

WEBB COUNTY

VETERANS TREATMENT PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION HANDBOOK

You will be required to know and understand the rules listed below upon entering VTP. Citing a lack of knowledge or understanding of any rule will not excuse your failure to follow the rule. Failure to follow these rules will result in sanctions:

1. Sign all agreements and releases necessary for entering the VTP program.
2. Report to court as required. As a VTP participant, you will be required to appear in court on scheduled dates. At each appearance, the judge will be given a progress report prepared by the treatment team regarding your drug test results, attendance in all program services, compliance with medications, and level of participation. The judge will ask you questions about your progress, and discuss any specific problems you have been experiencing. If you are doing well, you will be encouraged to continue with the program and work with your treatment team (VA provider, veteran mentor, case manager, probation officer, treatment provider as well as representative from other programs ordered by the court and court staff) toward success. If you are not doing well, the judge will discuss this with you and the treatment team to determine further action. If you commit program violations (i.e.: positive or missed drug tests, failure to attend individual or group counseling sessions, failure to comply with medications, failure to attend sobriety support meetings, failure to report to your probation officer, etc.,) the Court will impose sanctions. With repeated violations of program requirements, and a failure to progress satisfactorily, the court may impose the ultimate sanction of discharge from the program. Failure to appear in court on the date and time you are scheduled will result in a warrant for your arrest. If you cannot appear in court as scheduled, you must notify your probation officer or case manager as soon as possible to explain why you cannot appear. Illness (unless admitted to a medical facility) and/or transportation problems will not permit you to miss your scheduled court dates. You are responsible for being present for court and on time.
3. Report as required and/or requested for drug/alcohol testing. You will be randomly tested for the presence of drugs and/or alcohol throughout your participation in VTP at a minimum of two times per week. You may also be directed to test at any time during your participation in VTP by any VTP team member. Contact the Drug Testing Line 7 days a week by calling (956)231.0052 each day.
 - A. It is your responsibility to listen to each recorded message in its entirety and report as directed.
 - B. When you have a UA, report to the Webb County Treatment Center, for Drug Testing between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
 - C. You are subject to weekend/holiday testing on a random basis. Testing that occurs on weekends and/or holidays will have reduced hours for reporting from 8 am to 12 pm. It is your responsibility to listen to the entire recording to ensure you follow the directives provided. Tampering with any drug/alcohol test will be deemed a positive test and may result in a new arrest/criminal charge and may result in your expulsion from the program (this includes flushing, diluting, using someone else's urine, etc.).
 - D. VTP will have access to all drug test results including any failures to test. Additionally, any member of the VTP team may order a drug test at any time. A positive, "dirty", or diluted test will not automatically disqualify you from the VTP program; however, sanctions will be imposed. The judge will be reviewing your overall performance in the program when determining sanctions.

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4. Do not use or possess any drugs or alcohol. Sobriety is the primary focus of this program. Maintaining a drug-free lifestyle is very important in your recovery process. You are prohibited from using or possessing any legal and/or illegal drugs and/or alcohol (in any form). You are prohibited from using or possessing certain prescription drugs/medications, even if they are prescribed to you by a doctor i.e.: Amphetamines (i.e.: Adderall, Pseudoephedrine); Barbiturates (i.e.: Fioricet); Benzodiazepines (i.e.: Valium, Xanax); Opiates (i.e.: Tylenol 3, Lortab); Oxycodone (i.e.: Percocet).

A. You are prohibited from using or possessing any prescribed and/or over-the-counter drugs/medications without obtaining approval from VTP before purchasing or ingesting.

B. If you must seek medical attention you are required to inform your physician that you are in a drug/alcohol treatment program and cannot be prescribed narcotic/addictive medications.

C. You must submit copies of all medical documentation within twenty-four (24) hours of release to your case manager.

D. *You are strictly prohibited from using or possessing any alternative or “replacement” drugs such as Methadone, and Suboxone (aka Buprenorphine) as well as any substance intended to replace an otherwise illegal substance. These drugs are prohibited even if prescribed by a doctor.

E. *You are strictly prohibited from using or possessing any “designer drugs” that can be purchased legally or illegally. Any “smoking mixtures” (other than products specifically designated to contain only tobacco) are strictly prohibited. Any products sold or marketed under pretenses with the warning “not for human consumption” are strictly prohibited. Any products manufactured to be a “designer stimulant” or mind-altering substance are strictly prohibited.

*** Violation of this rule may result in immediate termination from VTP- regardless of other progress made.**

5. Report to Probation Officer as directed.

If you are in this program on a Felony offense, a Probation Officer (“PO”) throughout VTP participation will supervise you. In addition to your assigned Case Manager, the PO will also conduct random announced and unannounced visits to your home or work. Additionally, your person, home, and the vehicle will be subject to warrantless searches at any time.

- You must report to your PO during the first week of each month.
- If you have a problem getting to your appointment, you are to call your PO. Failure to report as required to your PO or failing to attend a scheduled appointment/visit will result in sanctions and/or fines.
- You must provide 24-hour notice of any canceled probation appointment.
- You must leave a voicemail or send an email in the event you cannot reach your PO.
- You must inform your PO of any change of address before changing locations.
- You must inform your PO when you gain and/or change employment.
- You must receive permission from your PO to leave Webb County unless traveling for a VA medical or mental health appointment.

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6. Remain in Webb County.

You are required to remain in Webb County. Your probation officer may permit you to leave the county for day trips. Overnight travel that requires you to leave the county is not permitted unless approved by the VTP judge and will likely not be approved for anything other than a family emergency and/or death. VTP is a privilege, not a right, and offers you an opportunity to receive help, not plan vacations. Medical, Mental Health, or other appointments with a VA provider may be attended if out of the county. At no time will travel outside of the continental United States be permitted.

7. Attend all treatment sessions.

This includes individual and group counseling sessions, mental health appointments, medical appointments, educational sessions, veteran mentor appointments/activities, and sobriety support meetings. If you are unable to attend a scheduled session/appointment, you must contact the individual whom your appointment is with. Failure to attend or missing scheduled appointments will result in sanctions and fines and may result in termination from VTP.

8. Be on time.

If you are late for court, individual and group counseling sessions, mental health appointments, medical appointments, educational sessions, veteran mentor appointments/activities, and sobriety support meetings you may not be allowed to attend and will be considered non-compliant. Contact the individual you are meeting with if there is a possibility you may be late or have an emergency that will cause you to miss your appointment. You must leave a voicemail or send an email in the event you cannot reach someone. Illness (unless admitted to a medical facility) and/or transportation problems will not be considered valid reasons for you to be late or to miss your scheduled events. It is your responsibility to be present and to be on time.

9. Do not make threats toward other participants, staff, or team members or behave violently.

Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the court. This will result in termination from VTP.

10. While in court and/or at treatment centers/services facilities, remain seated and quiet at all times unless otherwise instructed.

It is very important to observe appropriate behavior in court and treatment groups/services for the benefit of yourself and others present. All cell phones and/or electronic devices must be turned off in the courtroom and at group meetings and appointments. If found to be in use, these devices will be removed from your possession, turned in to the judge, and will only be returned by the judge.

11. Intimate relationships with any other Problem-Solving Court participant are not allowed.

This includes romantic involvement as well as living with other problem-solving court participants. Other problem-solving courts are programs such as Adult Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Dependency Drug Court. Violating this section is grounds for automatic termination from VTP.

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12. Dress appropriately for court and treatment sessions.

As a participant, you will be expected to wear a shirt or blouse, pants, dress, or skirt. Shoes must be worn at all times. While you may be permitted to dress comfortably and casually for your treatment sessions and doctor appointments; you are not to wear shorts, tank tops, flip-flops, and/or hats when appearing for court. Clothing bearing drug or alcohol-related themes or promoting/advertising alcohol or drug use is considered inappropriate. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the court or at treatment centers unless medically approved. Speak with your treatment team if you need assistance with clothing.

13. Do not engage in and/or commit any new criminal offenses.

Warrants and/or new arrests could result in your being terminated from VTP. This includes traffic-related offenses. If you do not have a valid driver's license, DO NOT DRIVE. If you would like to obtain and/or regain your driver's license, let us know and we will review your history to see what assistance can be provided once you have demonstrated progress in VTP.

14. Maintain contact with your veteran mentor.

The Veteran's programs or organizations attached to VTP constitute the most significant component of the treatment team. Your VTP mentor is a veteran of the armed services willing to volunteer a significant amount of time to you and the VTP program. Your mentor will maintain contact and provide advice, personal experiences, guidance, and recommendations to you to assist you in your recovery. Your mentor will also attend court hearings when necessary.

15. Pay your treatment fees.

You are required to pay certain fees as listed below (minimum total of \$500.00). Failure to pay fees will affect your ability to advance to the next phase and/or complete this program. You will also be responsible for a \$500.00 mandatory VTP program fee payable in the following manner (must pay each phase balance to be eligible for advancement):

- Phase 1: Must pay \$175.00 to the Court
- Phase 2: Must pay \$175.00 to the Court
- Phase 3: Must pay \$150.00 to the Court

Court Costs/Court Fines that are assessed against you at sentencing must be paid in full, considered compliant, waived, or converted to a judgment before program completion. Victim restitution must be paid in full before program completion.

16. Attend Sobriety Support Meetings if Court Ordered

(Substance Abuse and/or Co-Occurring Participants Only) Attending 12-Step meetings such as Narcotics Anonymous and/or Alcoholics Anonymous is required (as applicable) throughout VTP as is involvement with Community-based Veteran organizations. The frequency of attendance requirements for AA/NA is determined by phase. The minimum attendance requirement for each phase is below:

Phase 1: Daily (1 per day) AA/NA meetings are required during this phase.

Phase 2: This phase requires 2 AA/NA meetings per week.

Phase 3: This phase requires 3 AA/NA meetings per week.

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17. Education, Vocation, and Employment Programs.

Recovery from substance addiction and mental health disorders means developing self-sufficiency and becoming a productive and responsible member of the community. During VTP, you will be expected to be employed or involved in an educational or vocational training program. Your treatment counselor and your probation officer will work to assist you in obtaining an assessment of your needs and skills and will refer you to the proper agencies for education, training, and job placement.

18. Maintain Confidentiality

State and federal laws require strict confidentiality regarding issues relating to medical, mental health, and substance abuse treatment. You will be required to sign a release of information to the VTP team and the VTP may not share your information with outside parties without your consent. You are not to share information about other participants. Additionally, you are not to share court reports or documents with family and friends. If you have a question about whether your confidentiality is being protected, ask your attorney.

19. Follow the rules/follow instructions as they are given.

It is very important to follow all of the VTP rules. "I'm trying" is not acceptable and may result in your removal from VTP. Examples of violations that could result in termination include multiple missed drug tests, consistently demonstrating a lack of program participation, and/or continuously failing to follow instructions of the treatment provider, physician, mentor, probation officer, case manager, or court. Some behaviors will subject you to immediate termination after only one offense. If you are here to waste time in an attempt to "fake it til you make it," this is not the place to do it. All participants will receive a review of progress after six (6) months in VTP to determine if the level of participation is meeting expectations.

As you can see from reading the above section, following the rules is in your best interest. As you progress and consistently follow the rules and achieve your goals, you will receive incentives from VTP.