



**20th Judicial District**

**Family Integrated Treatment Court (FITC)**

**Parent Handbook**

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## Welcome

Welcome to the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District's Family Integrated Treatment Court (FITC). If you are reading this handbook, it means you are thinking about participating in the program, due to your history of drug/alcohol abuse and the need for the state to become involved with your family.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the information you need to be successful in the program. Should you decide to participate, you will be expected to comply with the expectations outlined below, as well as any instructions given to you in court.

## Overview

The Family Integrated Treatment Court is a collaborative effort between the Boulder County Courts, the Department of Housing & Human Services (DHHS), Mental Health Partners (MHP), and other agencies. The purpose of the program is to provide you with the services and support you need to maintain sobriety and provide a safe and secure environment for your children. Most services are provided free of charge.

Participants are required to enroll in substance abuse and/or mental health treatment, submit to random drug testing, and attend frequent court reviews as directed. These requirements, along with any others imposed by the Court, will become part of your Family Services Plan (also called a treatment plan). The Court will closely monitor your compliance with these requirements, and will respond accordingly. Compliance may result in rewards or incentives; non-compliance may result in sanctions.

The FITC program consists of five phases (which are explained in detail beginning on page 9), and takes a minimum of 12 months to complete. It may take slightly longer for some participants, depending on their rate of progress.

*Because having your children in the home is a matter of their physical and emotional safety (as in any dependency and neglect proceeding), the timing of their return is based on what is in their best interest, and is not tied to any specific phase of the program. It is very important to understand that compliance with FITC program requirements does not guarantee that your children will be returned to you. There may be circumstances in which, even with full compliance, the Court determines that returning home is not in the best interests of the children.*

## **The FITC Team**

As head of the FITC team, the Judge or Magistrate will make all final decisions regarding your status in the program, with frequent and regular input from the other team members. The other team members include:

- DHHS (FITC) Caseworker
- Mental Health Partners (MHP) representatives
- Assistant County Attorney
- Guardian ad litem (GAL)
- Your attorney, if you have an attorney
- Treatment Court Coordinator

Your FITC Caseworker will be your primary contact person during your involvement in the program. However, all members of the FITC team will play a role in your case, and all are committed to your success in the program.

## **Treatment Court Hearings**

Frequent court appearances are a key part of the FITC program. These hearings, or status reviews, are typically held every two weeks, at least initially. As you progress through the phases, these reviews generally become less frequent. Before your FITC court hearings, the Judge or

Magistrate reviews a progress report put together by the members of the team. This report will include information about your drug test results, participation and attendance in treatment, and your general progress toward your treatment plan goals. At your status review hearings, you will also have the opportunity to inform the Judge or Magistrate of any problems you may be having.

## **DHHS & MHP Treatment Plans**

Both your caseworker and substance abuse treatment provider will work with you to establish treatment plans. These treatment plans will outline the specific requirements each agency expects you to follow. Because these agencies will work together to address your treatment needs, many of these goals and requirements will be the same. The DHHS treatment plan will identify any of the requirements not specifically related to substance abuse, such as participation in parenting classes or mental health treatment. The Court will order your compliance with all elements of the DHHS treatment plan, which will include all recommended treatment.

## **Program Basics**

By following a few basic guidelines, you can greatly increase your chances of successfully completing the program. A few suggestions:

- Attend all court hearings, meetings, and appointments.
- Comply with the requirements of your DHHS and MHP treatment plans.
- Be honest! Although your honesty will not prevent a sanction from being imposed, it will help the team to consider the most effective response.
- Stay in touch with your caseworker and your attorney. Be sure they always have a current address and telephone number in case they need to reach you.
- Be as organized as possible. You will need to keep track of lots of meetings, court dates and appointments. A calendar or day-timer

is very helpful.

- If you are not sure about any requirements or expectations, ask your caseworker or other FITC team member.

## Confidentiality

State and Federal laws require that your identity and privacy be protected. In response to these regulations, the FITC has developed procedures that guard your privacy.

You will be asked to sign an Authorization for Release of Information. This authorization is for the sole purpose of hearings and reports concerning your FITC case.

## About Drug Testing

Random drug and/or alcohol screening is a very important part of the program. While drug use is typically monitored through urine and/or breath testing, you may also be required to submit to other types of testing, including saliva tests (swabs) and hair tests. You will be expected to comply with any testing ordered by your caseworker or the Court.

Positive, missed, altered or refused tests will be considered positive and subject to sanction. *Because abnormal creatinine levels can indicate tampering or deliberate flushing, samples with creatinine levels below 20 mg/dl or above 400 mg/dl will be considered invalid and subject to sanction.*

You are ultimately responsible for ensuring the screens you provide are valid. You should be aware that prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and dietary or energy supplements can affect your test results. As such, it is strongly advised you learn how the ingredients of a given medicine or supplement might impact results before you start taking them.

## Prescription Drug Use

All participants will be expected to inform their health care providers of their addiction issues so that informed decisions can be made when prescription medications are being considered. In the event that prescription medications are deemed necessary, participants should make every effort to obtain a non-narcotic alternative, if one is available.

Participants will be expected to notify their caseworker within 24 hours of being placed on a prescription medication, or if any changes are made to existing prescriptions. Failure to do so will result in a sanction.

In an effort to ensure full disclosure, participants are required to provide their health care provider with the FITC Doctor's Notice when attending medical or dental appointments, provided by the caseworker. This form contains the caseworker's contact information and requires the doctor's signature.

Participants with a history of abusing prescription drugs, or who have been prescribed potentially habit-forming medications, may be subject to additional requirements. These may include:

- Being restricted to one prescribing physician.
- Agreeing to work with your physician to discontinue use of a potentially habit-forming medication.

NOTE: Individuals may not possess a medical marijuana certificate while in the program.

## "Designer" Drug Use

The possession or consumption of any "designer" drugs such as "Spice," "bath salts," etc., whether purchased legally or illegally, is strictly prohibited and subject to sanction. Such substances are often sold or marketed under false pretenses and labeled "Not for Human Consumption," though they are purchased for the purpose of getting a "high."

## Incentives & Sanctions

Each time you come to court, the treatment team will decide whether you will receive an incentive, a sanction, or neither. This decision will be based on several factors, including your attendance and participation in treatment & visitation, drug screen results, and general progress in the program. While incentives and sanctions may not be exactly the same for everyone, they will be fair, and the Judge/Magistrate will explain the specific reasons for the response chosen.

Possible incentives include verbal recognition from the Court, applause, gift cards, movie tickets, activity passes, or a special gift for your children.

Possible sanctions include verbal warnings from the Court, essay presentations, community service, or work crew.

In the event you are given a sanction, its severity will depend upon several factors, including how long you've been in the program, your history of compliance or noncompliance, phase, previous sanctions imposed by the Court, and the nature of the infraction.

Clients will be asked upon entry if they have any medical issues that would preclude them from completing sanctions such as Work Crew. If so, they will be required to provide medical documentation to their caseworker indicating the nature of the condition and any limitations associated with it.

Those ordered to complete community service must provide documentation of hours completed to the Court. This should be on agency letterhead and include service dates as well as the name of a person who can be contacted to verify the information.

NOTE: While jail time will not be included in the regular progression of sanctions imposed, there are circumstances under which the Court may impose jail time. Such circumstances include when a participant fails to complete previously imposed sanctions; when a participant refuses to engage in the recommended level of treatment, or when the participant's



level of use is deemed to pose a risk to themselves or the community.

## Phases of the Program

There are five phases to the FITC program. The time frames below indicate how long it takes to complete each phase. These should be considered estimates, as the actual time it takes will depend on each participant's unique circumstances. Typically, the program takes about one year to complete. Your progress toward meeting specific phase requirements will be determined by the treatment team. The final decision regarding phase advancement is made by the Judge/Magistrate.

### Phase 1 (2 weeks)

Minimum Requirements:

- Attend substance abuse intake/evaluation at MHP (or other approved treatment agency)
- Attend all required substance abuse treatment, therapeutic services, and community support groups
- Attend all court appearances
- Attend all scheduled visitation (if applicable)
- Comply with Initial Protective Orders of the Court
- Comply with all random drug/alcohol monitoring

### Phase 2 (12 weeks)

Minimum Requirements:

- Attend and participate in all required substance abuse treatment, therapeutic services, and community support groups
- Attend all court appearances
- Attend all scheduled visitation (if applicable)
- Comply with all random drug/alcohol monitoring
- Comply with all court-ordered treatment plans
- Make acceptable efforts to establish sober/stable housing

To be eligible for Phase 3, participants must have a minimum of 30

consecutive days of sobriety.\*

### **Phase 3 (16 weeks)**

Minimum Requirements:

- Attend, participate, and engage in all substance abuse treatment, therapeutic services, and community support groups
- Attend all court appearances
- Attend all scheduled visitation (if applicable)
- Comply with all random drug/alcohol monitoring
- Comply with all court-ordered treatment plans
- Maintain sober/stable housing

To be eligible for Phase 4, participants must have a minimum of 30 consecutive days of sobriety.\*

### **Phase 4 (10 weeks)**

Minimum Requirements:

- Attend, participate and engage in all required substance abuse treatment, therapeutic services, and community support groups
- Attend all court appearances
- Attend all scheduled visitation (if applicable)
- Comply with all random drug/alcohol monitoring
- Comply with all court-ordered treatment plans
- Maintain sober/stable housing

To be eligible for Phase 5, participants must have a minimum of 30 consecutive days of sobriety.\*

### **Phase 5 (8 weeks)**

Minimum Requirements:

- Attend, participate and engage in all required substance abuse treatment, therapeutic services, and community support groups
- Attend all court appearances
- Attend all scheduled visitation (if applicable)

- Comply with all random drug/alcohol monitoring
- Comply with all court-ordered treatment plans
- Maintain sober/stable housing

\* Transition from one phase to the next includes a sobriety requirement. Given the lag time between testing and when results are received, should a person be promoted to the next phase and the results indicate use, dilution, or tampering, the promotion will be rescinded until the participant fulfills the sobriety requirement.

## **Graduation Criteria**

Graduation from the FITC is an important event that demonstrates to the Court, the treatment team, and your family members that you have made significant changes in your life. Successful completion of the FITC is a major achievement!

Participants must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for graduation:

- Successful completion of all five program phases
- Successful completion of all court-ordered treatment plans
- Be able to assist in permanency decisions regarding your children, (i.e. whether they should be returned to your care, placed with kin, placed in a foster/adoption home, etc.)
- Not be subject to a new D&N filing
- A minimum of 30 consecutive days of sobriety

## **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Participants may voluntarily withdraw from the program at any time, under the following conditions:

1. A participant requesting to withdraw from the program must make the request to the Court, and will be required to observe a two-week

- waiting period before the decision is deemed final;
2. Any sanctions that have been imposed by the Court must be completed before the participant is allowed to withdraw.

## **Termination from the Program**

While every member of the FITC team is committed to helping you successfully complete the program, there are certain events that can result in termination. If you are terminated from the program, you will not automatically lose your children. You will still have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Court that you can be a safe and stable parent.

The following are reasons for possible termination from the FITC:

1. You voluntarily request to leave the program.
2. You no longer live in Boulder County.
3. You fail to complete the assessment and evaluation with Mental Health Partners (or other approved agency) in a timely manner.
4. You disappear from DHHS supervision and fail to make contact with the department within 30 days of last contact.
5. You are arrested for a disqualifying criminal offense, such as Child Sexual Abuse, Criminal Enterprise Drug Sales or Child Abuse Involving Serious Bodily Injury or Death.
6. You are determined to have a condition that would prevent you from participating in or achieving benefits from the FITC's clinical program.
7. You fail to progress through the program phases in a reasonable period of time, as determined by the FITC team.
8. Failing to attend court appearances (for reasons other than those beyond your control.)
9. Evidence of ongoing drug use (as opposed to an occasional relapse.)
10. A pattern of noncompliance that suggests you are either unable or unwilling to abide by program rules.

## **Children & Visitors in the Courtroom**

The FITC team understands that childcare is an issue for many participants. For this reason, children are welcome to accompany you to your court hearings. If a family member can also attend, they may care for the children in the Child Friendly Play Room just down the hall from Courtroom O. Please note that the Judge or Magistrate may occasionally ask the children to leave the courtroom, such as before a sanction is imposed.

You are welcome to have other family members or friends attend court with you for support. However, to protect the privacy of the other participants in FITC, they will not be allowed in the courtroom while other cases are being discussed.

### **Contact Information**

#### **FITC Caseworkers:**

Ann Baldwin	(303) 678-6069
Ashley McDonald	(720) 864-6446
Jackie Sanders	(303) 678-6024

Office Location: Boulder County Dept. of Housing & Human Services  
1921 Corporate Center Circle, Longmont, CO 80501

#### **MHP Contacts:**

William Coppersmith	(303) 245-6786
Erin Sherman	(303) 245-4409

Office Locations: Mental Health Partners  
1333 Iris Ave., Boulder, CO 80304  
529 Coffman, Ste. 300, Longmont, CO 80501

## Useful Community Resources

Agency	Phone Number
Alcoholics Anonymous	(303) 447-8201
Boulder Community Transition Center (BCTC)	(303) 449-2539
Boulder County Attorney	(303) 441-3190
Boulder County Bar Association	(303) 440-4758
Boulder County Child Support Enforcement	(303) 441-1070
Boulder County Justice Center	(303) 441-3750
District Court, Juvenile Division	(303) 441-4765
Boulder County Dept. of Housing & Human Services	
Boulder:	(303) 441-1000
Longmont:	(303) 678-6000
Boulder Housing Partners	(720) 564-4610
Boulder Valley Women's Health Center	(303) 442-5160
Child Abuse Crisis Hotline	(303) 441-1240
Community Food Share (Longmont)	(303) 652-3663
Community Infant Program (CIP)	(303) 661-0433
Emergency Family Assistance Association (Boulder)	(303) 442-3042
Labor Ready (Boulder)	(303) 499-9288
Longmont Community Transition Center (LCTC)	(303) 651-7071
Longmont Housing Authority	(303) 651-8581
Mental Health Partners	
Boulder:	(303) 443-8500
Longmont:	(303) 684-0555
Metro Volunteer Lawyers	(303) 830-8210
Narcotics Anonymous	(303) 412-2884
OUR Center Day Shelter (Longmont)	(303) 772-5529
People's Clinic (Boulder)	(303) 650-4460
Probation, 20 <sup>th</sup> Judicial District	
Boulder:	(303) 441-3790
Longmont:	(720) 564-2555
RTD Information	(303) 299-6000
Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence	(303) 449-8623
24 Hour Crisis Line:	(303) 444-2424
Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley (Longmont)	(303) 772-0432
24 Hour Crisis Line:	(303) 772-4422
Workforce Boulder County	
Boulder:	(303) 301-2900
Longmont:	(303) 651-1510