

TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT LEE COUNTY ADULT VETERANS COURT HANDBOOK



.....no veteran left behind
.....you are not alone

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BACKGROUND

The origin of Veterans Courts stemmed from repeat offenders in need of treatment services. With community mental health resources dwindling, the courts were seeing more repeat offenders with untreated serious mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Florida's jails and prisons are not designed, equipped, or funded to deal with serious mental illness, so the creation of the Veterans Court model (a problem-solving court docket model) was a logical response.

Veterans Courts generally share the following goals: to improve public safety by reducing criminal recidivism; to improve the quality of life of people with mental illnesses/substance abuse and increase their participation in effective treatment; and, to reduce court and corrections related costs through administrative efficiencies and often by providing an alternative to incarceration.

Monitoring and treating offenders with serious mental illness or substance abuse issues in a Veterans Court can be more effective, efficient, and less expensive than the remedies available through traditional justice system approaches.

INTRODUCTION TO VETERANS COURT

You have been arrested for a criminal offense and have been identified as a person who may have a substance abuse disorder or severe and persistent mental illness. You may be offered an opportunity to participate in Lee County's Veterans Court. Final disposition of your case will be determined by the terms of your Veterans Court contract.

This handbook is designed to answer questions, address concerns and provide over-all information about the Veterans Court program. As a participant, you will be expected to follow the instructions given in Veterans Court by the Judge and comply with the treatment and supervision plan developed for you by your treatment team. This handbook will detail what is expected of you as a Veterans Court participant and review general program information. All participants are encouraged to share the handbook with family and friends.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Lee County Veterans Court program is designed as a court supervised, comprehensive treatment program for adults. This is a voluntary program which includes regular court appearances before a designated Veterans Court Judge. You will be expected to participate in treatment, including drug testing, individual/group counseling, family counseling and regular attendance at recovery meetings and support groups. As a participant, you will be assisted with obtaining education and skill assessments and will be provided referrals for vocational training, education and/or job placement services. It is expected that you will complete the program

requirements between 12 and 24 months, depending on your individual progress and the state attorney's offer.

Following arrest and/or formal charges being filed by the Office of the State Attorney, your attorney will first be expected to verify that you are eligible for VA Healthcare benefits through the Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator assigned to the court. If so, you will then complete a screening to determine if you are clinically appropriate for the Veterans Court program. You and your attorney will receive an explanation of the Veterans Court Program so that you can decide whether the sentence that may be offered is in your best interest.

Upon successful completion, if the participant is in the program for a substantive charge(s), the State Attorney's Office may dismiss the charge(s). Upon successful completion, if the participant has a charge of violation of probation after a prior plea and probation sentence, the violation of probation affidavit will be dismissed, the probation will be terminated and the original conviction that was imposed will remain. Upon successful completion, charges will be dismissed by the State Attorney's Office on cases entering under the diversion program. Probation may successfully terminate or be continued depending on the terms of the plea.

If you wish to seal or expunge your records, you may complete an application for certification of eligibility via the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. You may not be eligible, even if you successfully complete Veterans Court. Specific requirements for the application, as well as a list of disqualifying charges and a list of agencies that can obtain sealed and expunged records, can be found on FDLE's site at <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/expunge>.

Entry into the Veterans Court program may require all, but is not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Mental Health and or Substance Abuse Counseling
- ✓ Taking medications as prescribed
- ✓ Outpatient treatment
- ✓ Inpatient treatment/Residential treatment
- ✓ Halfway House or Transitional housing placement
- ✓ Regular and random drug testing, as directed
- ✓ Counseling (individual and group)
- ✓ Educational/vocational/employment program
- ✓ Participation in substance abuse recovery meetings (AA/NA/CA/OA)
- ✓ Participation in Veterans Peer support groups or mental health support groups (NAMI, DBSA)

The LCVC staff will also help you with other areas of your life according to your individual needs. Entry into the Veterans Court program is voluntary. However, once you have entered into Veterans Court, you are expected to abide by the requirements of the program. While in Veterans Court, you will be placed on a period of probation or placed on diversion depending upon the offer for entry into the program. You will be assigned a Probation Officer and/or Outreach Specialist to provide supervision and enforcement of those terms and conditions. You will be required to provide random drug screens and participate in regular treatment sessions and support groups.

Successful completion of the program will result in the disposition of your case according to the terms of your Veterans Court plea offer. If you willfully and substantially fail to comply with all of the requirements of the Veterans Court program, it may be considered a violation of the probation or of the diversion agreement. If you do not successfully complete the Veterans Court program, your case may be disposed of as follows:

- If you were offered diversion, your case may be returned to the regular trial docket for prosecution.
- If completion of Veterans Court was a term of your probation, you will face a violation of probation. If the violation of probation is proven at a hearing, you will be sentenced according to the Florida Criminal Punishment Code (this may include jail or prison).

Pursuant to Florida Statute 394.47891, the State Attorney's Office will make its recommendation to the Court after having taken into consideration the other factors specifically referenced in the statute. The Court will make the final determination as to acceptance into the Veterans Court program as provided in Florida Statute 394.47891.

VETERANS COURT SUPERVISION

As a Veterans Court participant, you will be required to appear in Veterans Court on regularly scheduled dates. Missing a court date may result in a warrant being issued for your arrest and remand to custody.

The Veterans Court team attends each court session to discuss your progress and makes recommendations to the Veterans Court Judge. The Veterans Court team consists of representatives from the State Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's office, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Veterans Justice Outreach, the Department of Corrections, law enforcement, and the treatment provider/outreach services. At each appearance, the Judge will be given a progress report prepared by outreach services, the treatment provider and/or the Probation Officer regarding your test results, attendance and participation. The Judge will ask you questions about your progress and discuss any specific problems you have been experiencing. You will receive encouragement to continue with your progress in the program and work with your treatment team 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, e.g. positive or missed tests, failure to attend individual or group counseling sessions or recovery meetings, etc., the court may impose sanctions (see Sanctions below). With repeated violations of the program requirements and/or a failure to progress satisfactorily, the court may impose the ultimate sanction of discharge from the program.

The imposition of sanctions may also result in the other "natural" consequences such as extended time to complete a phase of the total program; loss of wages due to loss of work; and/or other family, job, or financial hardship.

If you cannot appear in court as scheduled, you must notify your Probation Officer or Outreach Specialist as soon as possible to explain why you cannot appear. If you have any questions regarding your court appearances, you are required to contact your Probation Officer or Outreach Specialist.

Warrants and/or new arrests could result in your termination from the Veterans Court program and a violation of probation. Other violations, which could result in termination, include missing drug tests, demonstrating lack of program participation by failing to cooperate with the treatment, and failure to follow instructions of the Probation Officer or Outreach Specialist. Violence or threats of violence directed at the treatment team or other clients will not be tolerated. All final decisions regarding termination from the program will be made by the Veterans Court Judge.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

As a participant of the Veterans Court program you may be required to pay the following fees:

- Court Costs – Actual costs will be determined by the Judge at the time of sentencing. The Judge may exempt cost of supervision fees and allow the participant to work off the fine and court costs by doing community service with a credit of \$10 for each hour worked.
- Treatment Costs – You will be required to pay for your treatment. The cost will be determined by the treatment provider and paid directly to them if it is not completely covered by your Veterans Healthcare benefits.
- Drug Testing Costs – You may be required to pay Drug Testing fees.

TREATMENT PHASES

The Veterans Court Treatment program is a Four Phase, highly structured, treatment program lasting for a minimum of 12 months, depending upon your individual progress and offer for entry into the program. Your needs will be further assessed and an individual Court Supervision Plan will be developed. After entry, you will be assigned to an Outreach Specialist and/or or a Probation Officer who will provide an orientation/overview of the Veterans Court program.

Each phase consists of specified treatment objectives, therapeutic and rehabilitative activities, all required for advancement into the next phase, which also requires approval by the Veterans Court team. The components and requirements for advancement from each phase are described below.

The plan may also require the performance of community service. If needed, you may be required to consult with a doctor or other medical provider for any medical or mental condition. You are expected to inform your attorney, Outreach Specialist and the court of any religious beliefs or practices that may serve as a conflict when Veterans Court programs, peer groups and treatment are being considered.

If you relapse or have an unexcused missed drug test during any phase, you may be required to

return to an earlier phase as determined by the Veterans Court team. No matter what phase of treatment you are in at time of relapse or an unexcused missed drug test, you must demonstrate 90 days of continuous sobriety prior to being considered for successful completion or “Moving-On”.

COURT SUPERVISION, TREATMENT PLANS & COUNSELING

An individualized initial Court Supervision Plan will be developed by you and your treatment team following an overall assessment of your problems and needs. The plan will be made available to you and the entire Veterans Court team prior to entry into the program. The plan will act as a guide for your initial treatment phase and within it, you will set goals, select methods for meeting those goals, and develop target dates for achieving those goals. The plan will be maintained by your treatment team and will be updated as you progress through the program. Any member of the Veterans Court team will be provided a copy of any treatment plan or treatment plan update at any time.

Treatment may consist of group therapy, individual therapy, intensive outpatient treatment, residential treatment, and/or referrals to community treatment partners. Your attendance at counseling sessions will be reported to the Veterans Court team as part of your progress report. You must have prior permission from your Outreach Specialist to be excused from a counseling session.

If you have substance abuse issues, you may be eligible for Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), which will be considered where deemed medically appropriate on a case by case basis. (MAT is defined by SAMHSA as “the use of FDA- approved medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a whole-patient approach to the treatment of substance use disorders.”) The three medications approved to treat addiction (Opioid and Alcohol), include: Naltrexone (Vivitrol), Buprenorphine (Suboxone) and Methadone.

DRUG TESTING

You will be tested throughout the entire program. You will be tested randomly at a minimum of twice per week, unless otherwise directed. The Veterans Court team will have access to all drug test results. Missing and/or tampering with a drug test may be deemed a positive test and could result in your termination from the program (this includes flushes, diluting, using someone else’s urine, or altering your test, etc.). Your creatinine level will also be monitored to ensure that you are not flushing, diluting or altering your test. You may be sanctioned if your creatinine level is less than 20 mg/dL or over 400 mg/dL. Please refer to the Drug Testing Practices Section for more detailed information on drug testing.

****Note:** If you are required to give a drug test on a day that you are also expected to appear in court, you are expected to provide the drug test on the same day of court. Attending court is not an excuse for missing a drug screen.

RECOVERY AND SUPPORT GROUP REQUIREMENTS

Attendance may be required at recovery meetings such as Narcotics, Cocaine, Opiate and/or Alcoholics Anonymous or another recovery meeting as approved by the treatment provider. Attendance will be required at support groups such as the **Peer support group at the VA, NAMI or DBSA**. The frequency of attendance requirement is determined by your progress in the program. Attendance is an important part of your recovery process to help familiarize you with the “recovery” philosophy, and help you develop levels of trust, as well as to earn and create social bonds with other persons with mental illness and/or addiction. Your treatment team will provide you with information regarding the time and location of local recovery meetings and support groups and will also direct you to special interest and recovery events in the community. You will be expected to bring proof of attendance to court.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at all court appearances, group treatment sessions, drug screens, probation meetings and recovery meetings and support groups is **MANDATORY**. Failure to attend any such event can lead to an immediate sanction or violation of probation. In order to be excused from a mandatory event, you must contact your Outreach Specialist, treatment provider, or Probation Officer, as appropriate, immediately upon becoming aware of your inability to attend the event. You must provide appropriate proof/documentation of the emergency to treatment or probation, as appropriate, within 48 hours after the emergency has passed.

EDUCATION, VOCATION & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

As you progress in the program, you will be expected to be employed or involved in an educational or vocational training program if you are deemed capable of doing so. Your Outreach Specialist 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 agency for education, training, and job placement.

If not employed or involved in educational or vocational training, you may be required to perform community service hours at a rate of 20 hours per week.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Upon your entry into the Veterans Court program, your treatment team will assess your housing, transportation, family, and general living needs and when appropriate, refer you to a local, state and/or county agency for assistance.

MEDICAL TREATMENT PROTOCOL

You must provide your treatment provider/lab services with written notification of all prescribed and over-the-counter medications prior to taking a drug test.

When seeking medical treatment, you must do the following:

1. Inform your doctor if you have a substance abuse issue and that you are in Veterans Court.
2. Request the doctor to note that you have informed him/her of this. The doctor needs to put this note on a prescription pad or in letterhead.
3. If the doctor believes a prescription to be medically necessary, have him/her note this as well.
4. Sign a Release of Information (ROI) at all medical appointments authorizing the Outreach Specialist and treatment provider to receive your medical treatment records.
5. Inform your treatment provider/lab services of all medications.

In urgent medical situations (emergency room, urgent care, last minute appointments or as determined by the court) follow the steps 1 - 5 listed above. You must inform your treatment provider/lab services on the next business day by 9:00 a.m. In addition, you will submit to a urine drug screen at this time.

In emergency situations where you are hospitalized or seen in an emergency room, follow the steps 1 -5 listed above. You must inform your treatment provider/lab services on the next business day by 9:00 a.m. You must provide ALL documentation (including emergency room admission records, not just the discharge documents). In addition, you will submit to a urine drug screen at this time.

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION/MOVING ON

Once you have successfully completed the criteria for each phase (as described in the treatment phases sections) you will eventually become a candidate to “Move On” from the Veterans Court program. We speak of “Moving- On” rather than “Graduation” because the Veterans Court team understands that no person with a severe mental illness or substance abuse issue “graduates” from their illness, as recovery is a lifelong process. You will be required to discuss your progress toward the goals you initially set, and explain why you believe you have met the criteria for successful completion. Advancement for each phase and successful completion of the program shall be determined by the Veterans Court team. Your family will be invited to join you in court as the Judge congratulates you on successfully completing the Veterans Court program.

VETERANS COURT PROGRAM RULES/REQUIREMENTS

Failing to comply with any of these rules may result in imposition of a sanction and/or termination from the Veterans Court program and a violation of probation.

Maintaining a completely drug-free lifestyle is essential in your recovery process. Following the treatment recommendations of your doctor and taking medication only as prescribed is also essential. Sobriety and mental wellness is the primary focus of this program. Do not use or possess any drugs, alcohol, or “mind altering” substances, this includes over-the-counter medication/supplements, including all currently known and/or future synthetic and designer drugs, such as Bath Salts, Spice, Kratom (Mitragynine), Flakka, etc., as well as mood-altering prescription drugs, such as Benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, etc.), Opiates (Tylenol 3, Percocet, Darvocet, etc.). Regarding prescription drugs, you need to follow the same process as stated above in the **Medical Treatment Protocol**:

1. Inform your doctor if you have a substance abuse issue and that you are in Veterans Court.
2. Request the doctor to note that you have informed him/her of this. The doctor needs to put this note on a prescription pad or in letterhead.
3. If the doctor believes a prescription to be medically necessary, have him/her note this as well.
4. Sign a Release of Information (ROI) at all medical appointments authorizing the Outreach Specialist and treatment provider to receive your medical treatment records.
5. Inform your treatment provider/lab services of all medications.

In urgent medical situations (emergency room, urgent care, last minute appointments or as determined by the court) follow the steps 1 -5 listed above. You must inform your treatment provider/lab services on the next business day by 9:00 a.m. In addition, you will submit to a urine drug screen at this time.

You must refrain from the use of products or substances that may interfere with or cause a positive drug test. Examples include, but are not limited to: Poppy Seeds, Non-Alcoholic Beer, Vanilla Extract, as well as certain Mouthwash, Toothpaste, Cold Remedies, Hair Products, Inhalants and Cough Syrup.

“WHEN IN DOUBT, LEAVE IT OUT!” If you have any doubt as to whether a product may cause a positive drug test, refrain from use or consult your treatment provider and lab services before using.

Report to your Probation Officer and Outreach Specialist as directed: You will meet with your Probation Officer as required to discuss your progress in the program and to ensure you are in compliance with your conditions of probation. Your Probation Officer will discuss with you these reporting procedures during your initial visit. You will meet with your Outreach Specialist at minimum once per month to discuss progress, concerns, and needs. You will check in via phone

to your Outreach Specialist at minimum once per week on the assigned day. You will review your Court Supervision Plan requirements with your Outreach Specialist during your initial visit and at each subsequent home visit. You and your Outreach Specialist will complete and sign a Court Supervision Plan review form every 90 days.

Attend all ordered treatment sessions: These may include individual and/or group counseling, family counseling, educational sessions and recovery meetings and support groups. If you are unable to attend any scheduled session, you must contact your treatment team to discuss immediately.

Be on time: If you are late, you may not be allowed to attend your counseling session and will be considered non-compliant. Contact your assigned Outreach Specialist if there is a possibility that you may be late.

No threats or violence: Do not make threats toward other participants or staff, or behave in a violent manner. Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the court.

Inappropriate sexual behavior or harassment: Inappropriate sexual behavior or harassment will not be tolerated and will be reported to the court.

Respect others: While in Veterans Court or group, remain seated and quiet while others are speaking. Proper attention and respect for everyone in the room will be enforced, for the benefit of all participants and Veterans Court team members. There are to be no side conversations, and absolutely no cell phones will be permitted in the courtroom or in group.

Proper attire: As a participant, you will be expected to wear appropriate attire to Veterans Court and to group treatment sessions.

Please avoid the following: shorts, flip flops, pants that fall below your waist, anything that depicts illegal or inappropriate activity, any see-through clothing.

VETERANS COURT PHASES

PHASE I: Crisis Stabilization (28 days out of custody)	COURT REQUIREMENTS	PHASE ADVANCEMENT CRITERIA
	Make Court Appearances on time/Bi-weekly	Out of custody 28 straight days 14 consecutive days clean verified by UA's Meet with staff
	Be honest	
	Identify support groups	
	Drug testing as ordered	
	Meet with Outreach Specialist; be available for home visits	
	Schedule mental health and or substance abuse appointments	
	Start using daily planner	
	Bring planner to court	
	Meet PO if applicable/	
PHASE II: Clinical Stabilization (120-180 days)	Drug testing as ordered	28 days clean verified by UA's
	Begin support groups developed as part of Court Supervision Plan	
	Compliant with appointments for 28 days	28 days consecutive required support group; no missed meetings
	Engage in treatment	
	Bi-weekly court appearances	
	Home visits bi-weekly	
PHASE III: Maintenance (120-180 days)	Once a month court appearances; no unexcused absence	Stable housing
	Once a month home visits	Productive activity
	Continue Court Supervision Plan	Income
	Relapse prevention plan participation	Present phase advancement to court
	Drug testing as ordered	60 days clean verified by UA's
PHASE IV: Discharge Planning (90-150 days)	Monthly court appearances	After care plan in place
	Financial requirements satisfied	90 days clean verified by UA's
	Drug testing as ordered	All financial requirements met and any other court ordered conditions met 30 days prior to successful completion
		Discharge plan developed with Outreach Specialist

INCENTIVES AND SANCTIONS MATRIX

Compliance with the requirements and goals of the Veterans Court program may earn you certain incentives. Likewise, non-compliance may result in certain sanctions, up to and including termination from Veterans Court and or a violation of probation being submitted to the court. Incentives and sanctions lie entirely within the discretion of the Veterans Court team.

Some examples are as follows:

RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR	
ACHIEVEMENTS	INCENTIVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attending all Veterans Court appearances ➤ Negative drug test results for period of time ➤ Attendance and participation in treatment ➤ Attendance and participation in recovery meetings and support groups ➤ Completion of GED ➤ College enrollment and attendance ➤ New job/Job promotion ➤ Compliance with treatment/supervision plan ➤ Voluntary Speaking Engagements ➤ Phase Advancement ➤ Volunteering at Non-Required Veterans Court Community Service Projects ➤ Moving-On Ceremony ➤ Self-Reporting a Relapse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognition and praise by the Veterans Court Judge ➤ Leave early from court ➤ Decreased Court appearances ➤ Phase advancement ➤ Extension of Curfew ➤ Overnight out-of-county travel ➤ One night without a curfew ➤ Early Termination of Probation/Moving-On Ceremony ➤ When applicable, State will file a notice of Nolle Prosequi ➤ No jail for certain self-reported relapses as determined by the Veterans Court Team
NEGATIVE CHOICES	SANCTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Missed Veterans Court appearances ➤ Missed appointment with Probation Officer ➤ Missed recovery meetings and support groups ➤ Violation of Veterans Court Order ➤ Positive drug test ➤ Missed drug test (considered a positive drug test) ➤ Tampered drug test ➤ Missed treatment ➤ Inappropriate behavior at treatment groups and/or treatment facility ➤ New Arrest ➤ Failure to perform Veterans Court Sanction(s) ➤ Noncompliance with treatment plan and/or recommendations ➤ Dishonesty with treatment, probation, or the court ➤ Curfew Violation ➤ Inappropriate behavior at court ➤ Submitting fraudulent reaction sheets for recovery meetings and support groups and reporting a false sobriety date on your weekly treatment reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reprimand from the Judge ➤ Increased Court appearances ➤ Increased drug testing ➤ Daily reporting to Probation or Outreach Specialist ➤ Curfew imposed for longer period of time ➤ LCSO Day Work Program ➤ Community Service Hours ➤ Presentation on a recovery topic at Veterans Court ➤ Essay presented to Judge, Probation and/or treatment group ➤ Placement on GPS or SCRAM/Soberlink ➤ Home confinement except for work, treatment, and Veterans Court ➤ Jail ➤ Delay in Phase change or regress to a prior Phase ➤ Termination from Veterans Court/Imposition of a Florida Sentencing Guideline Score Sheet Sentence or return to trial docket if on diversion ➤ Reside at a sober living home

FACTORS/CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINING RESPONSIVE BEHAVIOR

- Length of time in program
- Prior Violations/Sanctions
- Honesty or Manipulation
- Other factors, of which the Veterans Court team may be aware you are experiencing in your life

DRUG TESTING PRACTICES

SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) recommends that laboratory testing procedures adhere to specific methods in analysis. The most common testing method used by reputable and certified laboratories is enzyme immunoassay (EIA). This method (EIA) uses antibodies to detect the presence of drugs and other substances in the urine.

Why the Veterans Court team is providing this information to all UA clients and patients?

Dilutes:

Each day, laboratory testing facilities receive a large number of urine screens that are “diluted”. Dilution is a common method used by some individuals in an attempt to conceal or “throw off” the fact a substance is in the system. Dilution is also known as “water overload” or “adulteration”. Factual evidence from forensic science indicates that dilutions occur only under the following instances: 1) urine substitution, 2) ingestion of fluids or compounds to flush the system, dilute the sample or to interfere with the testing process, and 3) direct addition of adulterants to sample itself. This information is important to those of you who are new clients or treatment patients ordered by the court to be screened. Should you unintentionally/intentionally alter the sample provided, consequences may occur. We want you to be informed so that you do not knowingly or unknowingly sabotage your own lab results. The only way to confirm that you did not continue to use a substance is by confirmation testing should adulteration occur with the sample that you provide.

Creatinine Levels:

Creatinine is a measurement used to determine whether a drug test is valid.

Low creatinine: if your sample has a creatinine level of less than 20 mg/dL, this is considered a dilute sample, and you may be sanctioned;

High/Elevated creatinine: This will be considered an attempt to mask dilution/water-loading by taking an over-the-counter supplement. You may be sanctioned if your creatinine level is over 400 mg/dL.

If you produce a urine sample with a creatinine level under 20 mg/dL or over 400 mg/dL, and if you have a medical condition that caused the low or high level, you must furnish the Veterans Court team with written documentation from a medical treatment provider. In that case, you may

be required to submit to an alternative test such as an oral swab test, which may be at your expense.

What this means to you:

It is important that all UA clients and patients understand that it is counterproductive to attempt to rid the body of a substance through the use of any of the above described methods. We understand that many new UA clients want to rid their body of unwanted substances prior to their first test and that they attempt to flush their system of the substance and do so with good intention. However, the results of this first test may show an inaccurate test result due to adulteration.

Alcohol testing--Monitoring with EtG/Ets (testing for the presence of alcohol):

Ethylglucuronide (EtG) and ethylsulfate (Ets) are metabolites of alcohol that are excreted more slowly from the body than alcohol itself. They are therefore better at picking up drinking and better at documenting abstinence. When being monitored with EtG/Ets, it is important, as in any monitoring situation to be aware of items to avoid so that inadvertent "incidental" exposure does not cause a positive test. In other words, it's important to know what items contain alcohol and to avoid them. With reasonable caution it is rare for "incidental" alcohol exposure to cause a positive test.

It is YOUR responsibility to limit and avoid exposure to the products and substances detailed below as well as any other substance that contains ethyl alcohol. It is YOUR responsibility to read product labels to know what is contained in the products you use and to inspect these products BEFORE you use them.

Terms used to describe alcohol in products that must be avoided include: denatured alcohol, SD alcohol, ethanol or ethyl alcohol. Use of the products detailed below or any other product containing alcohol is a violation of this contract and will NOT be allowed as an excuse for a positive test result.

Mouthwash/Hand Sanitizers: Many of these products contain alcohol and can cause positive tests for alcohol. You are required to read product labels and know whether such a product contains alcohol. Use of alcohol-containing products is not permitted. Non-alcohol mouthwashes and hand sanitizers are readily available and are an acceptable alternative. If you have questions about a particular product, bring it in to discuss with your Outreach Specialist.

Over-the-counter medications: Do not use alcohol-containing cough syrups or cold preparations (e.g. Nyquil). Nutritional supplements can also contain alcohol and should be avoided. Ethyl alcohol is frequently used in liquid medications as a solvent. Read labels and if the product contains alcohol, don't use it unless you first receive clearance from your Outreach Specialist or Probation Officer. Non-alcohol containing cough and flu medications are readily available and are acceptable alternatives.

Non-alcohol beer and wine: These beverages (e.g. O'Doul's, Sharps, etc.) contain enough alcohol that they can result in a positive test. You are not permitted to ingest these products.

Food and other consumable products: Flavoring extracts, such as vanilla extract or almond extract, if consumed in excess (e.g. to flavor coffee) can cause a positive test. Some desserts, especially

flamed desserts are prepared with large amounts of alcohol and can cause a positive test. Chocolates containing liquid filling can contain alcohol. Some churches use wine or fortified wine for communion, and depending on how much is consumed, can cause a positive test. All of these foods should be avoided.

Breathing alcohol vapor can cause a Positive Test: Avoid breathing fumes of products containing alcohol, such as alcohol based hand sanitizing gels (e.g. Purell), perfumes or colognes, bug sprays, or other chemicals (lacquers, solvents, or gasohol).

Comments:

We realize that some of you will have questions about this information. If you have questions regarding this matter, please ask a staff member and someone will assist you. If you have questions as to how a diluted or positive screen will impact your legal standing, please contact your attorney for specific information.

Remember: YOU are responsible for what you put in your body

If you find yourself in need of assistance with drug or alcohol use, ask one of the court team members – that is what we do, all you need to do is ask for help.

PRIVACY & DISCLOSURE

Your identity and privacy will be protected consistent with the Florida and Federal law. In response to these regulations, policies and procedures have been developed which guard your confidentiality. You will be asked to sign a General Consent for Release of Confidential Information form authorizing the transfer of information among all named participating agencies.

CONCLUSION

The Veterans Court program has been developed to help you achieve independence through connection to available community resources which will support lasting recovery. The program is designed to promote self-sufficiency and to return you to the community as a productive and responsible member. The program is voluntary and is your personal choice. The Judge, the court staff and the treatment team are present to guide and assist you, but the final responsibility is yours. You must be motivated to make this change and commit to a lifestyle of recovery.

We hope this Handbook has been helpful to you and answered most of your questions. If you have additional questions or concerns about the Veterans Court program, please feel free to ask your treatment team and your attorney.

VETERANS COURT PROGRAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE VETERANS COURT PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Participant Handbook, and have had the terms and conditions of the Veterans Court Program explained to me by _____

Defendant signature: _____

Veterans Court team member: _____

Date: _____

VETERANS COURT PROGRAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE MONITORING REQUIREMENTS FOR ETG/ETS EDUCATIONAL HANDOUT

I, _____ acknowledge that I have received and agree to the following:

1. I will contact my Veterans Court Outreach Specialist and Probation Officer immediately upon receiving any prescription from a physician.
2. I will inform the Outreach Specialist, Treatment Provider or Probation Officer performing the test that I am taking a prescribed medication prior to the sample being run and I will provide them with verification of that prescription.
3. I understand that I must tell my Veterans Court Outreach Specialist and Probation Officer, any and all over the counter medications that I have taken prior to my sample being run.
4. I understand that, Urinalysis Masking Adulterants, Niacin, and Creatine are not acceptable over the counter medications, in that they may interfere with urinalysis, resulting in an abnormal test result.
5. I acknowledge that the ETG/ETS educational handouts have been explained to me on this date, and that I fully understand them.
6. I acknowledge that if I have a "no alcohol order", I will not take any cold or other medications that contain alcohol. This includes Nyquil and Vicks 44.
7. In the event that I am testing for illicit substances, I will refrain from ingesting poppy seeds as they may result in an opiate positive test.
8. I understand that over consuming water or other substances can result in a diluted sample, and will be considered a positive result.

Defendant

Date

Probation Officer/VC Outreach Specialist

Date