Family Court order***, successfully completing Juvenile Drug Court may help you ***get off probation and have your case closed***, repeated violations and failure to do what you have to do in Drug Court may result in you having to go back to ***Family Court for probation violation***.

HOW DRUG COURT WORKS AND WHAT YOU MUST DO

Juvenile Drug Court will last 12 - 16 weeks (3-4 months) depending on how well you do in the program. If you do everything required you will finish in 12 weeks, but if not you may be in the program longer, up to 16 weeks.

You will be frequently drug tested to check your ability to stay away from using drugs and alcohol.

You will attend Group Counseling each week and be assigned a workbook ***you must complete***. The workbook is called ***"What Got Me Here?"*** and will help you learn new skills to make positive changes in your life. You will also receive ***education on the dangerous effects of drugs and alcohol***.

You and your parents or caretakers must attend Drug Court as scheduled. During Drug Court you and your parents or caretakers will stand before the Judge, who will review your progress in the program and address any problem you may have concerning: *Your drug tests results; Your progress in attending appointments & completing your workbook; Your behavior / attendance at school and your behavior at home*

After each Drug Court session, a counselor will hold a ***Family Group Counseling*** session. These counseling sessions help address problems which may be happening within each family at home and offer solutions.

INFORMATION & RULES YOU MUST FOLLOW

APPOINTMENTS

It is important that you attend appointments while in the program, however you may be excused from any appointments due to being sick, having a family emergency, or not having transportation to make it, but you must call the Juvenile Drug Court Director prior to the appointment to let him know why you cannot come. Missing too many appointments will hold you back in the program.

WHERE DRUG COURT AND COUNSELING SESSIONS ARE HELD

Drug Court (when you appear before the Judge) is held at the **Lancaster County Courthouse at 104 North Main Street, Lancaster, in the Family Courtroom located on the first floor.** When you attend Drug Court you must come wearing proper clothing: **No shorts, flip flops, or hats will be allowed; you must wear long pants (no sweat-pants, pajamas or jeans with holes in them will be allowed) and a shirt, preferably with a collar rather than a T-shirt. Also make sure your pants are pulled up and not sagging when you enter the courtroom.** Lancaster County Courthouse Security rules will not allow the following in the Courthouse: **Pocketbooks; Cigarette lighters; Electronic devices (ear buds); Weapons (guns, knives, hair picks, fingernail files, nail clippers, or any type of sharp instrument) or Cell Phones are allowed in the courthouse.**

Group Counseling is held at Counseling Services of Lancaster located at 114 South Main Street, Lancaster, S.C. 29720. If this location has to be changed for any reason, you will be notified ahead of time.

OTHER RULES

No cigarettes or lighters will be allowed at Drug Court functions, including counseling sessions.

No profanity or disrespectful behavior will be allowed in Drug Court.

You must attend school as required and not have discipline referrals. **Discipline referrals at school will result in some type of sanction in Drug Court.** Your attendance and discipline records at school will be checked on a regular basis and reported back to the Judge.

You must abide by the rules of your home given to you by your parents or caregivers. Disrespect and failure to follow rules at home will NOT be tolerated while you are in Juvenile Drug Court.

OTHER INFORMATION

DRUG TESTING

You must not use any illegal drugs or any prescription medication without a prescription from a doctor. If you are taking ANY type of prescription drugs, let the Drug Court Director know and provide proof that the medication was prescribed for you by a doctor; either a written prescription or the medicine bottle must be provided.

If you test positive on your first drug test in the program, we will monitor the levels of your following tests after that to see whether or not you are still using. Your drug tests may be observed if necessary, meaning someone may come in the bathroom with you to observe you producing a urine sample.

Under supervision of the Drug Court Director, after taking your drug test your specimen cup will be checked for a temperature reading and to make sure the lid is properly tightened. You will then sign paperwork which identifies the sample as yours. Drug tests are shipped through UPS and results are received the next day after shipping.

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are punishments you will get for violating rules. Examples of sanctions are: **Community Service; Additional Writing Assignments; or You may be held in the program longer**

REWARDS OF THE JUVENILE DRUG COURT PROGRAM

If you successfully complete Drug Court, you will be rewarded with a **Certificate of Achievement**, a **\$25 gift card**, and **your charges will be dismissed OR you may be released from probation if you are under a Family Court order.**