



Northshore Outpatient  
Assistance & Holistic Services

22nd Judicial District Court  
Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT)  
[www.22ndjdc.org](http://www.22ndjdc.org)

# Participant Manual

## **Welcome To Participants**

Dear Program Participant,

Welcome to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Court's Assistive Outpatient Program. We are glad to have you as a participant and we are here to assist you on your road to wellness. The program is designed to help you develop the skills needed to be well and live safely and as independently as possible.

The Court has found you meet the criteria for AOT program and have determined it necessary for your well-being that you participate in this program until further court order. Through collaboration of the Court, Florida Parish Human Services Authority, NAMI and other community agencies we are offering you a chance to improve your quality of life.

This handbook is provided to offer you an overview of our program, your participation in the development of a treatment plan, an outline of the phases, resources and treatment team member's roles in your program. If program changes are made the participant will be given advance notice.

We hope all your questions will be answered in this handbook, but if you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to ask the Case Manager.

We welcome you to the 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC AOT Court and wish you every success in the program.

Sincerely,

Wendy Griffith  
AOT Program Director

## **Mission Statement**

The goal of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Assistive Outpatient Treatment Court is to improve the stability and self-sustainability of its participants through reducing incidences of substance abuse, incarceration, hospitalization, and homelessness.

We will strive to increase the stability and self-sustainability of its participants. We seek to reduce recidivism of individuals in the criminal justice system and hospitalizations with a cost effective, integrated continuum of care through the utilization of integrated substance abuse and mental health services concurrently and community resources.

It will use the law as a therapeutic agent to improve the quality of lives within the community. This will be done by increased collaborations between the Court, counsel and community mental health treatment services by providing individualized, culturally competent, trauma-informed, evidenced based services based upon participant's level of need.

## **What is Assistive Outpatient Treatment Court?**

The AOT (Assistive Outpatient Treatment) court is authorized by La. R.S. 28:66-75 and allows authorized persons to file a petition for court ordered treatment for persons that meet criteria set forth in the law. A treatment plan developed by yourself and your treating professionals has been ordered by the court for you to follow with the assistance of your treatment team through supervision and treatment services. The services ordered in your plan will be specific to your needs and could include but not limited to: frequent drug testing, judicial supervision, counseling, medication, educational opportunities, co-occurring treatment and the use of incentives.

This program's goal is to provide treatment and services to you in the least restrictive setting through outpatient programs as opposed to inpatient treatment.

## **Members of Your Treatment Team**

- You!
- Honorable Judge Alan Zaunbrecher
- AOT Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner: \_\_\_\_\_

- Individual Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Peer Support: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other provider(s) as appropriate within your services \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Federal confidentiality laws protect any person who is receiving treatment for a mental health and/or substance abuse problem. To participate in this program you must agree to waive some of your rights to confidentiality. For example you will be asked to sign releases so that your treatment providers can communicate with the Case Manager.

Generally individuals have a right not to waive these rights. However, program participation requires waiver of these rights.

## **Overview of Requirements**

### **Program Requirements and Treatment Plans:**

The expectations in each participant’s treatment plan are individualized. The requirements are designed on a case-by-case basis to best meet the needs and abilities of each individual participant, phase by phase. Each participant has a case manager to provide monitoring, accountability, and service coordination. General program requirements include the following:

- Attend scheduled therapy sessions and appointments made by the providers
- Take your Medication
- Take any drug and alcohol testing if requested
- Attend court
- Keep your case manager updated on your living situation and contact information
- Open communication with your treatment team about your progress and any concerns about your health or issues that may prevent you from following your treatment plan

## **Status Hearings**

Attend status hearings as directed. Your Case Manager will complete a status report for each of your appearances, giving the Court information on how you are doing in the Program. Should you be providing your own transportation to court do not arrive late to the status hearings!

Remember that a Status Hearing is a Court appearance. Proper attire is required. No shorts, cutoffs, bare midriffs, halter-tops, sagging pants, hats, bandanas or other disrespectful/disruptive clothing will be allowed. Men are not to wear earrings and no one should wear any kind of facial piercing.

## **Incentives and Consequences**

Failure to follow your treatment plan, including medication, could result in more restrictive treatment services. This could include more frequent therapeutic sessions, additionally drug screening and/or court status hearings. If your situation causes concern by yourself or your treatment team about your health and safety, a motion can be filed with the court to determine if inpatient care is needed or in the event of an emergency, your treatment providers may seek an emergency certificate for hospitalization.

Incentives are provided to individuals who have demonstrated continued participation with your treatment goals. These rewards could be reduced supervision and/or frequency of drug screens, and decreased frequency of court appearances.

## **Medication**

You are responsible for informing both providers and your Case Manager of all prescription medications you are taking, or of any changes to your medication protocol. Prior to filling any new medications prescribed by your doctor you must contact your case manager.

You are required to get approval from your Case Manager before taking any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, nutritional aids or similar products.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. How long will I be in AOT Court Program?**

The court can order your participation up to 1 year and can be extended if determined that continued supervised treatment is needed to maintain your health and safety. The length of the program will vary based on the individual's level of need, cooperation and compliance with all treatment.

### **2. How do I get out of the program?**

This is up to you and your treatment team. The Court will determine when your commitment expires based on your compliance and success with your treatment plan along with recommendations from your treatment team.

### **3. What happens if I am sick or forget an appointment?**

You must contact your case manager or supervisor of the team immediately and provide the reason for missing the appointment. You will need to reschedule the appointment as soon as possible.

### **4. What if I do not want to take the medications that have been prescribed?**

Your psychiatrist/APRN has prescribed the medication(s) they feel is best to address the symptoms of your mental illness. If you are having side effects or want to request a change in medications, you must discuss with the prescriber. Please contact your case manager for assistance.

### **5. Am I allowed to speak to the Judge?**

Yes. The Judge will give you an opportunity to speak at each court appearance to go over your progress and any other issues you may have.

### **6. Are there any costs to participate in the AOT Court program?**

No.