

Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court Participant Handbook

A Division of the Judicial Alternative Sentencing Program
City of Bristol, Virginia Circuit Court

Welcome

The word Veritas is a Latin word that means truth. The Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court seeks to help troubled individuals discover truth, honesty, and accountability in their own lives and ultimately to break free of the addictions and behaviors that have resulted in their involvement in the criminal justice system and in a reduced overall quality of life.

The Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court Program values truth, honesty, trust, and fairness. Truthfulness comes first in drug court. In order to receive the best treatment possible, you must be truthful with the drug court team and other participants. Dishonesty makes it difficult to gain the trust and respect of others involved in the program. Once you are honest with yourself and truthful about your addictions and other problems, it will become easier to be honest with others. In return for your truth and honesty, the Court and drug court team will treat you with fairness and respect. All sanctions and incentives in this program are designed to assist you in your journey toward living a sober, productive life.

Overview

The Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court is one of three programs contained within the Judicial Alternative Sentencing Program. The Judicial Alternative Sentencing Program is designed to offer qualified defendants alternatives to incarceration and provide them with opportunities to become productive members of society.

The Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court is a four-phase program (12 to 18 months) for adult criminal offenders who are experiencing drug and/or alcohol dependence problems. The Veritas Program seeks to provide a variety of services and supports in order to help you learn to live and thrive without alcohol or drugs. The program requires frequent court appearances, random drug and alcohol screenings, individualized substance abuse treatment, and intensive supervision. The program gives incentives for positive, compliant behavior and imposes sanctions for non-compliant or negative behavior. If you do not follow the rules, you may be placed into short term custody, moved back to a previous phase of the program or receive one of a variety of other sanctions, including termination from the program.

As a drug court participant, you will develop an individualized treatment plan with the drug court team and treatment providers. You will be expected to comply with all aspects of that plan. In addition, you will be expected to follow all the instructions from the Circuit Court Judge and the drug court team.

This handbook is your resource and reference for any questions you may have as you enter and continue through the program. You are required to keep this handbook throughout your participation in the program.

The Drug Court Team

The Circuit Court Judge makes all final decisions regarding your participation in the Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court. The Judge bases decisions on input from the drug court team during weekly team meetings. The team includes the resident Circuit Court Judge; the Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Bristol, VA; the Director of the Judicial Alternative Sentencing Program; the Program Coordinator and/or Case Manager(s); a defense attorney; a probation officer; a treatment provider/counselor; and, a local police officer.

Progress Reports

Prior to each court review hearing, the Judge and the rest of the drug court team receive progress reports from program and treatment staff. These progress reports discuss your drug test results, attendance, participation in treatment, and general compliance with program requirements. Once in court, the Judge may ask you questions about the information in your progress report to address any problems or acknowledge achievements. If you are doing well, you may receive a reward, also known as an incentive. If you are not doing well, the Judge will determine the need for further action, including sanctions, after discussing the problems with you during the hearing. All sanctions are designed to help you become more accountable and maintain motivation to achieve your treatment goals, not to punish you. (See the Sanctions Grid at the end of this handbook.)

Court Reviews

Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court participants are required to appear before the Circuit Court Judge on a frequent basis so he or she can review your individual progress. Each phase of the program determines how often you will be required to appear. Failure to appear for scheduled court review hearings may result in a bench warrant being issued for your immediate arrest and detention until the Judge is available for another hearing. If you have any questions about court review hearings you should contact program staff.

Program Fees

As a drug court participant, you are required to contribute to the cost of the program by paying a monthly program fee of \$25, due by the first of each month beginning after you have completed 30 days in the program. Your case manager will inform you of when you should begin paying this fee.

You will also be charged \$25.00 per lab confirmation of drug screen results. This fee is payable before any drug test will be sent for confirmation (see Drug and Alcohol Testing for more information). In the event that the screen is confirmed negative, you will receive a credit of \$25.00 toward your program fees.

Other program fees may be incurred or assessed during your participation in drug court as well. For example, a monthly monitoring fee for alcohol compliance or a monthly fee for GPS monitoring in place of curfew calls may be required. All drug court fees paid, regardless of their purpose, are non-refundable in the event you are terminated from the program.

All program fees are payable by cashier's check, money order or cash to the City of Bristol, VA Treasurer, located in the Bristol, Virginia Courthouse, 497 Cumberland Street, Bristol, VA 24201. Please give the Treasurer's office your full name and that you're paying a drug court fee. This will ensure it is deposited correctly. All receipts from fee payments must be brought to your case manager as proof of payment.

Housing

As a drug court participant, it is essential that you have a healthy and supportive home environment. Prior to admission to the program, staff will complete an on-site "Residence Verification" of the proposed home. During this home check, all aspects of your living arrangements are examined – physical condition and safety of the home, other residents of the home and whether they have a criminal history, your access to prescription medications, and so on. The drug court team will discuss your proposed residence and decide if it is acceptable. If not, you will be informed that you must find alternate housing.

This procedure will be used again when you are active in the program and wish to move. You are required to ask permission to move, have a new Residence Verification completed, and WAIT to move until the drug court team has reviewed the home check and given approval. You are also required to ask and receive permission from the team before someone else may move into the residence. Any violation of this policy may result in sanctions.

Transportation

All new drug court participants receiving Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) are required to ride to treatment together in the department van. You will meet at the Jail Annex on the dates and times assigned by your case manager to be transported to the treatment provider's facility. After treatment you will be transported back to the annex. Participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from the annex, and staff will not pick up or drop off at any location other than the annex.

Transportation for other treatment groups, activities, or appointments provided at the sole discretion of program staff.

Program Phases

Phase I Requirements:

- Complete program intake orientation.
- Complete full medical examination and provide results to program staff.
- Complete application for Medicaid coverage, if a Virginia resident, and provide confirmation of application to staff.
- Attend all case management meetings as directed to develop a Treatment Plan.
- Follow Treatment Plan, including, but not limited to:
 - Begin Relapse Prevention planning/development;
 - Determine what you owe in restitution;
 - Develop a budget to be implemented in Phase II;
 - Develop a weekly schedule;
 - After the first two (2) weeks, attend one (1) in-person community support group each week;
 - Comply with an 8:00PM curfew;
 - Submit to random drug/alcohol testing a minimum of two (2) times per week.
- Appear for Court Review one (1) time per week.
- Attend Highlands Community Services treatment groups three (3) times per week.
- Attend Life Skills groups one (1) time per week.
- If the participant is in Phase I longer than thirty (30) days, the participant shall begin paying \$25.00 per month supervision fee.
- Required documentation must be submitted to your case manager by 8:30a.m. every Monday.

Requirements for Promotion to Phase II:

- Complete a minimum of thirty (30) days in Phase I.
- Have at least fourteen (14) consecutive days clean.
- Make satisfactory progress toward treatment goals.
- Have provided medical examination information to staff.
- Have provided confirmation of Medicaid application, if a Virginia resident.
- Create an approved budget to include restitution payments, if applicable.
- Be current on all program fees, if applicable.

Phase II Requirements:

- Follow Treatment Plan including, but not limited to:
 - Establish a practice of journaling daily;
 - Continue Relapse Prevention planning/development;
 - Attend two (2) in-person community support groups per week;
 - Enroll in GED classes as needed;
 - Obtain employment;
 - Perform Community Service work each week as outlined in the Community Service Work requirements in this handbook;
 - Comply with a 10:00PM curfew;
 - Submit to random drug/alcohol testing a minimum of two (2) times per week.
- Appear for Court Review one (1) time per week.
- Attend Highlands Community Services treatment groups three (3) times per week.
- Attend Life Skills groups one (1) time per week.
- Begin paying \$25.00 per month program fee (if not previously required to do so).
- Begin paying restitution as budgeted in Phase I, if applicable.
- Required documentation must be submitted to your case manager by 8:30a.m. every Monday.

Requirements for Promotion to Phase III:

- Complete a minimum of ninety (90) days in Phase II.
- Have at least forty-five (45) consecutive days clean.
- Make satisfactory progress toward treatment goals.
- Complete all required Life Skills classes.
- Journal throughout Phase as required.
- Be current on all program fees and restitution payments.
- Have provided confirmation of Medicaid application, if not completed in Phase 1 due to non-Virginia residency.
- Be employed.

Phase III requirements:

- Follow Treatment Plan including, but not limited to:
 - Continue journaling;
 - Continue Relapse Prevention planning/development;
 - Attend two (2) in-person community support groups per week;

- Continue with employment and GED classes;
- Perform Community Service Work each week as outlined in the Community Service Work requirements in this handbook;
- Comply with a 10:00PM curfew;
- Submit to random drug/alcohol testing a minimum of two (2) times per week.
- Appear for Court Review one (1) time every two (2) weeks.
- Attend Highlands Community Services as instructed.
- Attend Life Skills groups one (1) time per week.
- Continue paying program fees and restitution payments, if applicable.
- Required documentation must be submitted to your case manager by 8:30a.m. every Monday.

Requirements for Promotion to Phase IV:

- Complete a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days in Phase III.
- Have at least ninety (90) consecutive days clean.
- Make satisfactory progress toward treatment goals.
- Journal throughout Phase as required.
- Be current on all program fees and restitution payments.
- Be employed.

Phase IV requirements:

- Follow Treatment Plan including, but not limited to:
 - Continue journaling;
 - Attend Relapse Prevention group one (1) time per week;
 - Attend two (2) in-person community support groups per week;
 - Continue with employment and GED classes;
 - Submit to random drug/alcohol testing a minimum of one (1) time per week.
- Appear for Court Review one (1) time every two (2) weeks.
- Continue paying program fees.
- Pay off restitution according to budget established in Phase I.
- Required documentation must be submitted to your case manager by 8:30a.m. every Monday.

Requirements for Graduation:

- Complete a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days in Phase IV.
- Have at least one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days clean.

- Make satisfactory progress toward treatment goals.
- Be current on all program fees.
- Pay restitution in full.
- Be employed.
- Complete an aftercare plan with program staff.
- Prepare “Your Journey” for presentation at graduation.

Graduation

After successfully completing all four phases of drug court, paying all restitution owed, and upon the recommendation of the drug court team and Judge, you will graduate from the program. The graduation ceremony will be scheduled as soon as possible after successful completion of the program.

Graduation is a very important event in this program and a great source of inspiration to you as you begin your new life, as well as to your fellow participants. You may invite family and/or other special people in your life to attend the ceremony and take part in the celebration of your success in establishing a drug- and alcohol-free life.

Program staff will inform you of any post-graduation group opportunities that may be available to you.

Program Rules and Code of Conduct

As a drug court participant, your behavior reflects directly not only on yourself, but on the program itself. It is essential that you dress appropriately and conduct yourself in a manner at all times that earns the respect and cooperation of our program partners.

The offices of the Judicial Alternative Sentencing Department are located in the Sheriff’s Department Jail Annex, 415 Cumberland Street, Bristol, VA. Each participant will be required to conform to the minimum standards of conduct set forth by the inmate rules and regulations of the jail. While at the annex, the following rules apply:

- Tobacco products may not be used inside the annex (only at approved outdoor areas).
- Purses, backpacks, duffel bags, etc. are not permitted inside the annex. If you bring these items they must be surrendered to program staff upon entry and will be returned to you upon departure.
- Firearms, ammunition, or other weapons expressly prohibited to convicted felons are prohibited without exception.
- Mail or other forms of communication, unless directly related to drug court, are not permitted inside the annex.

- Controlled substances and/or alcohol are prohibited.

You may bring your cell phone with you to the annex, but it is to be silenced and put away unless you have permission from program staff to use it.

Only the participant in the program is allowed to enter the building, unless there are extenuating circumstances and you have received prior permission from program staff to bring someone into the building.

In addition, you must adhere to the following:

- You will be drug and alcohol free at all times.
- You may not behave in a violent or threatening manner to program or treatment staff, employees, fellow employees or fellow participants.
- Inappropriate touching, conversation, gesturing, or insinuation of an antagonistic, sexual, intimidating, or abusive nature will not be tolerated.
- Racial or ethnic slurs or name-calling will not be tolerated.
- You are not permitted to possess firearms, ammunition, or other weapons expressly prohibited to convicted felons, either on your person, in your vehicle or in your personal possessions. Possession of such will result in termination from the program and potentially result in a new criminal charge.
- No stealing.
- Contact with any inmate housed in the Bristol, VA Jail is prohibited without permission of program staff.
- Groups begin on time. If you are going to be late, you must contact the treatment provider and personally speak with staff or leave a message as to why you will be late. If you do not, you may not be allowed to attend group.
- Groups are to be taken seriously. Distractions such as side talk, personal business, daydreaming, and sleeping are not permitted in group. If you are disruptive to the group, you may be asked to leave.
- Participants are required to be actively involved in group discussion.
- Groups are used for self-examination, not for finding fault or blaming.
- Groups are confidential. Information shared in the group is not to be discussed outside the group setting. What is heard during group remains in the group. A breach of the confidentiality policy will result in your termination from the program.
- Attendance at all treatment sessions is mandatory. This includes individual and group counseling, educational sessions and NA and AA meetings or other meetings essential to your recovery. If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, you must contact the appropriate staff member with whom your appointment is scheduled. All missed groups must be made up within two (2) weeks. Failure to do so may result in a sanction.

Failure to abide by any of the codes of conduct may result in sanctions, up to an including termination.

Incentives and Sanctions

As a drug court participant, compliance with all program rules and requirements is expected. In order to encourage you to progress through the program in a positive way, and to discourage problematic or harmful behavior, a system of incentives and sanctions has been developed.

An **incentive** is an acknowledgement that the participant has reached a milestone, accomplished a specific goal or otherwise exhibited positive behavior or positive change. Incentives include, but are not limited to, verbal praise; clapping/applause; certificates of achievement; movie tickets; gift cards or certificates; participation in a weekly or monthly prize lottery; a “fast pass” for use at a future court review hearing; phase promotion; and, graduation.

A **sanction** is used as a response to problematic or negative behavior. They are designed to help you develop accountability and responsibility, and to encourage you to work toward recovery and treatment goals. The sanctions become more severe as problem behavior continues or escalates. The severity of the immediate problem also plays a role in determining the appropriate sanction. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, verbal reprimands; written assignments; increased drug and/or alcohol testing; increased court appearances; extra community support groups; extra community service hours; additional meetings with the drug court team; incarceration; loss of phase/return to previous phase; increase/change in curfew; house arrest; or, termination from the program. (Refer to the Sanctions Grid at the end of this handbook for more information.)

Drug and Alcohol Testing

As a drug court participant, you are required to abstain from controlled substance and alcohol use. To ensure that you are in compliance with this requirement you will be screened for drug and alcohol use frequently throughout the length of the program. Testing methods include breathalyzer, urine screen, saliva screen, as well as other FDA-approved screening tools. Participants will be screened on a random basis, up to and including weekends and holidays. You will be informed as to when and where you must appear to submit to testing. You may also be tested at your place of employment with no advanced notice.

The following basic guidelines apply:

- All drug screens require a valid sample. A valid sample is not diluted; is within normal temperature limits; has not been tampered with or adulterated; and the control test on each drug screen appears normal.
- Collection of the sample will be observed by program staff, a probation officer or other law enforcement personnel trained to observe drug screens.
- If a valid sample cannot be obtained, the sample will be considered a positive screen. If you are unable to urinate within 1 hour of being asked to produce a sample, it will be considered a positive screen.
- Falsifying a screen or tampering with a sample will result in a program sanction, up to and including termination. Such action may also result in a new criminal charge under §18.2-

251.4 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, or constitute a violation of the terms of your probation.

If you know that you will fail your drug or alcohol screen, you have an opportunity to admit usage prior to your test. You will sign a voluntary admission form and then the drug screen will be administered. All positive drug screens will result in a program sanction, but admission prior to testing may decrease the severity of that sanction.

If you disagree with the finding of a positive drug or alcohol screen, laboratory testing and confirmation is available. You are responsible for all lab confirmation costs. The fee for lab testing must be paid in full prior to the screen being tested by the lab. If you do not bring a payment receipt to program staff within 7 days, your sample will not be tested by the lab and the positive result will stand.

You must inform your case manager of ANY medications prescribed to you PRIOR to filling the prescription. You must provide proof from your prescribing physician that you are authorized to possess and consume the medication. You must also inform your case manager of ANY other substances you have used or are currently using (i.e. over the counter medications, supplements, vitamins, etc.)

Curfew Monitoring

Curfew Calls: All participants in Phases 1, 2, and 3 are required to maintain a curfew as outlined in the Phase requirements. Prior to your acceptance into the program, you are required to obtain a landline phone. It is on this phone that you will begin receiving nightly curfew calls as soon as you enter the program in Phase 1. These calls will continue through Phases 2 and 3, but will end once you advance into Phase 4. Missing curfew calls will result in a program sanction.

GPS Monitoring: Once you obtain employment, but no earlier than Phase 2, you may be granted permission to substitute GPS monitoring in place of nightly curfew calls. The following conditions apply:

- All restitution owed must be paid in full;
- A monthly monitoring fee of \$150.00 is required and due no later than the 1st of each month;
- All other drug court fees (monthly program fee, drug screen fee, etc.) must be up to date and remain so.

GPS monitoring in place of curfew calls is a privilege and the drug court team reserves the right to withdraw this privilege at any time. Violation of the requirements of curfew or GPS monitoring, or the failure to pay GPS and other fees on or by the 1st of the month may result in suspension of this privilege.

Health Screening and Infection Control

All participants are required to contact the closest Virginia Department of Health office upon entry into the drug court program to schedule a health examination that includes testing for HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and other communicable diseases. The results of that testing must be given to program staff within two (2) weeks of entry into the program. All health records are kept confidential as required by Part 2, Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and any other applicable federal, state, and/or local regulations.

Program staff exercise universal precautions to ensure the health and safety of staff members and participants during the course of all program activities.

Community Service

Giving back to the community is an important part of recovery. The Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court Program includes a community service requirement for all participants in Phases 2 and 3. Continuing with community service is encouraged for participants in Phase 4, but not required. During the Phases in which it is required, community service must be performed weekly as follows:

Hours of Community Service Work Required	
Hours Employed Per Week	Community Service Hours Required
0 to 14	10
15 to 30	5
31 +	0

Relationships

As a drug court participant, you will be around other participants frequently. One of the easiest ways to lose focus on your own recovery is to begin a romantic relationship with another participant while you are both in treatment. Relationships between participants are strictly prohibited. A violation of this policy may result in your termination from the program.

In addition to a total ban on romantic relationships between participants, there are also limits on non-romantic friendships between participants. You are not permitted, under any circumstances, to visit the residence of another participant, or to have non-program related contact with the family members of another participant. You are also not permitted to have contact with other participants outside of normal business hours (8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m.). Violation of these restrictions will result in a program sanction.

Confidentiality

As a drug court participant, you will be required to read and sign a Consent for Release of Confidential Information form which allows Judicial Alternative Sentencing Program staff to discuss your criminal records; medical, mental/emotional health records; military records; community supervision or probation records; substance abuse assessment and drug screen results; program progress and participation; etc. within the program itself and with program partners directly involved in your participation in the program. You have the right to revoke this consent, but it will result in you becoming ineligible to participate in the program.

Confidentiality also applies to any information you may learn about others in your treatment group. It is vitally important that you do not discuss any other participant's private information outside of group or with anyone who is not associated with the program. Doing so breaks the group's trust and negatively impacts the therapeutic environment.

Search and Seizure

As a drug court participant, you waive your Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure. This waiver is signed upon your referral to the program, prior to sentencing. This means that as a participant you are required to submit your person, vehicle, place of residence or living area, work locker/toolbox/designated storage area to search if it is discovered or believed that you are in possession of drugs, weapons, or any other contraband expressly forbidden under the terms of the rules of the jail, rules of probation, policies of this program, or your employer's rules and regulations. Random searches without cause may also be conducted in order to ensure continued compliance.

You are also required to submit your cell phone or other electronic device to search if it is believed that you have violated any rules or policies of probation or of the drug court program. Cell phones and other electronic devices may also be subject to random searches without cause. A search can be conducted by a program official, law enforcement officer, or probation officer.

Contact Information

As a drug court participant, your primary contact will be a case manager. He or she will provide you with a phone number and email address that you may use for program-related contact. Personal contact between participants and program staff is expressly forbidden and any violation may result in program sanctions, up to and including termination. If your case manager will be unavailable (vacation, illness, etc.) he or she will provide you with alternative contact information for another member of the program staff.

Sanctions Grid

The sanctions grid is simply a guideline used by the drug court team. Each sanction is imposed at the discretion of the team and may vary from the table below.

Behavior	1 st Incident	2 nd Incident	3 rd Incident
Late for Group	Warning	Warning AND essay	Treat as missed group
Incomplete Support Groups	Warning AND make up group(s)	Double groups AND essay	7 support groups in 7 days
Incomplete Community Service	Warning AND make up hours	Double hours AND essay	Jail (1-5 days)
Failure to Make Up Missed Treatment Group	Warning	5 support groups in 7 days	7 support groups in 7 days
Not Completing Previously Imposed Sanction	Warning AND double sanction	Reviewed by team on case by case basis.	
Missed Curfew Calls	Warning	Five (5) hours community service	Ten (10) or more hours community service
Violation of Curfew Hours	Earlier curfew, house arrest, or jail (1-30 days)	Earlier curfew, house arrest, or jail (1-30 days)	Earlier curfew, house arrest, jail (1-30 days) or termination
Late Verification Paperwork	Warning AND five (5) hours community service	Ten (10) hours community service	Treat as missing paperwork
Missing Verification Paperwork	Repeat missed hours/groups	Double missing groups/hours AND essay	Jail (1-10) days
Falsifying Documents	Reviewed by team on case by case basis. Sanction can include termination.		
Introducing Drugs/Contraband into Drug Court Offices	Jail (1-30 days) or termination	Termination	Termination
Falsifying/Tampering with Drug Screen	Criminal charge AND jail (1-30 days) or termination	Termination	Termination
Absconding Supervision	Jail (1-30 days) or termination	Termination	Termination
New Criminal Charge	Reviewed by team on case by case basis. Sanction can include termination.		
Positive Drug Screen	Loss of clean days AND additional sanction. Additional sanctions imposed on a case by case basis and can include termination.		
Diluted Screen (Low Creatinine Level)	Warning	Treated as positive screen	Treated as positive screen
Missed Drug Screen	Treated as positive screen	Treated as positive screen	Treated as positive screen
Using Substances without Permission (ANY Rx, OTC Meds, Supplements, etc.)	Warning, essay AND extra support group(s)	7 support groups in 7 days AND research paper on the substance	Jail (1-30 days)
Fraternization (improper association or relationship between participants)	Reviewed by team on case by case basis.		

This list is not all-inclusive; any negative behavior could result in a sanction.

Veritas Adult Drug Treatment Court Participant Handbook Acknowledgement

I, _____, acknowledge that I have been given this handbook by a program official, that I have read the entire handbook, that I understand the contents of the handbook, and that I have had an opportunity to ask a program official any questions I may have.

I further acknowledge that I will abide by all of the policies, rules, regulations, and procedures set forth in this handbook, and that I will retain possession of this handbook throughout my entire participation in the program.

I further acknowledge that I understand any violation of the policies, rules, regulations, and procedures set forth in this handbook may result in program sanctions, up to and including termination. I understand that termination from the program will result in my immediate return to incarceration. Termination from the program may also result in a violation of my probation and may subject me to new charges, depending on the reason for termination.

Participant Signature

Date

Program Staff Signature

Date