

# **17<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT**

## **YOUTH RECOVERY COURT**



## **PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK**

## **What is Youth Recovery Court?**

Youth Recovery Court (YRC) is a program designed for teaching youth and their families how to cope with mental health symptoms, substance abuse issues, and negative behaviors that have resulted in criminal charges and criminal behavior. YRC's priority is to keep youth from re-offending, help them graduate from the juvenile justice system, and start leading a productive, successful, and positive life. The YRC program provides a case manager, mental health counselor, addiction counselor, probation officer and a team oriented approach, including Judge Holmgren and the legal team.

This is all accomplished through use of family involvement in services, the use of sanctions and incentives to increase motivation, behavior charts to track progress through treatment, and a level system intended to provide structure throughout the treatment process.

## **Family Engagement**

*Research shows that positive and engaged family members are the #1 predictor of success in court related programs.* As a result of this finding, the YRC team ensures support and resources for the entire family, including parent or guardian, and can provide therapy

for the whole family dynamic. Involvement of the family is a huge factor in a youth's success, and is therefore, a mandatory component of treatment. This is done through attendance in weekly court appearances, family therapy, case management meetings, and/or psychiatry appointments. Please know that all recommendations and appointments are strictly in the youth's best interest and focused primarily on the youth's treatment and recovery.

## **Incentives**

Incentives are used to provide rewards and motivation for the youth engaging in the YRC program. As the youth continues to engage and show progress in the program, incentives continue to grow and become more positive. Small incentives can include praise, applause, less frequent court dates, while larger incentives may include rewards from cart, level advancements, graduation of the program, etc. As youth continue to engage in the program, they may be able to engage in positive social activities in the community. The purpose is to provide motivation and positivity for the youth making healthy choices and providing effort into his/her treatment process.

## **Sanctions**

Sanctions are consequences provided by the YRC team that can be therapeutic or probation related, and are given by the YRC team when a client is purposefully not engaging in services or not being compliant with probation related requirements. The purpose of sanctions is to hold the youth accountable for his/her choices and to help them learn from past behavior in order to move forward in a positive way. Sanctions can range anywhere from mild, such as therapeutic writing assignments, to more severe, such as home confinement or detention time. The YRC team will decide these sanctions based on the safety of the youth and the community, and work towards the least severe sanctions as possible, based on the youth's behavior.

### **Examples of Incentives:**

- Praise
- Applause
- Inventive items (candy, notebooks, coloring books, and other items)
- Less frequent Court dates
- Level advancement
- Reward Cards
- Charge reduction/ dismissal
- Recognition for number of days sober or completion of a level of treatment
- Travel Permits

- Reduction in Public Service Work
- Outings

### Examples of Sanctions:

- Verbal reprimand
- More frequent Court dates/ team contact
- Writing Assignments
- Behavior Charts
- No Incentives (withhold reward cart)
- Loss of privileges (travel, electronics)
- Curfew
- In Home Confinement
- Petition to Revoke
- Warrant/ Bench Warrant
- Detention remand
- Termination from Program

### **YRC Level System**

The YRC team tracks a client's progress in treatment with a level system. YRC has levels 1-4. When a youth is engaging in the program and ready to graduate to the next level, the YRC team will ask the youth to apply for the next level. This will keep the family aware of the youth's progress. The purpose of the level system is to keep the program completely transparent so the youth, family, and team are aware of the youth's progress and needs at all times.

## **Level 1:**

Level one is the orientation level. This level's focus is on engagement in the program and finding/meeting the basic needs of the family. The family is expected to engage in all services, and to get to know the YRC team that they will be working with while needs are being addressed. Visits with the team are weekly, as are court appearances in order for the YRC team to fully understand the needs of the family and the youth involved. Incentives are based upon attendance in services and compliance with probation requirements. This level is short term and is based on the family's engagement in services.

During Level 1, clients are expected to:

- Report to Probation as directed
- Be home for scheduled Home Visits
- Meet with treatment providers as scheduled
- Take medications as prescribed
- Attend scheduled Court dates
- Follow treatment plan

## **Level 2:**

Level two is focused on therapeutic services and progress. Now that the needs of the family are discussed and determined, the expectation and goal of this level turns into learning techniques to help the family manage

these issues and reduce problematic behaviors, as well as education regarding the diagnosis. The family is expected to have motivation to learn and change, while the YRC team provides therapy and recommendations to help the youth be successful. It is the hope that the family starts showing progress in decreasing negative behaviors and increasing use of positive coping skills. Incentives are based on engagement in services, progress on behavior chart, and compliance with probation requirements.

During Level 2, clients are expected to:

- Remain compliant with the Level 1 requirements
- Participate in Probation groups or programming deemed appropriate.
- Meaningfully participate in counseling and treatment services
- Provide drug tests that are negative for substances

### **Level 3:**

Level three is primarily focused on developing positive community supports. Now that the family has been given coping skills, the expectation is that the family will put them to use, and the behavior chart will be measured regularly to track progress. The YRC team will continue to engage the family in therapy services to meet the needs of the youth, and will assist the youth in

identifying and engaging in positive supports in the community. Youth in this level are able to engage in positive outings hosted by the YRC team as a reward for their continued engagement in services.

During Level 3, clients are expected to:

- Remain compliant with the Level 1 & Level 2 requirements
- Building and engaging in prosocial community supports
- Maintain sobriety

#### **Level 4:**

Level four is based heavily on transition outside of the YRC program. At this point, youth and family have shown great progress and effort into a positive lifestyle and have engaged in outside supports to keep the youth from re-offending, as well as continuous use of positive coping skills. The YRC team will continue to provide limited support while assisting further therapeutic recommendations if needed until the family is ready to graduate from the program.

- Remain compliant with the Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 requirements
- Work towards establishing long term support and treatment services for post YRC.

# Meet the Team

## Treatment Team Members

### **Miguel Toledo**

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## **CARES/SASS CRISIS LINE**

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