

Recovery Court Parent Handbook

**Polk County Justice Center
222 Fifth Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309**



**Achieving Sobriety
Maintaining Recovery
Obtaining Self-Sufficiency
Reunifying Families**

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Welcome to Polk County Recovery Court

Recovery Court is designed to assist with your sobriety and recovery. The Recovery Court Team will support you on your path to recovery. We will assist you in accessing treatment, mental health services, domestic violence services, parenting programs, referrals to community resources and sober family activities.

We have the same goal as you: to have you and your children live in a safe, nurturing home in an environment that is free of drugs, alcohol and domestic abuse.

Recovery Court is voluntary, and your commitment to Recovery Court is important. You will be expected to participate in programming and your failure to participate may result in sanctions. To graduate, you must complete the phases described in this handbook. The Recovery Court Team is here to help you develop your treatment plan, meet your treatment goals, and help you develop a self-sufficiency plan to maintain stability and sobriety.

This handbook is designed to provide you with information you need to be successful in Recovery Court. You are expected to follow the instructions given by Judge Belcher and to follow the plan you and the Recovery Court Team develop.



Polk County Recovery Court Team

Coordinator

Karla Lampman (515) 943-9948 Karla.lampman@iowacourts.gov

Family Treatment Court Liaison

Lauryn Muzny (515) 348-4907 lauryn.muzny@iowacourts.gov

Judge Belcher's Court Attendant

Kari Skelton (515) 286-2189 kari.skelton@iowacourts.gov

DHS

JoAnna Davis (515) 601-9479 jdavis4@dhs.state.ia.us

Abraham Vysocky (515) 601-56898 avysock@dhs.state.ia.us

Jessica O'Brien (515) 201-8567 jobrien@dhs.state.ia.us

Parent Partner Coordinator

Adam Andre (515) 336-5176 adama@cfiowa.org

Domestic Violence Outreach Advocate

Stacey Granger (515) 971-0277 staceyg@cfiowa.org

Attorneys

Teresa Pope Cell (515) 201-6792 (515) 224-9595 pope@branstadlaw.com

Kimberly Graham (GAL) (515) 975-3639 kimberly@grahamlawcollaborative.com

Mid Iowa Family Therapy FCS

Dan McClung Daniel.mcclung@miftc.com

Children and families of Iowa BrigetteC@cfiowa.org

Brigette Clements

Cabrie Claiser (515) 577-8245 CabrieC@cfiowa.org

Project Iowa

Gaby Palacios (515) 280-1274 gabypalacios@projectiowa.org

DHS

Casey Gill (515) 601-9429 cgill@dhs.state.ia.us

My Recovery Team

Treatment Agency: _____

Counselor: _____ Phone: _____

Mental Health Agency: _____

Counselor: _____ Phone: _____

My Sober Supports: _____

Please remember that everything shared with the Recovery Court team should be shared
with your attorney first.

Benefits of Recovery Court

- Access to substance abuse and mental health evaluations and services;
- Coordination of services;
- Regular support, encouragement, accountability, and referrals to community resources;
- Family-focused approach to treatment needs;
- Parenting tools and resources; and
- Tools for self-sufficiency.

CONFIDENTIALITY

You will be in the courtroom with other parents and will be held to strict confidentiality. You may NOT, under any circumstances, pass information from inside the courtroom to anyone outside the courtroom. This includes friends, well-meaning support, and staff from other agencies. These rules apply to both in court and outside Recovery Court activities. Other participants and the Recovery Court Team are bound by these standards unless a release is signed giving permission to discuss certain information. Please note that if your case does not transfer to Judge Belcher's docket and your DHS case worker is not reassigned, information shared will be provided to the presiding judge or DHS case worker assigned to your case.

Recovery Court must be a place where individuals can disclose positive and negative information without the threat of information being shared outside the Recovery Court Team. Therefore, what you see and what you hear in Recovery Court must stay in Recovery Court!

Remember these Important Points!

- The Recovery Court Team understands that you may face challenges. **We do not expect perfection. We expect progress.**
- **Mistakes may occur, but chances are not unlimited.** Children have a limited amount of time to be parented. If you do not progress as expected and cannot maintain sobriety, your parental rights could be terminated.
- **If you have questions, ASK.**
- **If you need support from the team, ask the Coordinator for a staffing with the team.**

Recovery Court Grievance Policy

If you feel your Recovery Court Team or a provider is not providing you with the needed services, please bring it to the attention of the Recovery Court Coordinator, DHS and/or your attorney. They will notify the person(s) with whom you have a grievance. If the agency/Recovery Court Team does not address your concern to your satisfaction after being informed of your grievance, you should speak to your attorney to see if the issue should be addressed with the judge.

Recovery Court Rules

Please review the rules before committing to Recovery Court:

- **Be honest about relapse or mistakes.**
- **Follow court orders and ask questions, if you do not understand what is expected of you.**
- **Attend all recommended treatment.**
- **Attend recovery support meetings (i.e. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), or Celebrate Recovery (CR) each week and provide proof of attendance.**
- **Turn your cell phone off and take care of any personal needs before entering the courtroom. You are expected to remain in the courtroom for the duration of Recovery Court.** You are expected to report on time and remain in attendance for all Recovery Court related programming.
- **Actively Attend Recovery Court from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm and Project Iowa from 5pm-7pm.** If you will be absent, contact your attorney to request that Judge Belcher excuse you. Notice should also be provided to Karla, the Coordinator at (515) 943-9948 before 8:30 am. If the phone is not answered, leave a message with a phone number where you can be reached. Absences from court may require verification (see attendance, page 14).
- **Be on time and prepared with your recovery meeting verification, and any completed assignment for Recovery Court.**
- **Treat your peers, the Recovery Court Team and its partners with respect.**
- **Provide list of all medication prescriptions and use medication as prescribed.**
- **Provide drug screens in the manner and at the time it is requested.**
- **Refrain from use of Alcohol.**
- **Maintain Confidentiality.** This is a safe and private place for you and the Recovery Court Team.
- **Know the Recovery Court Grievance Policy.**
- **No violence or threat of violence will be tolerated.**

Courtroom Attire

Do...	Do Not Wear...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dress for Success.• Wear slacks, that are ideal for the courtroom.• Wear jeans without holes.• Wear collared shirts, sweaters, cardigans.• Wear shirts with sleeves• Wear dresses and skirts, that are at least to the knee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shorts, sweats, yoga pants, or pajamas.• Crop Tops, tank tops, or spaghetti straps.• Slippers.• Sunglasses (on face or head).• Hats.• Clothes that advertise beer, cigarettes, or marijuana.• Funny or political shirts.

Intake Process

Learn about Recovery Court and how it can help you.

If you decide you want to participate in Recovery Court, the Recovery Court Team will make a recommendation to Judge Belcher regarding your participation.

Requirements for Intake:

- Observe Recovery Court on Wednesday from 10am to noon for two (2) weeks.
- Meet with the Recovery Court Coordinator and complete an intake.
- Agree to attend three (2-3) recovery support meetings.
- Obtain and complete recovery meeting attendance sheets and return to the Recovery Court Coordinator at the next hearing.
- Return Intake Assignment to Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Provide drug screen.
- Complete a substance use evaluation and be committed to following recommendations.
- Sign releases.
- Recovery Court Team will staff your referral and provide a recommendation to Judge Belcher who will determine if you are accepted into Recovery Court. If accepted, an order will be filed in your CINA case. If not accepted, you will be informed personally and an order will be filed in your CINA case.

Recovery Court is held on Wednesdays from 10am-12pm.

You will be notified by the Recovery Court Coordinator and/or Judge Belcher whenever Recovery Court is not scheduled.

You are required to attend and actively participate in all scheduled Recovery Court programming.

Please contact someone on the team if you are going to miss court or any other required activity. Phone numbers for team members can be found on page 4.

Please read the attendance policy located on page 16.

Orientation Phase

Establish a foundation for sobriety and work towards a drug-free lifestyle.

Goals for Orientation Phase:

- Detoxification and abstinence.
- Participate in substance abuse treatment.
- Identify other needs and obtain evaluations for those services.
- Identify community supports and barriers.
- Set goals for parenting skills development.
- Comply with recommendations of case permanency plan.

Requirements to advance from Orientation Phase:

- Maintain sobriety.
- Attend a minimum of four (4) consecutive Recovery Court hearings on time.
- Attend Project Iowa meetings on time, as required.
- Attend a minimum of three (3) recovery meetings (i.e. AA/NA/CR) per week. Submit meeting attendance log weekly to the Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Continue to participate in recommended services (i.e. substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence).
- Provide negative drug screens to demonstrate sobriety for at least 30-days while in the phase (based on Recovery Court drug screens).
- Cooperate with Recovery Court Team.
- Complete your Orientation Phase assignment and present to the Recovery Court Team.

Working Phase

Stabilize treatment and gain insight into barriers so that your recovery is a way of life.

Goals for Working Phase:

- Continued abstinence.
- Develop recovery tools.
- Progress towards attaining treatment goals established in previous phases.
- Continue working on goals for parents skills development.
- Understand the impact of substance use on children and family.
- Identify additional needs and services.
- Comply with recommendations of case permanency plan.

Requirements to advance from Working Phase:

- Maintain sobriety.
- Attend a minimum of eight (8) consecutive Recovery Court hearings on time.
- Attend Project Iowa meetings on time, as required.
- Attend a minimum of three (3) recovery meetings (i.e. AA/NA/CR) per week. Submit meeting attendance log weekly to the Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Continue to participate in recommended services (i.e. substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence).
- Provide negative drug screens to demonstrate sobriety for at least 60-days while in this phase (based on Recovery Court drug screens).
- Obtain a sponsor.
- Complete your Working Phase assignment and present to the Recovery Court Team.

Maintenance Phase

Reconnect with the community and progress towards self-sufficiency.

Goals for Maintenance Phase:

- Attain treatment goals established in Intake, Orientation & Working Phases.
- Set goals for education, employment, life skills, and independent living.
- Develop sound parenting practices and strategies.
- Comply with recommendations of case permanency plan.

Requirements for advancement from Maintenance Phase:

- Maintain sobriety.
- *Attend a minimum of four (4) Recovery Court hearings on time. Recovery Court attendance for this phase is bi-weekly on the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Wednesday of the month.*
- *This phase requires participants to attend Maintenance Group on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.*
- Attend Project Iowa meetings on time, as required.
- Attend a minimum of three (3) recovery meetings (i.e. AA/NA/CR) per week. Submit meeting attendance log weekly to the Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Continue to participate in recommended services (i.e. substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence).
- Provide negative drug screens to demonstrate sobriety for at least 60-days while in this phase (based on Recovery Court drug screens).
- Maintain contact with sponsor.
- Complete your Maintenance Phase assignment and present to the Recovery Court Team.
- Cooperate with the Recovery Court Team.

Maintenance Group

Justice Center Conference room

2nd Wednesday of every month

10 am to 11 am

Pre-Graduation Phase

Maintain stability and healthy relationships in recovery.

Goals for Pre-Graduation Phase:

- Stable living and financial arrangements.
- Progress towards education, employments, life skills goals and independent living.
- Develop family coping skills and parenting skills.
- Strengthen relationships with sober community.
- Comply with recommendations of case permanency plan.

Requirements for advancement from Pre-Graduation Phase:

- Maintain sobriety.
- Attend a minimum of four (4) Recovery Court hearings bi-weekly on time.
- Attend Project Iowa Group as required.
- Attend a minimum of two (2) recovery meetings (i.e. AA/NA/CR) per week. Submit meeting attendance log weekly to the Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Continue to participate in recommended services (i.e. substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence).
- Provide negative drug screens to demonstrate sobriety for at least 60-days while in this phase (based on Recovery Court drug screens).
- Maintain contact with sponsor.
- Active participation in recovery community (i.e. chairing meetings, attending retreats/conferences, service work, etc.)
- Complete your Pre-Graduation Phase assignment and present to the Recovery Court Team.
- Cooperate with the Recovery Court Team.

Graduation Phase

Contribute to your community by maintaining long-term abstinence and responsible parenting.

Goals for Graduation Phase:

- Enjoy the natural benefits of your sober lifestyle.
- Successfully complete recommended treatment.
- Comply with recommendations of case permanency plan.

Requirements for advancement from Graduation Phase:

- Maintain sobriety.
- Attend a minimum of four (4) Recovery Court hearings bi-weekly on time alternating between Recovery Court and Maintenance Group (see below for details). If there is a 5th Wednesday in a month Graduation phase participants are not required to attend.
- Attend maintenance group on the second week of the month and attend court on the fourth week of the month. The first and third week you are not required to attend court.
- Attend Project Iowa meetings on time, as required.
- Attend a minimum of two (2) recovery meetings (i.e. AA/NA/CR) per week. Submit meeting attendance log weekly to the Recovery Court Coordinator.
- Continue to participate in recommended services (i.e. substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence).
- Maintain contact with sponsor and do step work.
- Maintain active participation in recovery community (i.e. chairing meetings, attending retreats/conferences, service work, alumni group, etc.)
- Provide negative drug screens to demonstrate long term commitment to sobriety and recovery.
- Complete your Graduation Phase assignment and present.
- Cooperate with the Recovery Court Team.

2nd
Wednesday

• Maintenance Group

4th
Wednesday

• Court

Graduation and Extended Care

When Judge Belcher and you believe you may be ready for graduation, you may request a meeting with the recovery court team to discuss this. If you have met the requirements of the program, the Recovery Court Team will recommend you for a commencement ceremony. Congratulations! You have earned it!

Goals and expectation of graduation and extended care:

- Maintain sobriety.
- Self-sufficiency.
- Participate in self-care.
- Continue monthly attendance to recovery support meetings and engage a sponsor.
- Maintain housing and employment.
- Provide feedback on your Recovery Court participation.

“Recovery is something that you have to work on every single day, and it’s something that doesn’t get a day off.”

- Demi Lovato

- **Building on Success**The Court has clear expectations for Recovery Court participants. The Recovery Court Team will provide weekly peer-based support and accountability to help you meet these expectations. Achievements are rewarded!!

Expectations

- Attend, be on time, participate and stay for all Recovery Court programming;
- Be honest and show commitment to the Recovery Court process;
- Have negative drug testing results;
- Actively participate in substance abuse treatment;
- Participate in AA/NA/CR meetings and provide proof of attendance;
- Use medications as prescribed by your doctor;
- Keep information concerning Recovery Court participants confidential;
- Obtain self sufficientcy (i.e. safe stable housing, employment, transportation, etc.);
- Ask for a meeting with the team if you are struggling;
- Become a role model for others; and
- Reach out if struggling and report relapses if it occurs.

Possible Incentives

- Praise and acknowledgement from Judge Belcher;
- Peer acknowledgement;
- Applause/special recognition;
- Phase advancement;
- Small gift items;
- Phase certificates;
- Group leadership;
- Commencement; and
- Mentoring opportunities.

The most significant reward you can give yourself is the successful completion of Recovery Court and providing a safe, stable and sober home for you and your family!

Setbacks

The Recovery Court Team will respond to negative behavior with therapeutic interventions or sanctions. Judge Belcher will implement an intervention strategy with input from the Recovery Court Team. The more serious the mistake/behavior, the more significant the intervention.

The Recovery Court Team understands challenges of treatment, recovery and involvement with the child welfare system. The Recovery Court Team expects honesty, effort and progress – not perfection. Repeated infractions and disengagement may result in dismissal from Recovery Court and may affect your opportunity for reunification with your children and the transfer of CINA case back to the original judge.

Attendance:

Recovery Court is a voluntary program, but your attendance and participation is expected and it is your responsibility to notify the appropriate people if you are unable to attend. Failing to do so may result in sanctions. Parents are expected to attend all Recovery Court sessions, Project Iowa Meetings, and outside Recovery Court events. Understanding that life happens and things come up, the participants will be allotted eight (8) absences before being discharged after their ninth (9) absence in a calendar year. There may also be excused absences in extreme circumstances.

When a participant has accrued 3 absences or 1 no call no show they should meet with the team for a staffing to discuss goals moving forward. If the coordinator has not contacted you regarding the staffing please contact the coordinator.

No Call, No Shows:

- 1st No Call, No Show: Staffing with the Recovery Court team
- 2nd No Call, No Show: Reach out from the Recovery Court team
- 3rd No Call, No Show: Discharged from Recovery Court

Possible Infractions:

- Failing to attend any Recovery Court programming, not being on time, or leaving early;
- Not showing commitment to Recovery Court programming;
- Having positive drug screens or failing to test when asked;
- Failing to participate in recommended substance abuse treatment or mental health services;
- Failing to participate in support meetings or not providing proof of attendance;
- Violating a court order; and
- Failing to perform therapeutic interventions as assigned.

Potential Sanctions:

- Being addressed by Judge Belcher;
- Letters of apology, explanation or written assignments;
- Updated Relapse Prevention Plan and/or Intervention Contract;
- Restricted participation;
- Recovery Court Team staffing;
- Not advancing phases;
- Increased drug testing; and
- Dismissal from Recovery Court (and transfer back to original courtroom if applicable to your case).