

# **Macon County Mental Health Court**

## **Program Manual**



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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Macon County Mental Health Court program. This manual is important to your active participation in the program. In order to successfully complete the program, you must follow the rules and expectations in this manual, as well as the directives of the judge and the treatment providers. Failure to do so can lead to sanctions, including, but not limited to, dismissal from the program or incarceration in the Macon County Jail.

The purpose of this manual is to provide you with general program-related information, and expectations of the program.

## **Program Description**

The Macon County Mental Health Court is voluntary program designed for adults with serious and persistent mental illness who have been arrested for misdemeanor or non-violent felony offenses. Rather than traditional punishment, the Court diverts participants away from the criminal justice system by offering alternative comprehensive and therapeutic judicial intervention.

The goal of the Mental Health Court is:

- Decrease reoccurring arrests
- Decrease days in jail
- Increase access to mental health services
- Coordinate mental health services
- Enhance public safety

Participants who consent to join the program will receive:

- Intensive case management services
- Ongoing mental health treatment (including substance abuse treatment as needed)
- Regular court appearances
- Court supervision

Participants who meet criteria for treatment will remain in the program until the Mental Health Court team determines that all requirements have been met for successful completion.

Participants may voluntarily terminate their involvement with the program at any time. However, if a participant chooses to quit, or is dropped from the program due to a sanctioned dismissal, the traditional court process will resume.

## **Confidentiality**

The Mental Health Court program is governed by Federal laws of confidentiality. Participation in the program requires a waiver of confidentiality (authorization for release of information) and consent for participation in the program. Defendants are required to allow the Mental Health Court team to view documentation regarding the defendants' diagnosis, treatment, attendance and progress reports, and termination or completion of treatment. If the defendant is a veteran eligible to receive services through the Veterans Administration, a signed release of information form is also required.

## **Team Members**

In the Mental Health Court, you will work with a team which includes:

- The Judge
- Assistant State's Attorney
- Assistant Public Defender and/or defense attorney
- Treatment providers from Heritage Behavioral Health Center
- Probation Officers
- Specialty Courts Administrator

This team will design a treatment plan specific to your individual needs, track your progress, and will update the plan as you work through the program. You will be assigned a treatment provider and a probation officer. As part of the treatment plan, you might also be subject to random drug testing.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

During the course of the program, you will be expected to:

- Be honest – with the Mental Health Court team and yourself
- Attend court as required
- Follow all of the rules of the program and its contract
- Be invested in your success
- Follow the treatment plan – attend all appointments and take all prescribed medications

## **Incentives**

If you follow your treatment plan, you'll receive praise and incentives for continuing to do well. The Judge will determine your incentives based upon the recommendations of the Mental Health Court team. Examples of incentives include:

- Recognition, praise and placement on the 'honor roll'
- Less frequent appointments with probation officers and treatment providers
- Less frequent status hearing
- Fewer drug and alcohol tests
- Less frequent home visits
- More privileges such as travel and a later curfew
- Gift certificates or other donated items
- Food or restaurant certificates

## **Sanctions**

If you do not remain compliant with the program, sanctions may be used to reinforce the importance of following the rules. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning and/or reprimand
- Assignments (such as written essays)
- Loss of privileges such as travel or later curfew
- More frequent appointments with probation officers and treatment providers

- More frequent status hearings
- More frequent home visits
- Public service work
- Jail
- Bench warrant
- Termination from the program and possible sentencing.

Should a participant receive a sanction of jail, the time that you spend in jail may apply toward time served should the case return to criminal court.

## **Program Rules**

1. Do not violate any criminal statute of any jurisdiction.
2. Report to, attend and participate in any assessment, counseling, treatment, or educational programs as directed by the Court and/or the Mental Health Court team.
3. Do not possess a firearm or other dangerous weapon.
4. Do not leave the State of Illinois without the consent of the Mental Health Court team, unless in circumstances of an emergency where prior consent by the team is not possible.
5. Permit the probation officer or treatment provider to visit your home or elsewhere.
6. Notify the probation officer within 72 hours of any change in address or employment status.
7. Refrain from using alcohol, cannabis and/or controlled substances.
8. Engage in positive, pro-social activities which may include work, school, community service, volunteer work and/or support group involvement.
9. Cooperate with Heritage Behavioral Health Center or other private mental health service providers, sign all releases, and follow all treatment plans, including taking all medications as prescribed.
10. Additional rules may be assigned based on your individual treatment plan.

The Mental Health Court team reserves the right to evaluate each case individually to make a determination that the available resources for treatment of the defendant are available and appropriate. If the team determines that continuation is not appropriate, the defendant will be terminated from Mental Health Court and returned to the criminal court.

## **Mental Health Court Contract**

I have read and understand the entire contents of the Mental Health Court Program Manual. I understand that a violation of any of the above rules or conditions may result in sanctions. Furthermore, repeated violations of program rules and noncompliance could result in further action, including possible termination from the Mental Health Court program and sentencing of the original offense.

I hereby certify that I have read and understand this document and agree to fully follow and comply with every condition thereof.

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Participant Signature

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Date

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Judge Kitty M. McCarthy

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Date