

Mental Health Court

EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT



PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Eighth Judicial District Court
Specialty Courts Division
200 Lewis Avenue, 4th Floor
Las Vegas, Nevada 89155

Mission Statement

The 8th Judicial Mental Health Court helps build safer communities by using a team approach to give justice-involved individuals with serious mental illness the tools to stop criminal behavior and increase their overall wellness and stability. Mental Health Court participants are responsible for using their individual treatment plans to work on their for wellness and stability. These treatment plans focus on reducing risk factors, improving positive thinking, and participating in therapy for mental health and substance use. These goals are achieved through regular court hearings and meetings with treatment team members, which include court personnel, Parole and Probation, case managers, and therapeutic providers.

Services We Provide

- Case Management
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment
 - Individual Therapy
 - Group Therapy
 - Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)
 - Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)
 - Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment
- Housing (as needed)
- Drug and Alcohol Monitoring/UAs (as needed)
- Employment Support (Voc Rehab)
- Continuing Education Support (Adult Ed)

Team Members

Defendant/Participant– has a say in developing their treatment plan and deciding where they will receive mental health treatment services.

Judge/Hearing Master – gets information from the treatment team and gives out rewards and sanctions

Defense Attorney – makes sure participants are treated fairly in court

District Attorney – lets the team know of any new legal information, like new arrests or police contact

Coordinator – does assessments on new applicants, makes treatment recommendations and is a main contact person for court questions

Probation Officer – supervises participants in the community at their home, work, or treatment locations. The P.O. may also do random drug tests. All requests for changes in housing, travel outside of the county and employment need to start with your P.O.

Case Manager – makes all treatment referrals and ensures that participants are attending all of their sessions. Case Managers can also drop in for visits at participants' homes and treatment providers.

Treatment Providers – provides assessments, treatment and progress reports about how participants are doing in treatment

All members of the treatment team should be treated with respect.

Confidentiality

Your identity and privacy must be protected. You will be asked to sign a release of information between MHC and your treatment providers. This is required for participation in the MHC program.

Length of MHC Program

The Mental Health Court takes on average one year for misdemeanor offenses (average length is 15 months) and up to three years for gross misdemeanor and felony offenses (average length is 25.5 months). The length of stay for any particular participant varies on charge (misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor or felony) and how they do in treatment and following the rules of the program.

Court Appearances

Court happens every Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. on the third floor of the Regional Justice Center, at 200 Lewis Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89155.

Participants who are graduating or doing very well in the program will be called into the courtroom first. Participants who are not following the rules or who are having trouble will be called after..

Participants who have just started the program or who have been having trouble will be required to attend court on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. If a participant attends all of their appointments, takes their medication as directed, and follows all of the rules of the program, the court may allow them to come to court less frequently- sometime only every six weeks!

Participants are expected to dress neatly for court appearances. Participants should NOT wear the following to court: halter tops, tank tops, shorts, baggy pants, flip flops, clothing with gang or drug references or pajamas.

Mental Health Court Orientation

The Mental Health Court Orientation is held with the Mental Health Court Coordinators. Orientation is used to answer questions new participants may have about the program. Each participant must attend an orientation session.

Participant Obligations

Each participant is responsible for attending all treatment appointments. This includes, but is not limited to, psychiatrist appointments and individual and group therapy sessions. Some participants may be placed on random UAs, which must be completed. Every participant also must call their case manager to check-in weekly at a minimum. Case managers may request more frequent check-ins. If a participant receives SSI or SSDI, the court may require the case management organization (SNAMHS or Mojave) to become to participant's representative payee while they are in the program. Participants with income (SSI, SSDI, employment, etc.) will be

required to pay some of their housing and program expenses. Participants will also be required to pay their probation fees, court fees and restitution while in Mental Health Court.

Work and Employment

The Mental Health Court team supports participants getting a job. All jobs must be approved through the participant's Mental Health Court team before starting work.

Drug Testing Protocol

Participants must agree to not use any illegal substances, alcohol, marijuana or mood-altering substances not prescribed by a medical doctor. This includes: Kratom, Spice, bath salts, salvia, any natural or designer drugs, and substances containing ma huang, ephedrine, weight lifting/workout supplements, energy drinks, or foods containing poppy seeds. Participants who have history of drug use may be required to submit regular or random UAs based on the following guidelines:

- **Submission of Urine Samples:** Dirty drug test results will not result in a new criminal charge, but a sanction could be imposed to help the participant get back on track. Not providing a urine sample when requested will be considered a positive result.
- **False Urine Samples:** Trying to falsify urine samples could result in termination from the program.
- **Diluted Testing:** If a urine sample cannot be tested for any reason like the too little or no urine is provided, creatinine levels are too low, or correct UA protocol is not followed, the test will be considered positive for drugs. Participants should discuss low creatinine levels with their counselor, including how this may occur and how to avoid them.
- **Compliance: Refusal to comply with a drug test may result in termination from the program.** Participants must always leave a urine sample when asked. Participants may be asked to submit a UA by their treatment provider, by their P.O. or in court.

Follow the general rules below to avoid any complications with your drug testing requirements:

Alcohol

Participants in the Mental Health Court Program are not allowed to drink alcohol. A positive UA for alcohol and/or its metabolite or a positive breathalyzer result will be treated the same as a positive for any other drug.

Marijuana

Participants in the Mental Health Court Program are not allowed to use marijuana. A positive urine sample for marijuana and/or its metabolite will be treated the same as a positive for any other drug.

Prescription Medications

All medications must be prescribed by a doctor and shown to case manager. ***It is the participant's responsibility to tell their doctor that they are in Mental Health Court and to ask for a different medication if the doctor tries to prescribe any of the medications listed below.***

ABSOLUTELY CANNOT TAKE FOR ANY REASON:

Propoxyphenes	Promethazine DM	Oxycodone
Benzodiazepines	Nucynta	Oxycontin
Barbiturates	Sumatriptan	Fioricet
Carisoprodal (SOMA)	Naltrexone	Midrin
Methadone	Hydroxycut	Hydrocodone
Ultram	Dextromethorphan	Ambien
Midrin	Tramadol	Hydrocodone
	Products containing Phenazopyridine Hydrochloride (Pyridium)	

Incentives

If a participant follows the rules of Mental Health Court, he or she could be given rewards or incentives by the court. Examples of incentives include: praise, gifts, or gift cards.

Some participants may start the program on restriction- which means that they cannot leave the house without a staff member with them. These people can then earn passes as an incentive- these passes can be used for leisure activities of your choice, as long as you follow the general rules of Mental Health Court. Participants do not have to use their passes to attend treatment.

Sanctions

If a participant does not follow the rules of Mental Health Court, he or she could have sanctions imposed by the court. Examples of sanctions include: community service, written essays, being placed on restriction, or jail time.

Unacceptable Behavior

The following will not be tolerated for any reason by any participant:

- Violence- verbal assaults, fights, threats, possession of weapons, or property destruction
- Inappropriate sexual conduct
- Use of or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Gambling
- Stealing
- Fraternization- absolutely no dating or sexual relationships between any specialty court participants
 - Probation rules also say that anyone on probation is not allowed to socialize or associate with another person on probation, parole, or an ex-felon outside of a therapeutic environment (treatment sessions, group housing with staff present)
- Any behavior that puts others in danger
- Should you leave a residential placement without approval- the housing provider and MHC team are not responsible for your belongings

House Rules

- Cleanup after yourself; complete your assigned chore
- No borrowing, trading, buying, or selling between participants and/or other residents
- Adhere to your curfew; sign in and out whenever you leave the home
- No smoking anywhere within the home- you will be shown where it is ok to smoke
- Be fire-smart- for example: do not remove any fire or smoke detectors from the home, do not leave food unattended when cooking
- No overnight visits at the home by anyone who is not a resident at that home
- Participants may be moved to a new housing provider at the MHC team's discretion

Felony/Gross Misdemeanor- Phase 1: Stability and Engagement (minimum 12 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 1 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify housing, psychiatric, medical, substance use & financial needs • Identify personal strengths & goals • Identify barriers to treatment & reaching identified goals • Develop rapport and honesty with treatment providers 	Phase 1 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Court appearances weekly for the first 6 weeks, biweekly after that • Check-in weekly with service coordinator • Check-in regularly with probation officer (as directed) • Review all probation requirements • Compliant with all medication as prescribed • Demonstrate good hygiene/self-care • Attend all scheduled appointments including but not limited to court, med clinic, individual and group therapy sessions, drug tests • Work towards financial stability/payment plan for any unpaid fees • Follow rules of residential placement • No drugs or alcohol • Report any new contact with law enforcement to PO & service coordinator within 24 hours • No new charges 	Advancing from Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow curfew- home by 6pm each night • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Stable housing • Be able to identify team members • Be able to identify diagnosis • Be able to list medication names • Identify 3 strengths • Identify possible hobbies or interests • Develop a plan to meet all probation requirements • Initiate a safety plan (to be built upon in all phases and will then be used to create continuing care plan) this plan to have names and numbers to contact if symptoms become worse or having SI/HI-, including CM, coordinator, PO, housing provider • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 2

Felony/Gross Misdemeanor- Phase 2: Treatment (minimum 32 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 2 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase client's level of engagement (Intensive treatment focus) • Demonstrate stability with regards to mental health, medical needs, substance use and financial obligations • Individualized skills building • Target specific needs/risks 	Phase 2 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Court appearances (as instructed) • Check in biweekly with service coordinator • Check in regularly with probation officer (as directed) • Start completing probation requirements • Compliant with all medication as prescribed- begin to demonstrate responsibility with medication management • Demonstrate good hygiene/self-care • Attend all scheduled appointments including but not limited to court, med clinic, individual and group therapy, drug tests • Follow rules of residential placement • Develop financial plan to include payment to P&P and court fees • Develop income plan (work vs. SSI) • No drugs or alcohol • Report any new contact with law enforcement to PO & service coordinator within 24 hours • No new charges 	Advancing from Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow curfew- home by 8pm each night • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Be able to describe symptoms associated with diagnosis • Be able to list medication/what symptoms they treat/possible side effects • Be able to successfully fill and take medications from weekly medication planner • Be able to describe importance of medications • Be able to describe and demonstrate 2 coping skills • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Maintain stable housing and identify plan for future • Describe important relationships in your life/identify potential issues • Describe your relationships with your family and how they impact your recovery • Identify at least 2 goals you are working on, the progress made and any roadblocks • Identify sober support person(s) • Add coping skills to safety plan and additional support persons • Explore/practice hobbies/interests • Explore vocational resources, if applicable • Identifiable progress on probation requirements • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 3

Felony/Gross Misdemeanor- Phase 3: Planning for the Future (minimum 32 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 3 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain consistent attendance at med clinic, outpatient therapy/day treatment etc. • Work with treatment team on progress towards individual goals • Demonstrate <i>high</i> level of engagement • Shift focus towards future and what participant's life will look like after MHC 	Phase 3 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend court appearances • Check in with service coordinator (monthly) • Check in regularly with probation officer (as directed) • Continue work on probation requirements • Continue medication compliance and to demonstrate responsibility with medications • Attend all appointments with all treatment providers • Demonstrate progress towards goals (vocational, educational, financial, abstinence) • Comply with rules of residential placement • Maintain personal hygiene and appropriate grooming • Maintain abstinence from drugs/alcohol • Comply with UAs • No new charges • Report any contact with law enforcement to probation officer & Service coordinator within 24 hours • Continue making payments to P&P and court fees 	Advancing from Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow P&P curfew • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Be able to describe symptoms associated with diagnosis • Be able to list medication/what symptoms they treat/possible side effects • Be able to describe importance of medications • Be able to independently fill and take medications from a planner for 2 weeks at a time. • Be able to describe and demonstrate 5 coping skills • Put long-term goals into practice- housing, treatment continuation • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Continue completing probation requirements • Describe important relationships in your life/identify potential issues • Describe your relationships with your family and how they impact your recovery • Identify all treatment goals, the progress made and any roadblocks • Continue identifying and participating in leisure activities (add successful ones to safety plan) • Continue working, if applicable • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 3

Felony/Gross Misdemeanor- Phase 4: Sustainability (minimum 32 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
<p>Phase 4 Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish post-graduation short and long term plan to maintain mental health, abstinence, housing, financial & compliance with community laws 		<p>Phase 4 Participant Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend court appearances (as directed) • Check in service coordinator (monthly) • Check in regularly with probation officer (as directed) • Continue compliance and take all medication as prescribed • Attend all appointments with all treatment providers • Fulfilled all treatment goals and continue involvement in positive social activities • Demonstrate an understanding of importance of ongoing treatment and medication compliance • Complete Graduation Packet and exit survey 		<p>Advancing from Phase 4 (Graduation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Independence with medication administration • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Complete all probation requirements • Must have support system in place • Complete payment of fees/fines • Team meeting to review continued care plan • Turn in detailed continued care plan to court <p>• Graduation will be scheduled for 12 weeks after continued care plan is turned into court. During that time client is expected to check in with CM and PO monthly (or more often if assistance is needed), but will not have any court appearances. This is the “trial run” to put care plan into action. If successful- graduation upon return. If not successful- team meeting to be held in advance of court appearance to problem-solve and set new timeline.</p>	

Misdemeanant- Phase 1: Stability and Engagement (minimum 6 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 1 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify housing, psychiatric, medical, substance use & financial needs • Identify personal strengths & goals • Identify barriers to treatment & reaching identified goals • Develop rapport and honesty with treatment providers 	Phase 1 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Court appearances weekly for the first 6 weeks, biweekly after that • Check-in weekly with service coordinator • Compliant with all medication as prescribed • Demonstrate good hygiene/self-care • Attend all scheduled appointments including but not limited to court, med clinic, individual and group therapy sessions, drug tests • Work towards financial stability/payment plan for any unpaid fees • Follow rules of residential placement • No drugs or alcohol • Report any new contact with law enforcement to service coordinator within 24 hours • No new charges 	Advancing from Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow curfew- home by 6pm each night • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Stable housing • Be able to identify team members • Be able to identify diagnosis • Be able to list medication names • Identify 3 strengths • Identify possible hobbies or interests • Initiate a safety plan (to be built upon in all phases and will then be used to create continuing care plan) this plan to have names and numbers to contact if symptoms become worse or having SI/HI-, including CM, coordinator, housing provider • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 2

Misdemeanant- Phase 2: Treatment (minimum 16 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
<p>Phase 2 Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase client's level of engagement (Intensive treatment focus) • Demonstrate stability with regards to mental health, medical needs, substance use and financial obligations • Individualized skills building • Target specific needs/risks 	<p>Phase 2 Participant Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Court appearances (as instructed) • Check in biweekly with service coordinator • Compliant with all medication as prescribed • Demonstrate good hygiene/self-care • Attend all scheduled appointments including but not limited to court, med clinic, individual and group therapy, drug tests • Follow rules of residential placement • Develop income plan (work vs. SSI) • No drugs or alcohol • Report any new contact with law enforcement to service coordinator within 24 hours • No new charges 	<p>Advancing from Phase 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow curfew- home by 8pm each night • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Be able to describe symptoms associated with diagnosis • Be able to list medication/what symptoms they treat/possible side effects • Be able to successfully fill and take medications from weekly medication planner • Be able to describe importance of medications • Be able to describe and demonstrate 2 coping skills • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Maintain stable housing and identify plan for future • Describe important relationships in your life/identify potential issues • Describe your relationships with your family and how they impact your recovery • Identify at least 2 goals you are working on, the progress made and any roadblocks • Identify sober support person(s) • Add coping skills to safety plan and additional support persons • Explore/practice hobbies/interests • Explore vocational resources, if applicable • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 3 	

Misdemeanant- Phase 3: Planning for the Future (minimum 16 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 3 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain consistent attendance at med clinic, outpatient therapy/day treatment etc. • Work with treatment team on progress towards individual goals • Demonstrate <i>high</i> level of engagement • Shift focus towards future and what participant's life will look like after MHC 	Phase 3 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend court appearances • Check in with service coordinator (monthly) • Continue medication compliance • Attend all appointments with all treatment providers • Demonstrate progress towards goals (vocational, educational, financial, abstinence) • Comply with rules of residential placement • Maintain personal hygiene and appropriate grooming • Maintain abstinence from drugs/alcohol • Comply with UAs • No new charges • Report any contact with law enforcement to service coordinator within 24 hours • Continue making payments on court fees 	Advancing from Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive adjustment to treatment • Follow curfew- home by 9pm each night • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Be able to describe symptoms associated with diagnosis • Be able to list medication/what symptoms they treat/possible side effects • Be able to describe importance of medications • Be able to describe and demonstrate 5 coping skills • Put long-term goals into practice- housing, treatment continuation • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Move towards • Describe important relationships in your life/identify potential issues • Describe your relationships with your family and how they impact your recovery • Identify all treatment goals, the progress made and any roadblocks • Continue identifying and participating in leisure activities (add successful ones to safety plan) • Continue working, if applicable • Team meeting to review progress/identify new issues moving into phase 3

Misdemeanant- Phase 4: Sustainability (minimum 18 weeks)

GOALS		REQUIREMENTS		ADVANCEMENT	
Phase 4 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish post-graduation short and long term plan to maintain mental health, abstinence, housing, financial & compliance with community laws 	Phase 4 Participant Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend court appearances (as directed) • Check in service coordinator (monthly) • Continue compliance and take all medication as prescribed • Attend all appointments with all treatment providers • Fulfilled all treatment goals and continue involvement in positive social activities • Demonstrate an understanding of importance of ongoing treatment and medication compliance • Complete Graduation Packet and exit survey 	Advancing from Phase 4 (Graduation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unexcused absences from scheduled services • Compliance with medication • Drug/alcohol free (including no missed UAs) • Must have support system in place • Complete payment of fees/fines • Team meeting to review continued care plan • Turn in detailed continued care plan to court • Graduation will be scheduled for 12 weeks after continued care plan is turned into court. During that time client is expected to check in with CM monthly (or more often if assistance is needed), but will not have any court appearances. This is the “trial run” to put care plan into action. If successful- graduation upon return. If not successful- team meeting to be held in advance of court appearance to problem-solve and set new timeline.