

# Buffalo Drug Treatment Court



# Participant Handbook



As a participant in the Buffalo Drug Treatment Court, you are expected to follow the instructions given to you in Court by the Judge and the Drug Treatment Court team. You will also be responsible for complying with the recovery and treatment plan that will be developed. This handbook will explain what is expected of you and provide general program information.

We encourage you to share this handbook with your family, friends, and significant others so they will know about the work that you are doing to become clean and sober. Support from those around you will be extremely important throughout your participation in the program.

### **Orientation**

Orientation takes place in the Courtroom every first Monday of the month at 1:30pm. Orientation will consist of a group meeting with Treatment Court participants and Court Team members where the entire program will be explained. The orientation itself will cover the details of each phase and it places a special emphasis on abstinence, health, family, education, and employment.

At the time of the orientation, you will be able to ask questions or get clarification about any issue related to the Treatment Court Program. Legal questions about your case should be directed to your attorney.

## What is Drug Court?

The Buffalo Drug Treatment Court is a judicially supervised treatment program for persons whose substance abuse and or dependency appears to have contributed significantly to their current arrest and or conviction of a crime. This program **requires a total commitment** to remaining clean and sober as well as leading a law-abiding life. Unless sentenced to Drug Court, the consent of the prosecutor, defense counsel, and defendant, the referring Judge and or the Drug Court Judge is required. However, an offender may be required to participate as a result of being sentenced.

Participating in the Buffalo Drug Treatment Court requires regular court appearances before the Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres, the presiding Treatment Court Judge. The Drug Court is located on the second floor "Part 4". You will be required to **follow and complete a treatment plan**. Treatment begins immediately upon your first appearance in court. You will be referred to the COURTS Program for an initial screening and evaluation conducted by treatment staff from your assigned treatment agency.

This plan may require all or some of the following:

- ✓ Outpatient treatment
- ✓ Inpatient treatment/Residential treatment
- ✓ Halfway House or Transitional housing placement
- ✓ Regular and random drug testing
- ✓ Counseling (individual and group)
- ✓ Mental Health Counseling
- ✓ Educational/vocational/employment program
- ✓ Participation in self-help (AA/NA) groups

The BDTC case management staff will also help you with other areas of your life according to your individual needs. This may include referrals for:

- ✓ Skills testing and an educational assessment
- ✓ Job Training and job-readiness training
- ✓ School or other educational services
- ✓ Job placement services
- ✓ Family counseling
- ✓ Life Skills classes
- ✓ Public Assistance/Medicaid
- ✓ Recreational activities

You are required to appear in Drug Court weekly or every other week and depending on your progress, your appearances in court may be reduced to once a month. The Judge will be given progress reports on you regarding your drug tests, attendance, and participation in your treatment program. These reports will come from the COURTS Program, your Probation Officer, treatment and/or mental health counselor, vocational counselor and the members of the BDTC support program with whom you are working (such as Employment Specialist, Family Advocate, etc.). The Judge will ask you about your progress, and discuss any problems you may be having.

You will be expected to **remain arrest free, remain clean and sober, attend all your scheduled court appearances and all your scheduled treatment appointments.** Attending all of your scheduled treatment sessions, include counseling, substance abuse sessions, education sessions and all other sessions as directed. You will be required to be on time for all sessions. If you are late, you may not be allowed to attend and may be considered absent. **Your treatment schedule will vary according to your progress. It is your responsibility to schedule all needed appointments and to arrive on time for all of them.** The BDTC team, your treatment providers, and YOU will develop plans to fit your specific needs. One will specifically address your substance abuse problem, and others will address other life issues such as education, vocational training, parenting and family skills. These plans will be strength based and will serve as a guide or roadmap during your participation in the program. Expect to contribute to them with your thoughts and needs.

One of the primary goals of BDTC is to help you remain abstinent from alcohol and all non-prescribed drugs. You will be tested throughout the entire program. The Judge will have access to all drug results including failures, refusals to test and adulterated tests. A drug test may be ordered at any time. A positive test or admission of alcohol or other drug use will not disqualify you but may result in a sanction or change in treatment planning. Drug screens may be conducted at your drug treatment facility, during court appearances, or at any other time.

# What's in it for me? Benefits of the Program:



## No Incarceration and for most Dismissal or reduction of your charges

In most cases, successful completion of the BDTC program results in having the original charge(s) dismissed or reduced. Your particular circumstance will depend upon your negotiated agreement with the District Attorneys' Office, that has the approval of the Trial Court, regarding the disposition of your case upon successful completion in the Treatment Court. Some of you may have been sent to the Treatment Court as a condition of your sentence. In all cases, successful completion will result in no jail or incarceration. (Your attorney will be able to discuss the particulars of your specific case.)



## A Second Chance

This program offers you the chance to move forward in your life with the new things you have learned.



## A Healthy Lifestyle

The BDTC program will help you take control of your life in many ways. Even more important than learning the skills about how not to abuse drugs and alcohol and committing any more crimes-are the things you will learn how to do: eating right, reducing stress, becoming fully employed, rebuilding family relationships, and becoming a productive member of the community.



You are responsible for what you consume and put in your body. Refrain from all items that contain poppy seed as this excuse will not be tolerated. Items include: everything bagel, poppy seed muffins and bread or ANYTHING containing poppy seeds.

Marijuana is federally illegal and not allowed in our Treatment Court: recreational or medical. Marijuana is a mind altering substance and treated just like alcohol. This includes CBD products and edibles over the counter. Marijuana is a no in any form.

### How can I participate in the BDTC Program?

At some point following your arrest, you were provided several choices (1) participating in the Buffalo Drug Treatment Court Program or (2) remaining in criminal court for prosecution or sentencing on your pending charges. If you are accepted into the BDTC, successful completion and graduation from the BDTC program may result in reducing or dismissal of the pending charges or the imposition of a more favorable sentence, depending on the terms of your individual contract.

*Note: Some BDTC participants do not sign contracts, but enter the program in other ways. If you did not sign a contract with BDTC, talk to your defense attorney about your specific situation.*

**Always keep in mind that removal from the BDTC program may result in a return to criminal court or sentencing on the charge(s) to which you have been convicted.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

My Drug Court Case Manager:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

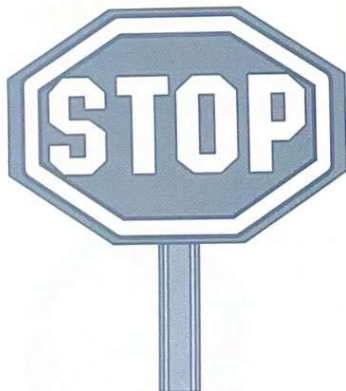
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

### Relapse Triggers & Relapse Prevention

Relapse and situations that trigger your drug use can happen at any time in many different ways. Your Drug Court Case Manager, treatment counselors, probation officer and others will help you identify them and discuss ways to either prevent bad situations or to work through them when they cannot be avoided.

#### Relapse triggers can include:

- going to places and hanging around with people who are drinking and drugging
- money in your pocket
- spending time thinking about "the parties" and forgetting about the problems your use created
- arguments with loved ones
- bad luck, disappointments
- good luck, celebration events, holidays
- medicine, even prescription drugs, that can get you high.
- 



Remember! For people in recovery, triggers and cravings are not an excuse to use - they are a reason to go to a meeting and to call a recovering friend to get more support.

# R

## ules: What are the rules of program?

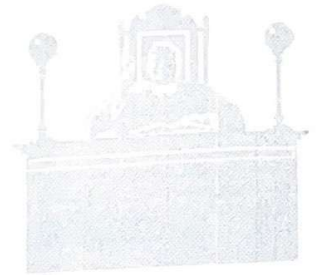
To remain in the Buffalo Drug Treatment Court Program you are required to follow BDTc rules.



1. You must participate in regular court supervision (In other words, you must show up at Drug Court and or meetings with your Drug Court Case Manager or Probation Officer on time.)
2. You must live a law abiding life (In other words you must not get re-arrested)
3. You must attend all scheduled treatment and support services appointments.
4. You must successfully complete all four phases of the program.
5. You must remain clean and sober.
6. You must complete all required paperwork.



# W hat if I don't follow the rules?



If you break the rules of the Drug Court you may be subjected to a sanction. Doing any of the following may result in a sanction:

- ◆ New arrest or other police contact
- ◆ Leaving a treatment program against medical advise
- ◆ Breaking the rules at a Treatment Program (not resulting in termination)
- ◆ Positive urine or alco-sensor tests, or admission of use
- ◆ Failure to take a drug test (urine screen and/or alcohol tests)
- ◆ Attempts to falsify drug tests
- ◆ Missing or arriving late for group or individual treatment appointments or any other BDTC appointments
- ◆ Missing or arriving late for Drug Court appearances
- ◆ Failure to follow the direction of the Drug Court Judge, Drug Court Case Managers, or probation officers
- ◆ Demonstrating a lack of program progress

A failure to appear in court when scheduled will result in a sanction that may include a period of incarceration.

**S**anctions in BDTC may include, but are not limited, to the following:

1. Verbal warning or admonishment;
2. An essay writing assignment;
3. Increased urine testing;
4. Increased attendance at BDTC sessions;
5. Penalty Box;
6. Placement in an earlier program phase or repetition of a phase;
7. Community work assignments;
8. A higher level of treatment;
9. Incarceration; and
10. Dismissal from the Treatment Court.

**I**ncentives for progress in BDTC may include:

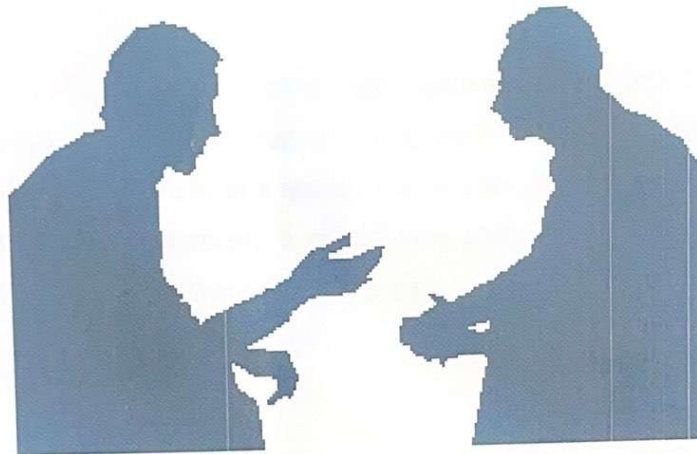
1. Recognition by the Judge
2. Recreational activities
3. Decrease in urine testing;
4. Decrease in attendance at Court;
5. Certificates of Completion;
6. Graduation;
7. Dismissal or reduction of charges; Sobriety and a drug free

**C**ommon error or myths that you should be aware of in order to avoid misunderstandings that could lead to sanctions are:

- ❖ I don't have to stop using until I begin treatment. Wrong! Consider your treatment beginning the first day in Drug Court.
- ❖ I completed treatment so I don't have to come to court. Wrong! It is the Judge who tells you when to come to court.
- ❖ I missed treatment appointments because I was out of town at a family gathering, vacation or work assignment. Wrong! You cannot leave the county without the permission of the Judge and or recommendation by the Drug Court Team.
- ❖ I will change treatment agencies because I did not like the treatment plan or I don't like my counselor. Wrong! These decisions will be made in conjunction with the Drug Court Team, your primary case manager and with the approval, of the Judge.
- ❖ I did not know when my next court date or treatment appointment was. Wrong! You are completely responsible for knowing these dates and times. Losing your appointment card is not an acceptable excuse.

*It will be important to remember that Programs will not work unless you work your program.*

#### **RECOVERY AND TREATMENT PLANNING:**



The Buffalo Treatment Court team, your treatment providers, and YOU will develop plans to fit your specific needs. One will specifically address your substance abuse problem, and others will address other life issues such as education, vocational training, parenting and family skills. These plans will be strength based and will serve as a guide or roadmap during your participation in the program. Expect to contribute to them with your thoughts and needs.

*The purpose of the BDTC Program Support Services Team (COURTS PROGRAM) is to make resources available to you and your family that will help you overcome stress, problems and conflicts that may block your recovery process. The BDTC Program Support Services Team is located on the fourth floor suite 400 and here to help you and your family build the skills that you may need to succeed in the BDTC program.*

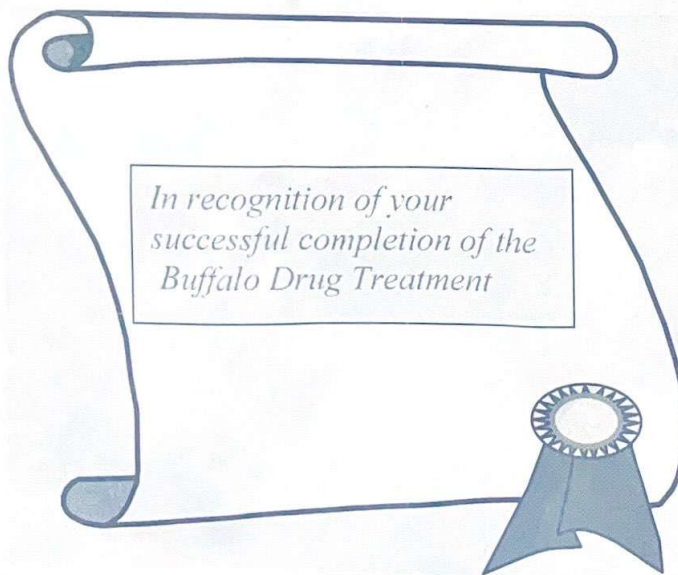
Remember: While there are certain things you must complete, your ability to move along in the program and graduate will depend mostly on your own actions. If you miss appointments, ignore other requirements, or fail to stay away from drug and alcohol use, your time in BDTc could be longer

**The final decision about your readiness to graduate will be made by the BDTc Team.**

Your Drug Court Case Manager will let you know when the BDTc Team and Judge have decided that you are eligible for graduation. You must then complete your Graduation Interview Form, submit it as directed, and attend a graduation review panel.

## **G**raduation / **R**ecognition

.Is a time to celebrate your transition to a healthy lifestyle. It does



not mean the end of working hard at your recovery, for staying sober is a life-long pursuit. You will be able to invite your family and friends to join you at your BDTc graduation Ceremony. This special event is recognition of your accomplishments and marks the beginning of your new way of life.