

# Collier County Mental Health Court Program

## Who is Eligible?

- Adult Resident of Collier County, Florida
- Must suffer from a severe and persistent mental illness
- Must be legally competent to proceed
- Facing misdemeanor or felony charge(s) or Violation(s) of Probation
- If charges are out of another FL county, transfer to Collier may be possible
- All referrals will be subject to clinical screening and final approval by the MHC Team
- NOTE: MHC rules require strict sobriety. If you are currently taking medications by prescription that may be subject to abuse (such as certain pain and anxiety meds), this may affect eligibility & will need to be disclosed and discussed thoroughly before entry into MHC can be considered
- Must be ready and willing to be fully honest and work hard to find a lasting recovery!



For additional information and to download the referral form and/or Handbook please visit our website at:

<http://www.ca.cjis20.org>

Click on **Programs > Mental Health Court > Collier**

Should you have additional questions after reviewing the website, please contact:

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**20th Judicial Circuit of Florida  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Criminal Division**

**3315 Tamiami Trail East  
Naples, FL 34112**

## What is Mental Health Court?

Defendants who plea into Mental Health Court (MHC) are placed on a period of probation, a requirement of which is compliance with a highly structured, court-based treatment program lasting an average of 12 months. One condition of each Participant's probation is a requirement that they be evaluated for treatment, and then follow all treatment recommendations. Participants attend MHC regularly, where their progress in treatment is discussed with the entire MHC Team, including the Judge. A Participant's successful completion of the program and all probation terms may lead to reduction or even dismissal of their charges. Entry into the program is voluntary, but once accepted, compliance is required.

**Mental Health Court improves Participants' understanding of and access to available treatment avenues and tools**

## Program Completion

Upon completion of all terms of the MHC Program, the Participant will graduate from MHC and the balance of his/her probation will convert to regular reporting probation. Upon completion of all probation terms, the Participant may be granted an early termination of probation, and in some cases (according to the terms of the individual's MHC Contract) felony adjudication may be avoided and/or some or all charges may be dropped.

## How it Works

1. Referrals may come from anyone – the Judge, the State Attorney, the Defense Attorney, a Probation Officer, the Arresting Officer, Jail Staff, a pastor or counselor, a treatment provider, a family member or employer, or the defendant himself/herself.
2. Once identified, the Defendant is screened by a mental health specialist to determine if they are clinically appropriate for the program.
3. If clinically appropriate, the State Attorney determines whether the Defendant is legally appropriate for an opportunity in MHC, and if so, under what terms.
4. Once approved, the Defendant, the Defendant's attorney and State Attorney all sign a contract agreeing to the specific conditions of the Defendant's opportunity in MHC.
5. Upon signing the contract, the Defendant enters a plea/admission according to the terms negotiated between the State Attorney and the Defendant's attorney.
6. Participants are required to submit to appropriate evaluations for treatment and to follow all treatment recommendations, in addition to any other probation terms.
7. Each Participant's progress is monitored and discussed weekly by the MHC Team in conjunction with the Participant's regular appearances in court.
8. The Team has discretion to award incentives for progress, and to impose sanctions for infractions. Serious infractions may result in a Violation of Probation and/or termination from MHC.

## Program Objectives

- Identify appropriate Participants:
  - > Clinically appropriate based on history of mental illness & willingness to accept treatment;
  - > Legally appropriate based on unique facts and circumstances of individual, his or her pending case(s) as well as criminal history;
- Develop holistic and individualized treatment plans respecting the unique needs of each Participant;
- Improve Participants' understanding of and access to available treatment avenues and tools;
- Equip Participants through treatment with tools to manage their diagnoses and find a lasting recovery, including recovery from substance abuse, if that is also an issue;
- Maintain constant emphasis on honesty and accountability, in all aspects of the program;
- Improve community functioning of Participants in areas of employment, education/training, housing and relationships;
- Reduce harmful impacts of mental illness upon Participants, families, businesses & our community;
- Reduce relapse, recidivism and re-incarceration.