

**Spokane County
Therapeutic Mental Health Court**

Participant Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to the Spokane County Behavioral Health Adult Felony Therapeutic Mental Health Court (FMHC) program. The FMHC is a collaborative, problem-solving court that strives to promote stability, sobriety and safety for criminal justice-involved individuals with mental illness through an intensive program of evaluation, treatment and frequent monitoring of compliance, while ensuring the security and well-being of the community.

This handbook will detail what is expected of you as a FMHC participant and review general program information. As a participant, you will be expected to follow the instructions given to you by the judge and the Team, as well as to comply with the Individual Services Plan (ISP) developed jointly by you and your Mental Health Professional (MHP). Some guidelines may vary at the discretion of the FMHC Team. All participants are encouraged to share this handbook with family and friends.

The FMHC is a voluntary program. The five-phase program consists of intensive judicial supervision that includes frequent appearances before the FMHC judge, mandatory mental health treatment, and co-occurring treatment, if you also have chemical dependency. As you complete requirements for each particular phase, you will become eligible to advance to the next phase.

Program Length

The program length is a minimum of twenty-four (24) months for felony charges.

Program Rules

As an FMHC participant, you will be required to abide by the following rules:

1. Attend all scheduled sessions. An unexcused absence may result in imposition of sanctions, including the issuance of a bench warrant for missing court.
2. Behave appropriately. FMHC clients are expected to support one another and pay attention to the court proceedings and group interactions. Listen to the judge, the agency counselors, your MHP, and to one another.
3. Dress appropriately for court. No torn clothing, shorts, or flip-flops.
4. Attend all treatment sessions. This includes individual and group counseling, educational sessions, and other treatment as directed. Unexcused, missed treatment sessions will result in a sanction. If you are unable to make a scheduled appointment, you must notify your MHP immediately. You must make all reasonable efforts to give your MHP as much notice as possible of cancellation and to provide a reason for the cancellation.

5. Do not make threats towards other clients or staff or behave in a violent manner. Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Court. This behavior will result in a sanction and may result in termination from the FMHC program.
6. Submit to random urinalysis and breath (UA/BA) tests.
7. You must abstain from alcohol, marijuana, and all non-prescribed medications or drugs.
8. Maintain confidentiality of other FMHC participants.

Termination from the Program

This is a voluntary program. You can decide to ***voluntarily terminate*** from the program at any time. The judge can also ***involuntarily terminate*** you from the program for non-compliance with your Individual Services Plan (ISP), repeated failure to appear in court, new criminal charges, or use of non-prescribed drugs and/or alcohol. The FMHC Team will jointly recommend all decisions regarding involuntary termination.

If you are terminated from the program for any reason, voluntary or involuntary, the judge will review the police reports and decide whether or not you are guilty.

If the judge agrees that the reports support a finding of guilt, you will be convicted of the crime you have been charged with and the recommended sentence will be imposed.

Schedule and Location

The FMHC docket will be held on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. unless otherwise scheduled. Court will be held in one of the courtrooms in Superior Court. You will be advised of the court's docket location prior to a hearing.

FMHC Requirements

Progressing Through Treatment

TMHC consists of phases that include judicial oversight, individual treatment requirements, drug testing, and rewards and sanctions. Phases are designed to build upon the skills acquired in the previous phase, allowing you to learn to effectively manage your mental illness (and substance abuse, where applicable). As you move through the phases of the program, you will be evaluated and promoted based on successful completion of each phase.

Because all Individual Service Plans (ISPs) are personally customized, the requirements may vary. This is a general guideline and is subject to modification by the TMHC Treatment Team and TMHC Judge.

1. Intake/Assessment

- Complete mental health assessment
- Complete CD assessment if indicated; enter detoxification or inpatient treatment if indicated; submit to random UAs/BAs
- Observe minimum of two consecutive TMHC dockets and appear in court as scheduled
- Sign Agreement to Participate in FMHC and Stipulation to Facts

2. Phase I (minimum of 3 months)-The Intervention Phase

- Appear in court as scheduled
- Follow Individualized Services Plan for mental health and substance abuse
- Comply with medications regimen
- Engage in individual and group counseling
- Submit to random UAs/BAs as required
- Address payment of court fees and fines if necessary
- Maintains safe, appropriate housing and reliable transportation
- Engage in family counseling, parenting class, life management skills as recommended

3. Phase II (minimum of 3 months)-The Restructuring Phase

- Appear in court as scheduled
- Follow Individualized Services Plan for mental health and substance abuse
- Comply with medications regimen
- Engage in individual and group counseling
- Engage in relapse prevention techniques
- Random UAs/BAs as required
- Obtain sponsor if applicable
- Address payment of court fees and fines; complete community service
- Safe, appropriate housing & reliable transportation
- Engage in family counseling, parenting class, life management skills as recommended

4. Phase III (minimum of 4 months)-The Stabilization Phase

- Appear in court as scheduled
- Address court fees and fines as necessary
- Demonstrate skills learned in earlier phases
- Random UAs/BAs as required
- Comply with medication and Individualized Services Plan
- Safe, appropriate housing & reliable transportation
- Engage in pro-social behavior

5. Phase IV (minimum of 3 months)-Relapse Prevention Phase

- Appear in court as scheduled
- Demonstrate skills learned in earlier stages of FMHC Program
- Comply with medication and Individualized Services Plan
- Random UAs/BAs as required
- Follow Relapse Prevention Plan, which recognizes triggers for old patterns of thinking and behavior and what to do during periods of high stress or personal vulnerability to mental decline or criminal behavior
- Begin seeking employment or educational activity, or other activity as approved by Court
- Actively engage in work to pay court fees and fines if necessary, or have plan to pay off outstanding balance
- Has means to maintain stable housing
- Meets all basic needs
- Engage in pro-social behavior

6. Phase V (minimum of 11 months)-Application and Transitional Phase

- Appear in court as scheduled
- Demonstrate skills learned in earlier stages of FMHC Program
- Comply with medication and Individualized Services Plan
- Random UAs/BAs as required
- Follow Relapse Prevention Plan
- Complete Wellness Plan
- Maintain employment or educational activity, or other activity as approved by court
- Actively engage in employment to pay court fees and fines if necessary, or have plan to pay off outstanding balance
- Has means to maintain stable housing
- Meets all basic needs
- Engage in pro-social behavior

Graduation Requirements

Program Participation and Cooperation – The client will be engaged in an ongoing therapeutic support system and will have complied with Individualized Services Plan.

Drugs and Medications – The client will have complied with the Individualized Services Plan including appropriate use of medications and drugs.

Triggers – The client will be able to identify and understand those circumstances and/or events which are likely to trigger relapse behaviors. S/he will develop new responses to those signs, including a list of significant others who will be helpful when the triggers are present.

Legal - The client will have addressed outstanding matters in the criminal justice system.

Basic Life Needs – The client has evidenced the skills to secure food, clothing and shelter. Client makes every effort to ensure that the residential environment is one that will promote ongoing recovery, and is safe and stable.

Reliability - No excessive or unexcused absences from appointments, employment, training classes or other obligations.

Financial or Community Service Responsibility – Has made all payments or performed all community service hours required for TMHC participation.

Transition/Wellness Plan – The client must meet with all Treatment Team members, including Mental Health Professional/Chemical Dependency Professional, and a Support Employment Specialist, and solicit input to help him/her complete a Wellness Plan for the Court that describes how s/he will maintain stability after graduation. The Wellness Plan will describe what participant must do every day to keep well, triggers that could make participant feel worse, and an action plan to stabilize the situation. The Plan should also describe their goals for their future life and a plan to achieve those goals. The Plan must address the following elements:

- Crisis Management and Mental Health Treatment
- Chemical Dependency Treatment
- Employment or Vocational
- Housing and Income
- Natural Supports
- Socialization
- Legal Issues
- What participant has learned through the Mental Health Court Program
- Future Goals

Conclusion

The FMHC program has been developed to help you achieve stability in your life. The program is designed to promote self-sufficiency and to return you to the community as a productive and responsible citizen. The FMHC Team, Treatment, and community resources are here to guide and assist you, but the final responsibility is yours. If you have any additional questions or concerns about the FMHC program, please contact NEWTA, your attorney, the Public Defender, or the FMHC Coordinator.