

22nd JDC

Family Preservation Court



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Welcome to the 22nd JDC Family Preservation Court!

The 22nd JDC Family Preservation Court is a special program designed to help you and your children get back together and stay back together. To reach that goal, this program will help you recover from substance abuse by participating in treatment, frequent drug testing, and monthly judicial monitoring. This program is designed to work through incentives and sanctions that will help provide the motivation you need to reunite with your family.

We hope that by working together, we can help you break the cycle of addiction and build a better life for yourself and your children. To reunify your family, this program requires that you complete substance abuse treatment as well as other requirements set forth by the Court. As you work through treatment, you will also progress through Phases of participation through the Court. Each Phase has specific requirements for advancement. The Family Preservation Court team will constantly monitor your progress and help you toward reaching those requirements. Each graduation from a Phase will be celebrated. Your biggest success will be to make a safe and happy home for your children.

Mission Statement

The mission of the 22nd JDC Family Preservation Court is to provide judicial accountability and enhanced access to comprehensive treatment services, to improve the safety and the welfare of children, and to support the recovery of their parents from alcohol and drug abuse.

Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the program is that through learning new behaviors, using the resources of treatment, family, community and friends, and also structuring a suitable recovery environment, many of these people will be capable of living a drug-free lifestyle. The Family Preservation Court Program is designed to address the parent's need for treatment, support and monitoring in a highly structured system. This system involves the treatment program, the Court, the Department of Child and Family Services, a Case Management Office and other community resources as needed. Clients are required to participate in regular treatment sessions, frequent urine drug screening and recurrent court appearances to ensure they comply with the requirements. Other issues which clients face, such as emotional problems, vocational needs, educational deficits, etc. are referred to the appropriate agencies.

The treatment philosophy used involves the utilization of intensive day treatment, family therapy, the self-help programs of support meetings and case management in a structured and disciplined environment. When appropriate, referrals can be made to detoxification programs, inpatient treatment and/or residential treatment settings.

The goal of the program is get the participant off of drugs and/or alcohol and to ensure that they have the tools necessary to provide a safe living environment for their children.

22nd JDC Family Preservation Court Team

- Judge
- Program Coordinator
- Case Manager
- Public Defender
- Children’s Attorney
- Department of Children and Family Services
 - Case Worker
 - Supervisor
 - Program Operations Manager
- Treatment Provider
 - Licensed Addictions Counselors
 - Licensed Clinical Social Workers
- Ancillary Services
 - Domestic Violence Advocates
 - Parenting and Nurturing Professionals
 - Job Readiness Trainer
 - In-Home Parent Coaching
 - Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

PROGRAM RULES

As an FPC participant, you will be required to abide by the following rules:

- 1. Do not use or possess any drugs or alcohol.** Sobriety is the primary focus of this program. Maintaining a substance-free lifestyle is very important in your recovery. Carefully choose the people with whom you associate.
- 2. Attend all ordered treatment sessions or case management appointments.** This includes inpatient, outpatient, individual and group counseling, educational sessions, drug testing, and support meetings. If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, you must contact the treatment provider before a session is missed. If you miss any of the above, you are subject to sanctions.
- 3. Attend all court hearings.** If you are unable to be present in court, you must make yourself available by telephone. Having an unexcused absence from court will result in sanctions, possibly a bench warrant. If you are unable to be available by phone, you must contact your case manager before you are scheduled to appear.
- 4. Attend all visitations.** If you are unable to make your scheduled visitations, you must contact your DCFS case worker in advance.
- 5. Report to your DCFS case worker and/or FPC case manager as directed.** If you have any problems making an appointment, you must call in advance.
- 6. Be on time.** If you are late for court, treatment, or other case plan related obligations, you may be subject to sanctions. Contact your treatment provider if you plan to be late.
- 7. Do not make threats towards other participants or staff, behave in a violent manner, or disrupt treatment.** Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Court. This may result in immediate termination from the FPC.
- 8. Dress appropriately for Court and treatment sessions.** As a participant, you will be expected to wear a shirt or blouse, pants, dress, skirt or shorts of a reasonable length. Shoes must be worn at all times. If you have difficulty with this, we would be happy to help you. **Clothing bearing gang, drug or alcohol related language is considered inappropriate.**
- 9. Maintain confidentiality in all 22nd JDC Family Preservation Court activities.**

Medication

There are some very strict rules about taking medication while in the Family Preservation Court. The first reason is because some medication is mood-altering and the potential for cross-addiction is real. Second, your sobriety is measured in many ways, but the most effective way is through drug testing. Drug testing is the best way to show the FPC team that you are remaining clean and sober. Therefore no drugs of any kind (including over-the-counter) are to be taken without prior approval of the staff. You must also inform your physicians that you are in recovery and may not take narcotic or addictive medication. You have to take responsibility for your sobriety because not every physician knows about the nature of your condition. **If you are, by chance, prescribed a narcotic by a physician for medical necessity, you must tell the doctor that you are in a program and sign a consent form for the doctor to communicate with the treatment staff.** There will be a form made available to you at your orientation to give your physician for his signature and approval of this medication.

You are responsible for informing both the treatment clinic and the Case Management Office of all prescription medications you are taking. You are also responsible for providing documentation and notifying staff if there are any changes to the prescriptions. Use of mood-altering medications (prescribed or not) can exclude a person **from participation in the program.**

You are required to get staff approval before taking any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, nutritional aids, or similar products. You can only take products that are non-addictive and do not contain alcohol. Failure to follow this policy can result in a positive or abnormal urine drug screen or breathe test, and sanctions may be requested based on the results. This may also change your verified clean date, causing you to stay in Family Preservation Court longer.

Drug Testing

If you are going to be positive for a screen, tell us up front, before you give the urine specimen. We can deal with a relapse a lot differently if you are honest about it. If you have a positive screen and you have not told the Family Court Staff about it, you will receive sanctions for dishonesty in addition to whatever the treatment team recommends.

You are required to submit to a minimum of two OBSERVED random urine drug screens per week. You are responsible to pay for these screens. The fee is \$7.00 cash per screen. If you do not have the exact amount of money, you will not be allowed to screen and you will receive a “presumptive positive” result for that day.

You will be assigned a screening username and pin number during the intake process, to help determine when you will be required to screen. EVERY DAY, SATURDAY through FRIDAY, you will be required to call in at 985-202-5962 and check to see if you will be screening that day. If your scheduled to screen that day, you MUST report to give a screen THAT DAY. You can always report to the Drug Screening Office at .

The hours that we screen in **Covington and Slidell** are:

Monday through Friday **8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (must be checked in by 4:45 pm),**

(closed from 1:00 to 2:00 pm and must sign in by 12:45 pm)

Saturday and Sunday **8:00 AM to 12:00 PM (must be checked in by 11:45 pm).**

If you have not gotten to the screening site by the time we stop screening, you will receive a stall (presumptive positive) for that screen. If you have not produced specimen by 15 minutes after closing time, you will not be allowed to continue trying and you will receive a presumptive positive for that screen.

Intentional adulteration of a screen (trying to cover up/change results) will be dealt with as any other dishonesty. This can be a reason for discharge from the Program and scheduling of a probation revocation hearing.

Your Treatment Provider will also require drug screens. Failure to provide specimen at the clinic will be treated the same way as missing a screen at the Drug Court Office. Positive or adulterated screens at the clinics are also reported to the Case Manager and then the Judge. However, we do not allow your screens at the clinic to take the place of a missed screen for drug court. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Understand that you may also be required to submit to breathe tests to verify that you are alcohol free. If you are found to be drinking or continue to use drugs, you must agree to follow through with a referral to a detox, inpatient or any other clinical recommendation by the treatment staff.

INPATIENT/DETOXIFICATION

If you are unable to abstain from chemical usage, a decision may be made to refer you to an inpatient drug treatment program. Understand that any recommendation made by clinic staff (and drug court staff) is in your best interest and should be followed through. If referred to a detox or inpatient facility, you are required to continue attending group at your respective clinic until which time a placement can be secured.

You are required to follow any treatment recommendation. This may include detoxification, inpatient, halfway house or other residential placement. If sent to detox, inpatient, halfway house or any other residential placement, you are expected to complete the program you are sent to and follow any recommendations that their staff makes for you. This may include completion of a Residential or Halfway House type program.

You must return to the clinic immediately upon release from such facility to check-in with staff so they can reassess your level of participation in the program. You are also required to check in with the Case Management office by noon on the next working day after your discharge from the facility.

Status Hearings

Court is held every Wednesday or Thursday at 8: 30 am. Your Case Manager will complete a status report for each of your appearances, giving the Court current information on your progress. You may receive sanctions or incentives depending on how you are doing in the program. If you are unable to attend a court appearance, you must let a team member know in advance or be subject to possible sanctions. The frequency of court appearance corresponds to the person's level in the program. **DO NOT ARRIVE LATE TO YOUR STATUS HEARINGS!**

Frequency of Status Hearings:

- Phase 1 – Every week
- Phase 2 – Every two (2) weeks
- Phase 3 – Every four (4) weeks
- Phase 4 (Aftercare) – Every four (4) weeks

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

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information regarding FPC participants is bound by Part 2 of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which governs the confidentiality of substance abuse patient records. All team members sign a confidentiality form during every weekly staff meeting.

You are expected to follow the same confidentiality guidelines in treatment and in the courtroom. Sanctions will be imposed if the confidentiality rules are not followed. Staffings and hearings are not open to the public.

Also, the Case Management Office will need a release to give the Court information it gets from the treatment provider. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WAIVE THESE RIGHTS. HOWEVER**, if you choose not to do so you will not be allowed to participate in this program.

Confidentiality is also essential in group therapy. Anything that is discussed in group must remain within the confines of group. No information pertaining to any client should be discussed outside of group, unless you have that client's WRITTEN permission to talk about it.

Meetings

You are expected to attend and participate in all treatment meetings required. You are also required to present verification support group meeting attendance as required. Regular attendance will be seen as a measure of your recovery. Meeting lists are provided to you at intake but are also available at all of the clinics and at the Drug Court Office.

You are required to fill out a meeting verification sheet for each meeting that you attend. If you fail to fill out your sheet completely, it will not be accepted. **IF YOU ARE CAUGHT FORGING** your meeting verification sheets, sanctions will be severe. Keep in mind that some of the staff members are very familiar with the recovery community, and will immediately recognize most attempts at deception around meeting attendance.

Do not let yourself fall behind on meeting attendance. It is much more difficult to catch up than it is to stay current. Falling behind on your meetings can also cause you to stay in a phase longer than normal, and therefore stay in FPC longer than you have to.

Incentives

If you do well in treatment and obey all Court orders, you will be rewarded with incentives.

What is an Incentive?

An “incentive” is an acknowledgment by the Court that you have reached a treatment milestone or accomplished a specific achievement. Incentives can be as simple as applause in the Courtroom and as much as increased visitation with your children.

Why are Incentives given?

It is important to acknowledge achievements and progress in some tangible way. Receiving incentives can build self-esteem and help you set the stage for continued progress.

Are Incentives the same for everyone?

There are several possible incentives that can be granted for each particular achievement or milestone. Since every case is a little bit different, the Preservation Court team decides which incentive is most appropriate for each case. In some situations, the Judge may grant more than one incentive.

Sanctions

Just as it is important to recognize progress, it is also important to receive consequences for negative behavior. By imposing “graduated sanctions” on you if you do not comply with treatment, the Court hopes to help you learn that there will be swift consequences for your actions.

What is a sanction?

A “sanction” is a response to an infraction. The seriousness of the infraction determines the severity of the sanction imposed. Sanctions are “graduated.” Not only are more severe sanctions imposed for more serious infractions, but also as infractions accumulate, the sanctions become harsher.

How many Infractions and Sanctions can I get before being terminated from the Family Preservation Court?

This is determined on an individual basis. There is some room for behavioral mistakes and adjustments. However, you will not get unlimited chances to change your behavior and succeed in treatment. When you run out of chances, you risk losing your parental rights to your children.

Phases of Participation

One of the main goals is to have you understand the treatment process and help you engage in treatment until you complete it.

To help you focus on meeting the requirements for reunification, you will pass through four Phases of the 22nd Family Preservation Court. The following questions and answers explain what the Phases are.

What is a Phase?

A Phase is a stage of participation in the FPC. Each Phase has minimum time frame, except Phase IV which is typically three months of Aftercare.

Why are there four Phases?

Recovery from substance abuse is a long process. Sometimes, setting short-term goals can help you feel less overwhelmed. Breaking down the specific requirements for graduation and/or reunification can also help you stay focused on success.

How will I move through Phases?

Each Phase has a set of specific requirements. Once all the requirements for the Phase have been met, you will be eligible to advance to the next Phase.

How long will it take to complete all the Phases?

It will fifteen months to complete all requirements and reunite with your children. However, this depends upon each individual's participation and progress.

What happens if I fail to complete all the Phases?

It will be up to the FPC team. The team can choose to give you more time to complete the Phases and the Judge can also give you sanctions. The Judge may discharge you from the program.

PHASE I **(Minimum of 2 months)**

The focus of this Phase is stabilization and to encourage you to work toward a drug free life and establish a foundation of abstinence.

Goals for this Level include:

- Parents enrolled in substance abuse treatment
- Parents begin receiving parenting and nurturing skills (If available)
- Assessment for parents, children, and family completed
- Identification of family members in support roles
- Initial case plan and treatment plan developed
- Detoxification and abstinence from all mood-altering substances
- Evaluation and placement for additional services
- Gaining job skills needed for employment
- Increased stability in lifestyle, housing, and finances

Requirements for Advancement from Phase I:

- Consistent attendance at scheduled court appearances
- Compliant with treatment requirements
- Compliant with drug testing
- Attend a minimum of 3 support group meetings weekly and submit signed attendance forms
- Obtain a 12-step sponsor
- Compliant with supervised visits
- Compliant with DCFS Case Plan
- Completed all court-related sanctions (Community Service, essays, etc.)
- Provide OBSERVED urine drug screens minimally twice a week on a random basis
- A minimum of 60 days of consecutive clean time immediately prior to promotion.

PHASE II **(Minimum of 6 months)**

The focus of Phase II is to increase awareness and create a foundation for sobriety.

Goals for Phase II include:

- Continued abstinence
- Continued participation in substance abuse treatment
- Assessment for parenting and nurturing skills classes
- Increased awareness and insight of anger management and relapse prevention
- Identifying core belief systems and ineffective coping skills and solutions for change
- Continued and improved interaction with family and children leading to increased visitation
- Integration of identified family members into treatment
- Maintain employment and approved stable housing
- Identification of additional needs and linkage to services
- Increased stability in lifestyle and finances

Requirements for Advancement from Phase II:

- Continued consistent attendance at treatment
- Completed all treatment requirements
- Continued consistent court appearances
- Compliant with drug testing
- Continued attendance of three (3) meetings weekly and submit signed attendance forms
- Secure/maintain sponsor
- Compliant with visitations
- Join a 12-step home group
- Approved stable housing
- A minimum of 120 days consecutive clean time immediately prior to promotion

PHASE III **(Minimum of 4 months)**

The focus of this Phase is to concentrate on your continued sobriety and to reunite you with your children and the community at large.

Goals for Phase III include:

- Identification of relapse triggers and proactive strategies for continued sobriety
- Continued development of parenting skills
- Stable living and financial arrangements
- Reintegration into family and community
- Preparation, in all respects, for reunification and continued substance-free living
- Temporary placement with child/children and intensive home based services
- Child Placement with child/children

Requirements for Advancement of Phase III:

- Completion of all treatment requirements
- Compliant with all in-home visits
- Completed DCFS case plan requirements
- A minimum of three (3) support meetings a week and submit signed meeting attendance forms
- Service commitment with home group
- Compliant with drug testing
- A minimum of 180 days of consecutive clean time immediately prior to promotion

PHASE IV - Aftercare **(Minimum of 3 months)**

The focus of this Phase is to ensure maintenance of a healthy recovering lifestyle and support of your reunited family.

Goals for Phase IV include:

- Maintaining sober lifestyle
- Utilizing support systems for continued success with newfound lifestyle
- Mentor new clients just entering the program

Graduation should take place during Phase IV - Aftercare. After graduation, you will stay in Aftercare for as long as necessary. The graduation ceremony will occur at various times throughout the year, typically occurring every three (3) months. Before you are eligible, you must be able to check all the boxes below.

Graduation Checklist:

- Satisfied all components of DCFS case plan
- Completed Nurturing Parenting program
- 6 months consecutive clean time.
- Children returned and living at home for at least two months.
- Stable housing, employment and finances
- Successful discharge from a substance abuse treatment program.
- Active participation in 12-step or support group home group
- Support system established.

CONGRATULATIONS!

