

Towaliga Judicial Circuit Special Drug Court

WELCOME

Welcome to the Towaliga Judicial Circuit Special Drug Court; serving the Georgia counties of Butts, Lamar, and Monroe. Our mission is to ensure your recovery and minimize repeat offenses, known as recidivism. We seek to achieve this goal by implementing a judicially supervised substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation program specifically designed to administer to specific cases within the circuit. We also intend to educate the public as to the positive impact the Towaliga Judicial Circuit Special Drug Court has on the community.

Each of you entered this program following an arrest. As a drug offender, you were assessed and selected as a good candidate for this program. This is a golden opportunity, a chance for you to change your behavior and therefore improve your life. This goal can be achieved through hard work and commitment and you will have the help you need. You will be a member of an enthusiastic team; including judges, lawyers, business and medical professionals, treatment counselors, district attorneys, public defenders, law enforcement, and community volunteers. Your team will work together to help you eliminate your desire to use drugs and alcohol, help to prevent you from relapsing and thus the possibility of re-arrest or involvement in a more serious crime; while also encouraging you to increase your education and seek gainful employment. These are all tools needed for you to become a productive member of society; therefore making your family and your community very proud of you.

You have entered into a program that is unlike any other in the criminal justice system. The program will last for at least one-year and includes several phases with awards and punishments (incentives and sanctions) that will motivate you to change your behavior. During this time, you will have judicial intervention, supervision, treatment classes, counseling, and random drug testing. As an alternative to jail, if you can successfully complete your program, you will graduate and receive a tremendous reward....

You could be Drug Free

and

Your Criminal Charges could be Dismissed !

As an arrested drug offender, you were court ordered or agreed to become an active participant in this program. You are required to read all of the following pages to educate yourself on the program and to understand what is expected of you from this day forward.

~ WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE ~

CLASS SCHEDULE:

All classes are conducted in Forsyth, Georgia at the Monroe County Justice Center.

The drug court program offers no transportation and you are solely responsible for your on-time attendance at all classes and court hearings. In the event of an emergency you are to notify the office of your expected absence or tardiness before 5:00 pm on the day of the class. You are required to make-up all class sessions missed, no exceptions.

Participants entering in Phase I will attend class sessions every Tuesday and Friday.

Participants promoted to Phase II will attend class sessions every Wednesday.

Participants in Phase I with a make-up class will attend on Wednesday.

Participants in Phase II with a make-up class will attend on Friday.

Our current class schedule is as follows:

- 5:30 pm - 6:00 pmUrinalysis Specimen Collection
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Class / Group Education
- 7:00 pm - 7:15 pm Break
- 7:15 pm - 8:00 pm Class / Group Education
- 8:00 pmDismissal

All participants are required to arrive for urinalysis specimen collection and class by 5:30 pm

The Monroe County Justice Center will provide security during the drug court's presence and all participants are required to be respectful of authority and obey all commands.

- Enter through security; go directly to the courtroom, sign the attendance sheet.
- After entering you are not permitted to leave; no in and outs in the Justice Center.
- Please park only in the spaces on the same side as the flag pole.
- The drug court dress code includes no shorts, tank /tube tops, flip flops, sagging pants, etc.
- Absolutely no cell phones, food, drinks, knives, weapons, etc. are permitted.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Justice Center, including the restrooms.
- Visitors (including children) of the participants are not allowed to attend any drug court activity at the Justice Center; and are not permitted to wait for you in the lobby or at the front door/porch area.

ALL PARTICIPANTS IN ALL PHASES ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND

"REPORT BACK HEARINGS"

HELD TWICE MONTHLY AT THE LAMAR COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN BARNESVILLE
YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ARRIVE BY 9:00 AM FOR YOUR SPECIMEN COLLECTION ,
FOLLOWED BY A PROGRESS REPORT BEFORE THE JUDGE.

Report Back Hearing Schedule Included in Packet

The length of the Report Back Hearings are not set, therefore you should be flexible and allow from 9 am to 11 am for this required drug court activity. After appearing before the Judge you are required to remain in the courtroom until you are dismissed by the court staff.

- You may bring guest with you to the "report back hearings" (no children, please) however, they must obey all drug court rules and dress codes.
- Please come neatly dressed to appear before the Judge
- You are not allowed to bring any items (including purses, cell phone, food, papers)
- After your security check you are to report to the 2nd floor and will not be permitted to leave for any reason until dismissed by the drug court staff
- Upon your arrival by 9:00 am; you are to sign-in on the attendance sheet
- Proceed directly to the courtroom and be seated
- You will be called from the courtroom to come to the facilities for specimen testing
- After testing, you are to immediately return to the courtroom
- Take care of all of your personal needs before the Judge enters the courtroom
- Do not engage in conversations when a participant is before the Judge

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION FEE:

Participants are required to pay a participation fee of \$500 upon entry into the program.

If you are unable to make the full payment at that time, a payment plan may be approved and will be provided with the following conditions:

1. Payments of at least \$42 per week or \$84 at every report back session must be made on a regular schedule
2. The total fee of \$500, must be paid in full prior to the end of Phase I

All participant fees and payments will be collected in person, by Ms. Renea High. She will be available to receive these fees at counseling classes and report back hearings.

- Purchase Money Orders only payable to Towaliga Drug Court
- Print your name and the last 4 digits of your social security number on the money order

You will not receive a receipt from the drug court; you are responsible for keeping your stub/receipt and presenting it to the drug court administrator at the next report back to receive proper credit.

INCENTIVES & SANCTIONS:

Incentives are given to acknowledge a participant that is progressing extremely well.

A participant may receive forms of praise from the judge and administrator, gift certificates, early dismissals from report back hearings, and early phase promotions.

Stay focused, do your best and you may be rewarded for:

- Perfect Attendance
- Higher Education (GED)
- No Dilutes
- Behavioral Change
- New Employment
- Employment Promotions
- Other Successes

Sanctions are necessary, at times, to cause some to change your behavior. Not all sanctions are bad, but they will always be designed to increase or improve the participant's chances of graduation from the program. The judge orders the imposition of sanctions on individuals based upon your individual behavior and independently from the actions of your class or from others in the program. Jail time and additional classes are the most common forms of sanctions, however the drug court is creative in developing other means to get your attention.

- Urine Positives (2 Dilutes equal 1 Positive)
- Unexcused Absences; Failure to complete homework/class assignments
- Failure to Present AA/NA sheet

- Negative Attitudes
- Other Violations

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

The Towaliga Judicial Circuit Special Drug Court is a minimum twelve month program consisting of three phases. Each phase must be successfully completed before a participant can move to the next phase of the program. The staff will determine whether a participant has successfully completed the requirements for each phase. You are required to return to court twice monthly at which time the Judge will review your performance to determine your progress in the program. There are areas the staff will concentrate on as they make their recommendations to the Judge. They will track your attitude, attendance, active participation in the program, participation fee payments, urinalysis, and employment and/or school status.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The Towaliga Drug Court Program is divided into Three Phases for Twelve Months.

Phase I is the Stabilization Period for approximately 13 weeks

Phase II is an Intensive Treatment Period for approximately 13 weeks

Phase III is a Social Reintegration Period for approximately 6 months.

Each phase has requirements that must be satisfied before a participant is allowed to move into the next phase of the program. Upon successful completion of Phase III of the program, a participant becomes a candidate for graduation.

Phase I participants receive an initial treatment assessment and health history/physical exam, provide samples for regular and random urinalysis, attend intensive group-counseling sessions, receive substance abuse education as well as screening for other needs, return to court when ordered for a progress hearing, and enter a detoxification, if necessary. Attendance at weekly NA/AA meetings are encouraged.

At the end of the first approximately thirteen-week period, participants receive an evaluation by the program staff to determine eligibility for movement into Phase II of the program.

The minimum requirements for successful completion of Phase I are as follows:

- Not more than three absences during Phase I
- Full payment of the participation fee of \$500
- Not less than six consecutive weeks of negative urinalysis prior to the evaluation
- No disciplinary problems

Unsuccessful participants will remain in Phase I of the program and will be re-evaluated every two months until they meet requirements to move to Phase II. Successful participants will move into Phase II of the program under a specific category. Each category will have different requirements. Program staff will select the category for each participant which affords him/her the optimum opportunity for successful completion of the program.

Phase II participants will continue to provide samples for regular and random urinalysis, attend group-counseling sessions and return to court on a regular basis for a progress hearing. In addition, participants are required to attend additional peer/support group meetings , such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), twice weekly. If necessary, participants will enter a detoxification program, enter a short-term in-patient treatment program, and receive individual counseling.

At the end of the next thirteen-week period, participants in Phase II of the program are re-evaluated by program staff to determine eligibility for movement into Phase III of the program.

The minimum requirements for successful completion of Phase II are as follows:

- Not more than two absences during Phase II
- Not less than 8 consecutive weeks of negative urinalysis prior to the evaluation
- No disciplinary problems

Unsuccessful participants will remain in Phase II of the program and will be re-evaluated every two months until they meet the requirements to move to Phase III.

Phase III participants will continue to provide samples for regular and random urinalysis, continue attendance at peer group meetings and return to court on a regular basis for a progress hearing. In addition, participants will effect lifestyle changes to improve their chances for social reintegration as productive members of society by securing employment, returning to school, obtaining a GED, or obtaining vocational rehabilitation. In addition, participants will obtain supportive housing services and other aftercare activities.

Successful participants will be considered as a candidate for graduation pending reviews and interviews. Graduates will have the opportunity to have the charges for which they were arrested, dismissed.

URINALYSIS:

Every program participant is expected to give a sample for urinalysis each time you come to class. In addition, random testing will be performed. Samples are to be given only during the times mentioned earlier, unless special permission has been given. All samples will be tested immediately, locally and at the toxicology lab. A positive test means the drug for which we tested is in your system. A negative test means that either the drug we tested for is not in your system or the amount in your system is extremely low. We will perform drug tests for the following drugs:

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- PCP
- Heroin
- Opiates (Such as Lortabs, Vicodin and Codeine)
- Amphetamines
- Methamphetamines
- Benzodiazepines
- Barbiturates

- Alcohol

Even though alcohol is legal for use by anyone over the age of twenty-one, we do not approve of its use by program participants. A positive test for alcohol is the same as a positive test for any other drug. All samples will be tested for adulterants and/or flushing agents if deemed necessary by program staff. Any sample found to contain any adulterant, contaminant or flushing agent shall be considered positive for all the drugs for which we test you. All samples must be observed by a member of the program staff of the same sex as the person giving the sample. No unobserved samples will be accepted. Failure to give a urine sample will result in being considered positive for all drugs. Bringing a fraudulent sample will result in dismissal from the program. Don't worry about how long the drugs stay in your system. Stop using today! Your tests will soon reflect if you have stopped.

You are required to refer to your handout *Reference Guide for Medication in Alcohol and Drug Dependence* for information on medications allowed. Always tell your doctor that you are in the drug court program before accepting medication of samples, over-the-counter, or prescribed. It is your responsibility to check out all items entering your blood stream! Excuses of something unknown causing you to test positive or dilute is not considered.

ATTITUDE & BEHAVIOR:

We expect everyone who participates in this program to conduct themselves with respect; for the other participants in the program, for the program staff, for the facility where classes are held and all of the property inside and outside of the building. We like to think that everyone has self-respect and that everyone wants to be treated with respect. In this program, if you want respect, you have to give respect.

Irrational outbursts, sleeping or appearing to be asleep in class, inappropriate talking and any other behaviors considered inappropriate and/or disruptive by the counseling staff will cause

you to be removed from the classroom. We expect everyone to act as if they are interested in the education and counseling we are giving. Even if you do not think you have a drug problem, we expect you to act appropriately, at all times.

No program participant is considered "better" or "superior" to anyone else. Social standing, economic affluence, educational achievement, physical superiority; none of these things will cause us to treat any one better than the rest. Each of you share one common trait...you were arrested ! That's how you came to the program and for that reason, the program staff will treat each of you the same.

DRESS CODE:

Clothing is to be clean and seasonally appropriate and must conform to normally accepted standards of dress. Failure to dress appropriately can result in the imposition of a sanction by the court.

All participants will comply with the following dress code:

Men:

Shirt: Dress shirt or casual shirt preferred. Work shirt, sweat shirt or t-shirt are acceptable. Shirts that advertise alcohol or drug use, or having offensive statements are not acceptable. Shirt-tails must be worn in.

Pants: Dress slacks preferred. Work pants or jeans acceptable. Sweat pants and shorts are not acceptable. All pants must be worn at the proper waist level.

Shoes: Dress shoes preferred. Work boots or tennis shoes acceptable.

Hats: Hats, caps, or scarves are not to be worn in meetings.

Women:

Blouse: Dress or casual blouse preferred. Work blouse and appropriate t-shirts are acceptable. Shirts that advertise alcohol or drug use,

or having offensive statements are not acceptable. Sexually suggestive tops are not acceptable.

Skirts: Dress or casual skirts preferred. Skirts must be of appropriate length.

Pants: Dress or casual pants preferred. Pants must be worn with proper fit.

Dresses: Business or casual dresses are preferred. Sexually suggestive dresses are not acceptable.

Shoes: Casual or dress shoes preferred. Work boots or tennis shoes are acceptable.

COMMUNICATION:

No telephone calls are permitted while classes are in session. Cellular phones and pagers should not be brought to class. If the beeping from your pager or the ringing from your cellular phone is heard by the program staff, your pager or cellular phone will be confiscated.

CONCLUSION:

This program is not easy to complete! However, the rewards for successfully completing the program outweigh the difficulties you endure. The drug court program staff is here to help you overcome your substance abuse problems. Our philosophy is, you can come to our classes and spend 2 hours, twice a week, having a good time without using alcohol or drugs. Now, if you can do it for 2 hours, twice a week, then you can do it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Once you enter the program, you automatically have another family of supporters that are cheering you on to become, and stay **DRUG FREE!** Remember, this team of judges, counselors, an administrator, and other professionals and volunteers care about "YOU" and we hope you will not disappoint us. We will do our part to help you, we just ask you to do your part. You must decide to stay focused and determined, and do not let anything or anyone stop you from completing this program. The wise choices you make today, can result in your peace and joy tomorrow. From this day forward, each and every moment, you must concentrate on the choices you make. Whether the choice is small or large, you must first ask yourself...

"will this help me to get closer to my goal of becoming drug free?"