

Western Massachusetts



Veterans Treatment Court

PARTICIPANT MANUAL

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2016

Welcome to the Western Massachusetts Veterans Treatment Court!

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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the entire Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Team, we are glad that you have chosen to participate in the VTC as a condition of your probation. This court has been set up in recognition of the service and dedication that you have given to your country as a member of the Armed Services. While we recognize and honor your service, we hope that you agree with us that public safety is our main priority along with returning you to a healthier and successful individual.

This short manual is designed to be both an introduction to the program and a resource guide as you proceed throughout the various phases of the court. All members of the VTC team are committed to your success in the program and your continued success after graduation. The VTC is designed so that you can receive the services and treatment that you need so that you can modify behavior and become a productive and valued member of your community. Together, we will make every effort to make this happen.

EXPECTATIONS

What we will give you:

- **Clinical Assessment:** This will help determine eligibility for the VTC and will assist the team in developing a manageable and realistic service plan.

- **Service Plan:** An individually tailored service plan with specific, realistic and attainable treatment goals that will assist you in advancing through the program. It will become a condition of your probation to comply with the service plan. The plan may change over the term of your probation as you accomplish goals or as your needs change.

The service plan is meant to assist you in overcoming obstacles that prevent you from being the grounded person that you are. If you follow it, you may receive certain incentives. If you do not follow it, you will receive certain sanctions. So you know, incentives can be positive reports from your probation officer or treatment providers, appreciation of your accomplishments by the Judge, advancement through phases of the program, reduction in reporting requirements, and graduation. Sanctions can be admonishment from the Judge, increased drug / alcohol testing, additional self-help or treatment meetings, return to an earlier phase, community service, detention and incarceration.

- **Transportation:** Veterans Court participants are responsible for their own transportation while they are involved in the program. However, if transportation is an issue there may be options available to you and these can be discussed with your Probation Officer or Mentor

- **Mentors:** We will assign you a volunteer mentor, usually a veteran, to assist you through this program. He or she is your confidential buddy during this program. Your conversations with your mentor will remain confidential unless it includes a plan to cause harm to yourself or others or involves a plan to commit a crime.

- **Probation Officer:** You are assigned a Probation Officer who is actively committed to your success in the VTC and will guide you through your service plan to assist you with being successful in reaching your goals.

- **Judge:** While you are a participant in the VTC, you will report to court as often as your current phase of the program requires. The Judge will ask you questions about your progress since your last court date. The Judge will ask those questions because the judge is truly interested in your answers and your success as you progress through the program.

What you will give to the VTC:

- A promise to show up: for treatment, meetings with your mentor, meetings with your probation officer, drug screens and court appointments.

- A promise to be honest with the VTC

- A promise to work hard on the requirements of your service plan.

- A promise to address the serious problems that have led you

PHASES

The Western MA Veterans Treatment Court is composed of five different phases which will take a minimum of eighteen months to complete. Participants must satisfy a set of pre-determined requirements to advance through the various phases. Graduation from each phase is based on completion of the criteria and a period of sobriety leading up to graduation eligibility.

Phase	Court Appearances	Phase Requirements	Completion Criteria
Phase I - 60 days	Weekly	-Meet with probation weekly -Meet with mentor weekly -Twice weekly drug/alcohol testing -Monthly home visit -Engage with VJO and therapy	-Show Up & Be Honest -Follow the orders of the court -Follow the orders of treatment -14 consecutive days of sobriety
Phase II - 120 days	At least bi-weekly	-Meet with probation weekly -Meet with mentor bi-weekly -Twice weekly drug/alcohol testing -Monthly home visit -Engage with VJO and therapy -Entry into 12-step program as needed begins	-Show Up & Be Honest -Follow the orders of the court -Follow the orders of treatment -30 consecutive days of sobriety
Phase III - 180 days	At least monthly	-Meet with probation bi-weekly -Meet with mentor bi-weekly -Twice weekly drug/alcohol testing -Monthly home visit -Engage with VJO and therapy -Educational/Vocational programming as required begins -Moral Reconciliation Therapy as needed begins -Family legal services and counselling services begins as needed -Relapse prevention planning begins	-Show Up & Be Honest -Follow the orders of the court -Follow the orders of treatment - 45 days of sobriety
Phase IV - 90 days	At least monthly	-Meet with probation bi-weekly -Meet with mentor bi-weekly -Twice weekly drug/alcohol testing -Monthly home visit -Engage with VJO and therapy -Life skills planning begins -Sober lifestyle planning begins	-Show Up & Be Honest -Follow the orders of the court -Follow the orders of treatment -60 days of sobriety
Phase V - 90 days	At least monthly	-Meet with probation monthly -Meet with mentor bi-weekly -Twice weekly drug/alcohol testing -Monthly home visit -Engage with VJO and therapy -Apply all life skills to a new social and sober network	-Show Up & Be Honest -Follow the orders of the court -Follow the orders of treatment -90 days of sobriety

TESTING PROTOCOL

The Veterans Treatment Court is dedicated to helping you achieve abstinence from drugs and alcohol. You will therefore be required to submit to drug and alcohol testing at least twice per week through Phase IV and as directed in Phase V.

You will be assigned your drug testing color and testing phone number by your probation officer. The drug testing hotline number is also included on the last page of this manual.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT (VTC) TEAM

The following are members of the Veteran's Treatment Court team and may be present during VTC sessions.

- Judge Laurie MacLeod - Presiding Judge
- Judge Maureen Walsh - First Justice Holyoke District Court
- Chief PO Sean McBride - Team Coordinator
- Antonio Padilla - Probation Officer
- Michael Russo - Northwestern ADA
- Tiffany Shapiro - Hampden ADA
- Ed Kivari - Hampden ADA
- Gary Iglarsh - Defense Attorney
- Kally Walsh - Defense Attorney
- Archer Battista - Mentor Coordinator
- Alexis Truslow- Clinician
- Kevin Cahill – Clinician
- Marie Demarey - VJO Coordinator VA
- Fred Baron - First Assistant Clerk Magistrate
- Manuel Reyes - Holyoke PD
- John Sevigne - Holyoke PD
- Dominick Sondrini - Soldier On
- Ed Callahan- MA Trial Court Evaluator

BE ENCOURAGED BY YOUR SUCCESS! We look forward to working with you and to your eventual graduation. Graduation will be held during a VTC session amongst your fellow veterans. Your graduation will show that you have demonstrated strength, courage, persistence and growth. By your success, you will give hope and inspiration to others in the program. Your continued success is assured after graduation if you continue to make use of the resources and skills that have enabled you to be a successful VTC participant.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

- Holyoke District Court - 413-493-0200
- PO Antonio Padilla - 413-493-0246
- CPO Sean McBride - 413-493-0212
- Drug Testing Line - 413-493-0290
(*To be called daily after 3PM for the next day's drug testing color*)
- VA Leeds - 413-584-4040
- VA Springfield - 413-731-6000
- Soldier On - 413-582-3059
- Veterans Justice Partnership – 866-406-8449
- Mental Health Crisis Hotline - 800-273-8255
- Carlson Detox - 413-733-1431
- Providence Detox - 413-536-5111



PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing this form I agree that I have received, read and understand the rules of the *Western Massachusetts Veterans Treatment Court*.

PARTICIPANT

DATE

WITNESS

DATE