

Comal County
County Court at Law No. 2
Judge Charles A. Stephens, II

Veterans Treatment Court



Participant Handbook

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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Comal County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). This handbook is designed to be an overview of what to expect as a participant in VTC. It provides a basic outline of the program and is a resource to turn to for the many questions you may have as you move through the program. You are expected to read the handbook and review it often so that you can easily comply with VTC's mission of promoting a healthy and productive lifestyle.

As a participant of VTC, you will be expected to follow the instructions given to you by the Judge and the VTC Team. The VTC Team includes the Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Probation Officer, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist, Defense Attorneys, and the Assistant District Attorney. You will also be expected to follow all supervision and program rules and complete the treatment plan developed by you and your assigned treatment provider.

You are encouraged to share this handbook with your family, significant other, and friends (people in your support system) so they can support you in achieving your goals. They are also welcome to attend your scheduled court sessions with you.

History and Purpose

The VTC was established on August 13, 2015 by the Commissioners Court of Comal County. The innovator behind the VTC is Judge Charles Stephens of the County Court at Law No. 2. Judge Stephens saw a need to provide military veterans with an alternative to the traditional criminal justice system. Thus, the mission of the VTC is:

To help Justice Involved Veterans by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system and providing them with the tools they need to reintegrate into a productive, law-abiding lifestyle through a collaborative effort of support, treatment, and accountability that leaves no veteran behind.

VTC is designed to reduce arrests, promote self-sufficiency through sobriety, employment and education, and to help you remain in the community as a productive and responsible member of society. VTC strives to assist you in making positive changes in your life. It is your dedication to the VTC's goals and rules that will enable you to effect that change.

Goals

1. Provide each participant with a judicially-supervised treatment program using a variety of methods and treatment options.
2. Facilitate the achievement of educational, employment, and social goals that promote a healthy and productive lifestyle.
3. Help each participant maintain a productive lifestyle in the community.
4. Help each participant abstain from the abuse of substances by treating addiction and other underlying factors, thereby reducing future contact with the criminal justice system.



Application Process

The Veterans Treatment Court is an alternative court model, which requires submission of a completed application and review of it by the members of the VTC team prior to admission into the specialty court. The application requests a variety of information from the applicant to include details of their offense, whether or not the applicant has accepted responsibility for their wrongdoing, prior military service, along with information related to any prior or current trauma the veteran is experiencing. While the VTC team understands that answering some of these questions can be difficult for applicants, please understand the requested information is used to identify appropriate candidates, in addition to assisting and guiding the members of the VTC in their development of a treatment plan for greatest success.

If an applicant is not accepted into the Veterans Treatment Court, for any reason, the information provided in the application will not be used as evidence against the veteran in the State's case in the event of trial on these charges. If a veteran is accepted into the Veteran's Treatment Court and is subsequently unsatisfactorily terminated from the Program, their Statement of the Offense MAY be used for purposes of impeachment.

Confidentiality

Records maintained by VA on veterans, including medical records, are generally confidential, and the VA may not disclose or release these materials except as provided by federal law. Specifically, VA records of the identity, diagnosis, prognosis, or treatment of a veteran related to drug abuse, alcoholism or alcohol abuse are confidential and subject to disclosure only for the specific purposes and under the circumstances expressly authorized under 42 CFR and 38 U.S.C. 7332.

Participation in the VTC necessitates applicants to sign a "Release of Information" which allows the VTC Team to discuss your case and progress with treatment providers and the VTC Team Members. Note, team members sign confidentiality statements and are bound by such. Persons outside the VTC Team do not have access to information about you or your progress unless there is an emergency or legal circumstance that requires release of information in compliance with both state and federal law. Your statements and information about your treatment will be shared with the VTC Team, which includes the Judge, Court Administrator, Assistant Criminal District Attorney, defense attorneys, probation officers, and representatives from the VA and Mental Health. **This information may be used to evaluate your current compliance with the program and to determine appropriate treatment or other actions.**

Veteran Mentors (Battle Buddies)

Veteran Mentors/Battle Buddies act as a coach, guide, role model, advocate, and support for the participants. Mentors encourage, guide, and support each participant through the court process. This includes listening to the concerns of participants and making general suggestions, assisting with determining needs, and acting as a support. Mentors must be a veteran of one of the branches of the US Armed Forces.



Veteran Mentors are not members of the VTC Team. They will not participate in discussions of participants' cases or make reports to the Team regarding participants. Only in emergency situations will a mentor report to the Team about something happening with a participant. However, mentors will encourage participants to talk openly with the Team about problems they are having or relapses in progress.

You are strongly encouraged to utilize the mentor program and interact with the mentor who volunteers to work with you. However, your mentor should not be a crutch. He or she is not allowed to give you rides, money, or other things of value.

Participant Rights

All participants have the right to courteous, dignified and reliable delivery of service. Participation in VTC is voluntary. Participants will be informed of changes in the program, rules and policies as early as possible. Equal treatment and services will be delivered without regard to age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ancestry, or physical disability.

Participant Responsibilities

It is your duty to comply with your responsibilities as a participant in VTC. A violation of any of your responsibilities may result in sanctions, including your termination from the program. Listed below are some of the responsibilities you must adhere to. This list is not all-inclusive, but should serve as a guide to help you achieve success in VTC. This handbook and the Participant Performance Contract you sign when you enter VTC details your full responsibilities.

1. You must not violate any law;
2. You must not use or possess any controlled substance, dangerous drug, marijuana, or prescription drug not specifically prescribed to you by lawful prescription with approval from your treatment provider;
3. You must notify all of your treatment providers of your participation in this treatment court so that they may prescribe in accordance with the goals of this program towards sobriety;
4. You must not consume or possess alcoholic beverages;
5. You must attend all court sessions and required appointments and be on time;
6. You must reschedule any missed or cancelled appointments as early as possible and have a valid reason supported by documentation;
7. You must exhibit appropriate behavior in the courtroom as well as at all sessions, appointments, meetings, and interactions with other participants and the Team;
8. You must dress appropriately for court as well as for other VTC appointments; no midriff shirts, sleeveless shirts, shorts, short skirts, clothing with drug or alcohol related themes, or flip-flops will be allowed;
9. You must submit to any medical, psychiatric, educational, vocational, or substance abuse treatment programs, up to and including residential treatment, as directed;
10. You must submit to urinalysis or other drug testing, randomly and upon demand;



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11. You must not leave Comal or contiguous counties without written permission from VTC;
12. You must contact your community supervision officer or the court administrator within 24 hours regarding any change in address, telephone number, or employment;
13. You must pay all fines, court costs, treatment fees, restitution costs, assessment fees, and laboratory fees as ordered;
14. You must be respectful to yourself and others.

Court Reviews

You are required to attend the VTC review docket to discuss your progress. Dockets are held on Mondays at 3:00 p.m. in County Court at Law No. 2, located at 199 Main Plaza, Courtroom A, New Braunfels, TX 78130, or as otherwise instructed.

Based on your progress in the program, you may be required to appear for court reviews more or less often. Typically, participants are required to appear as follows:

- Phase I – every two weeks or as directed
- Phase II – every two weeks or as directed
- Phase III – every three weeks or as directed
- Phase IV – every four weeks or as directed
- Community Transition – as required by the VTC Team

Prior to each court review, the Team will meet to discuss participants' progress in the program and make recommendations to the Judge regarding any action that needs to be taken.

Supervision

You are required to meet with your assigned probation officer as directed by the Judge in addition to court appearances. The frequency of these visits depends on your progress in the program. Your probation officer will discuss the conditions of your supervision with you initially and as you advance through the program. VTC probation officers will also make home and work visits on a random schedule or as needed based on your individual situation.

You may also be required to have a portable monitoring device. These devices are typically either an ankle bracelet, handheld device or ignition interlock, and are used to monitor alcohol use. Monitoring devices are generally paid for by the VTC however there may be some instances where the participant is responsible for monitoring costs. In the event a participant skips a scheduled analysis on a handheld or in-home device, or tampers with an ankle bracelet, they will immediately be scheduled for a drug screening through the Probation Officer. The VTC Coordinator and Probation Officer have independent authority to require participants to attend a show cause hearing out of the normal phase cycle with the Veterans Court.



Alcohol and Drug Testing

It is the goal of VTC to help you maintain sobriety not only to succeed in the program but also to succeed in life after the program. Therefore, we use frequent and random drug/alcohol testing to promote this goal. You may be required to pay all fees associated with testing.

You will have two hours from the time you are notified to provide a specimen for testing. If you fail to appear or cannot provide a specimen, the Team will consider this as a failed test and sanctions may be applied. The Comal County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (Probation) will direct the drug/alcohol tests. If the test indicates a positive result, and you don't agree with it, your specimen will be forwarded to the laboratory under contract with Probation to verify the result and you may be required to pay for the test.

Medications

All medications must be pre-approved by your treatment provider prior to taking them. When going to the doctor or dentist, please make sure to bring the *Medical/Dental Medications Form* (see Appendix) for your physician to sign. If an emergency room visit is necessary, it is important that you identify yourself as a VTC participant and request non-narcotic and non-alcoholic medications. It is your responsibility to know what is contained in the medications you consume. The only exceptions to the pre-approval rule are the over-the-counter medications listed on the *Approved OTC Medication List* (see Appendix).

Treatment

Substance abuse and mental health treatment is provided by state-funded treatment agencies or the federally funded Veterans Health Administration. The treatment agency to which you are assigned will coordinate your treatment and may refer you to additional treatment and/or mental health services if needed. Most treatment providers charge a fee based on your income. After your intake session, you and your counselor will develop a treatment plan that may involve both group and individual counseling as well as either in-patient or out-patient treatment. The schedule will be determined by the treatment provider, and attendance is required. You may be required to attend more groups or individual sessions depending upon your treatment plan. Each treatment plan is individualized to best meet your particular needs. You are responsible to provide information to the VTC regarding your treatment plan, goals, and duration, as well as informing your treatment providers and medical providers that you are participating in an abstinence-based treatment court program.

You are responsible for attending all scheduled appointments. A missed treatment appointment must be excused by your treatment agency and made up later. Your attendance and level of participation at counseling sessions will be reported to the team as part of your weekly progress reports. You must contact your case manager or your counselor if you are unable to attend or will be late to a scheduled session. Unexcused misses could result in sanctions.



Fees

There is a \$750 VTC program fee (\$525 for probation and drug /alcohol testing to the Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD), and \$225 for programs and attorney fee to the Comal County Clerk, which may be paid up front or on a payment plan such as the plan noted below. These fees may be paid on a periodic basis or on a deferred payment schedule at the discretion of the Judge based on the participant's ability to pay and fees may be used only for purposes specific to the program. Depending on the offense, you may also be required to pay \$64 in restitution fees in addition to the VTC program fee. VTC generally covers the costs associated with monitoring devices, but circumstances may change during the course of VTC that require you to pay additional amounts. For example, if you are locked out of a testing device due to your negligence in routine calibration and maintenance you are responsible to pay the lockout fee to restore the device to working order. You are responsible for any rescheduling fee associated with missed appointments.

Payment information will be reported to the Judge as part of your regular progress reports. Inability/failure to timely pay fees will not automatically result in termination from the program. At a minimum, where applicable, fees should be paid according to the following schedule, unless the Judge, in his discretion, directs otherwise:

Phase	Amount Due	Paid To:
Phase I	\$150.00	County Clerk
Phase II	\$75.00 \$175.00	County Clerk CSCD
Phase III	\$250.00	CSCD
Phase IV	\$100.00	CSCD

Program Structure

The VTC Program offers a four-phased structured approach plus community transition with the first phase focusing on stabilization, orientation and engagement, and the last focused on participant independence and community reintegration. The program is characterized by two tracks. The VTC program will progress in the same manner regardless of which track you are on. The tracks are as follows:

Track One is a Pre-Trial Intervention program. It is a voluntary program for Veterans charged with a criminal offense. Track One is not appropriate for violent crimes, domestic violence, sexual offender related crimes, Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), or related offenses. Applicants must go through an assessment and application process to determine if they are an appropriate candidate for the program. Once accepted into the program, a contract will list the specific requirements and obligations for each defendant. Upon successful completion of Track One, the Comal County Criminal District Attorney's Office will review the participant's criminal



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history to determine if there have been any additional arrests. If there are no new arrests, all rules and conditions set forth in the Track One have been followed, and if all conditions are satisfied, the criminal case will be dismissed. After dismissal, pursuant to Articles 55.01-55.03 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and Chapter 124 of the Texas Government Code, the Veteran may seek expunction of the charge from his/her criminal record one year after completion of the Track One Veteran's Treatment Court Program, however, the Comal County Criminal District Attorney's Office will retain a copy of their records. Counsel for the Veteran may seek, may, but is not entitled to an expunction prior to the one year requirement by contacting the District Attorney's office. The District Attorney's Office may approve or deny said early request.

Track Two applies when a Veteran is placed on a term of Community Supervision pursuant to Chapters 124 and 42A of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and completion of the VTC is ordered as a condition of community supervision. This applies to both standard probation and deferred adjudication probation. A Veteran who successfully completes their period of community supervision and the VTC program, may seek an Order of Non-Disclosure for the offense on their criminal record as delineated in Chapter 411 of the Texas Government Code. The eligibility requirements may differ depending on whether the defendant served a period of straight probation versus deferred adjudication probation. Please refer to the applicable provisions in Chapters 124 and/or 411 for further guidance.

The Veteran's Treatment Court is also able to assist in covering the cost of the expunction or non-disclosure, including aid from the defense attorneys participating in the Court in verifying eligibility, drafting the applicable petition, and filing the proposed Order Expunging Records or Order of Non-disclosure.

The program phase schedule for all VTC participants is as follows:

Phase	Weeks in Phase	Court Review
Phase I: Orientation and Stabilization	8 weeks minimum	Every 2 weeks
Phase II: Intensive Treatment	16 weeks minimum	Every 2 weeks
Phase III: Recovery Skills Development	16 weeks minimum	Every 3 weeks
Phase IV: Practical Application	12 weeks minimum	Every 4 weeks
Community Transition	24 weeks maximum	To be determined

Phase Advancement and Promotion

In order to advance to the next phase, you have the primary responsibility of completing all phase requirements in collaboration with treatment and supervision, paying the required fees according to the payment schedule, and requesting permission to phase up. The time it will take to complete VTC depends upon your progress through the phases. If you do not complete all of the components of a phase, you will spend more time in that phase. Each phase will be specifically tailored to you, but all participants will have the same basic components.



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To be considered for phase advancement, you must submit a request in writing to the VTC Team. These form requests can be found in the appendix of this Participant Handbook. The Phase Advancement Requests consist of the Request for Advancement and the Phase Responsibility Contract for the following phase. The Team will review progress, sanctions, completion of required conditions, and verify that you have met the treatment and financial requirements as well as sufficient personal progression to advance to the next phase. The final decision on phase advancement is made by the Judge after considering the input of the Team. Merely showing up for the required number of court reviews does not guarantee advancement. You must show progress in achieving short term and long term goals while being attentive to your treatment plan.

Once you have been approved for phase advancement, you are encouraged to verbally share your experiences with the court at the time of advancement. This statement is a personal reflection on what you have learned during your current phase, the short term goal(s) you have achieved, the progress you have made toward your long term goal(s), and what you will continue to do to achieve those goal(s).

Phase I: Orientation and Stabilization
(Minimum 8 weeks)

Phase Requirements

- Attend VTC Court Reviews every two weeks or as directed.
- Meet with your probation officer every week and as required
- Meet with your VJO two times a month and as required
- Submit to weekly and/or random Urinalysis (UA)
- Complete a SASSI-3 or a Substance Abuse Evaluation & Assessment
- Create a Goal Achievement Plan (GAP)
- Enroll in and attend treatment as recommended
- Create a schedule and maintain a weekly planner
- Create a personal budget

Advancement Criteria

- Fulfillment of at least one short-term goal
- Substance free (no positive UAs) for 30 consecutive days prior to advancement
- Sanction free for 14 consecutive days prior to advancement
- Employed or enrolled in educational pursuit or actively seeking either
- Secured or actively seeking stable and sober housing



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- Paid or credited by the Judge a minimum of \$150.00 toward the VTC program fee to the Comal County Clerk.

Phase II: Intensive Treatment
(Minimum 16 weeks)

Phase Requirements

- Attend VTC Court Reviews every two weeks or as directed.
- Meet with your probation officer every two weeks and as required
- Meet with your VJO at least once a month and as required
- Submit to weekly and random urinalysis testing.
- Complete required treatment in accordance with recommended level of care
- Attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week
- Attend additional treatment/support sessions as directed
- Review and update your GAP and treatment plans
- Review and update schedule/weekly planner and budget

Advancement Criteria

- Fulfillment of at least a short-term goal
- Progress towards long-term goal(s)
- Substance free (no positive UAs) for 60 consecutive days prior to advancement
- Sanction free for 30 consecutive days prior to advancement
- Demonstrated positive adjustment and attitude to treatment
- Employed or enrolled in educational pursuit
- Stable and sober housing arrangements
- Paid or credited by the Judge a minimum of \$250.00 toward VTC program fee and Probation fee to Comal County Clerk and CSCD. (Total paid now \$400.00)

Phase III: Recovery Skills Development
(Minimum 16 weeks)

Phase Requirements

- Attend VTC Court Reviews every three weeks or as directed.
- Meet with your probation officer every two weeks and as required



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- Meet with your VJO as required
- Submit to weekly and random Urinalysis (UA)
- Complete required treatment in accordance with recommended level of care
- Attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week
- Review and update GAP and treatment plans
- Review and update schedule/weekly planner and budget

Advancement Criteria

- Fulfillment of a long-term goal
- Progress towards long-term goal(s)
- Substance free (no positive UAs) for 120 consecutive days prior to promotion
- Sanction free for 60 consecutive days prior to promotion
- Demonstrated positive adjustment to treatment
- Employed or enrolled in educational pursuit
- Stable and sober housing arrangements
- Paid or credited by the Judge a minimum of \$250.00 toward VTC program fee to CSCD.
(Total paid now \$650.00)

Phase IV: Practical Application
(Minimum 12 weeks)

Phase Requirements

- Attend VTC Court Reviews every four weeks or as directed.
- Meet with your probation officer every two weeks
- Meet with your VJO as required
- Submit to random Urinalysis (UA)
- Complete all required treatment and counseling sessions
- Attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week
- Review and update GAP
- Review and update schedule/weekly planner and budget

Graduation Criteria



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- Fulfillment of a long-term goal
- Substance free (no positive UAs) for 90 consecutive days
- Sanction free for 90 consecutive days
- Demonstrated positive adjustment to treatment
- Employed or enrolled in educational pursuit
- Stable and sober housing arrangements
- Community Transition Plan approved
- Paid or credited by the Judge a minimum of \$100.00 toward VTC program fee to CSCD.
(Total paid now \$750.00)

Graduation

Once all requirements for VTC have been met, including payments, treatment, and being substance-free, you will graduate from VTC with a sense of pride knowing that you have completed a rigorous program to enable yourself to make healthy decisions in your life. You will have achieved the goal of remaining substance-free and essentially starting your and your family's lives over again.

At your graduation, you will be recognized by the VTC Team and presented with a token of your success. You will also be given the opportunity to speak to the other participants about your journey and what you've experienced and learned throughout the course of the program.

After graduation, you will be required to maintain some level of involvement with VTC for a period of time up to six months. This Community Transition period will be structured for each participant on an individual basis with the main goal of keeping your life headed in the right direction. During this time, you are encouraged to support the participants still going through the phases and attend court meetings to share your story. You also have the option to apply to be a Veteran Mentor.

Graduation Ceremonies

All current participating Veterans are required to attend all Graduation ceremonies. Graduations are held at 1:30 PM in the Court Room. While attendance is mandatory, Graduations do not count as a regularly scheduled court appearance. Therefore, scheduling may require you to attend consecutive weeks in order to meet the requirements of the phase you are currently in.

Community Transition

(Maximum 24 weeks)

Requirements

- Comply with Community Transition Plan (to be developed individually for each veteran and approved by Probation, and Judge)
- Attend a minimum of one mutual support meeting per week



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- Check in with your probation officer once each month
- Submit to random Urinalysis (UA)
- Maintain stable and sober housing and employment
- Abide by all laws and stay out of trouble

Conclusion of VTC

Once you have successfully completed the Community Transition period, you will be done with all requirements of VTC. If you were on Track One, your case will be reviewed as described above and is eligible for dismissal. After dismissal, you may seek an expunction of the arrest from your criminal record as provided by Articles 55.01-55.03 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and Chapter 124 of the Texas Government Code, one year from the date of completion of the Track One Veteran's Treatment Court, however, the Comal County Criminal District Attorney's Office will retain a copy of their records. Counsel for the Veteran may seek, but the Veteran is not entitled to an expunction prior to the one year requirement by contacting the District Attorney's office. The District Attorney's Office may approve or deny said early request. The VTC Defense Attorney will assist in this process. If you were on Track Two you may seek an Order of Non-Disclosure of criminal history information as provided by Chapter 411 of the Texas Government Code.

Incentives and Sanctions

VTC provides incentives to encourage your progress. Incentives maybe received for excellent participation, clean holiday time, a new job, college attendance, driver's license reinstatement, etc. Incentives are given to recognize successes you have achieved in the VTC program.

If you fail to comply with the Veterans Treatment Court Program rules, you may be sanctioned. Sanctions are progressive and become stiffer for repeat violations. In higher phases, the expectation is that you will not have any sanctions, therefore, the sanctions imposed may be stiffer than for lower phases. Sanctions are individualized to your situation and should not be compared against sanctions given to other VTC participants.

Incentives include:

- Verbal recognition
- Decreased supervision
- Awards/Certificates
- Gift Cards
- Any other incentive deemed appropriate for the participant's positive actions

Sanctions include:

- Verbal admonishment
- Increased supervision
- Written assignments
- Community service hours



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- Jail commitment
- Any other sanction deemed appropriate for the participant's actions or lack thereof

Termination

Warrants, new arrests, or noncompliance could result in you being terminated from the Veterans Treatment Court Program and sentenced on your pending charge(s). The veteran's Statement of the Offense contained within their VTC application MAY be used against them for purposes of impeachment if terminated from the VTC program.

Noncompliance violations which could result in termination include consistently missing drug tests or testing positive, missing treatment or supervision appointments, repeatedly breaking the program rules, and violence or threats of violence directed at other participants, treatment staff, or other VTC team members. Driving while your license is invalid may also result in your termination from the VTC Program



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Receipt and Review of Participant Handbook

Name: _____ Cause No.: _____

I, _____, acknowledge the receipt of the Comal County Veterans Treatment Court Participant Handbook. By my signature below, I attest that I have been provided with a copy of the Participant Handbook and that I have reviewed it prior to agreeing to participate in the Veterans Treatment Court. Furthermore, I acknowledge that I have been made aware of the Veterans Treatment Court program rules and my responsibilities.

Participant Signature

Participant Printed Name

Date

Defense Attorney Signature



Appendix



Contacts

VTC Court Coordinator – Brad Ramey(830) 221-1122

Comal County Criminal District Attorney’s Office(830) 221-1300

Comal County Adult Probation (CSCD) – Storri Valero(830) 221-1160

Veteran Justice Outreach Specialist – Stacey Adams(210) 852-6843

Audie L. Murphy Memorial VA Hospital(210) 617-5300

San Antonio NE Vet Center(210) 650-0422

San Antonio NW Vet Center(210) 688-0606

Austin Vet Center(512) 416-1314

New Braunfels Veterans Health Care System Outpatient Clinic(830) 643-0717

Hill Country MVPN Coordinator – Stephen Stavish(908) 356-2601

Hill Country MHDD.....(830) 620-6221

Comal County Veterans Service Office(830) 221-1170

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Comal #163(830) 624-1949

Defense Attorneys

Courtney Miller(830) 214-2050

Brooke Rudeloff(830) 282-9138

Amber Macias(210) 712-5130

Aaron Seymour(830) 832-4570

Texas Veterans Commission Regional Outreach Coordinator – Joe Ramirez(210) 582-1647

Texas Workforce Commission – Joel Hart(830) 629-2010

Recovery Healthcare (SCRAM).....(210) 229-1495

Smart Start (Interlock, portable device)(800) 831-3299

Mobile Crisis Outreach Team Hotline(877) 466-0660

Veterans Crisis Hotline (800) 273-8255, press 1 OR text to 838255



Phase Responsibility Contract – Phase I

I, the undersigned Veterans Treatment Court Participant, acknowledge that *in addition to complying with my Veterans Treatment Court Performance Contract, and Supervision Rules*, I will complete the following minimum Phase I Program Requirements **before I am permitted to advance to Phase II:**

1. I will attend VTC court sessions as directed and meet with my probation officer each week.
2. I will attend all treatment and counseling sessions with my assigned treatment provider as directed.
3. I will create a Goal Achievement Plan (GAP).
4. I will achieve at least one short-term goal.
5. I will create a schedule and maintain a weekly planner.
6. I will create a personal budget with a savings plan.
7. I will promptly submit to drug or alcohol testing upon request of the VTC team.
8. I will only take over-the-counter medication as listed on the “Approved Over-the-Counter Medications” list, provided in the VTC Handbook. I will have all other medications approved by my treatment provider. I will ensure my treatment provider or prescribing physician knows that I am participating in a treatment court program and ask them to be cognizant of the medications prescribed.
9. I will take a Medical Release Form to any dental, medical, or psychiatric provider and turn in the completed original to the VTC at my next court date.
10. I will pay \$150.00 towards my VTC program fee.
11. I will remain in Phase I until all milestones have been met. I must be sanction-free for at least 14 consecutive days, substance-free for at least 30 consecutive days, and have been in Phase I for a minimum of 8 weeks prior to promotion to Phase II.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

DATE



REQUEST FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PHASE II

I, _____, hereby request that I be promoted to the next phase of the Veterans Treatment Court. In support of my request, I affirm that I have completed all of the requirements of my current phase as shown below.

Participant Signature

Date

Phase Progress Report – Phase I

1. I attended VTC court sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

2. I met with my probation officer and VJO as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

3. I am attending the following treatment/counseling programs: _____

4. I attended all treatment and counseling sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

5. I created a Goal Achievement Plan and my current goals are:
 - a. Short term: _____
 - b. Short term: _____
 - c. Long term: _____
 - d. Long term: _____
6. I achieved the following short-term goal: _____

7. I created and maintained a schedule, a weekly planner, and a budget
8. I have not missed a drug/alcohol test or had a positive result for 14 days; the dates of any positive or missed tests are: _____
9. I have not been sanctioned for any reason for 14 days; the dates of any sanctions are: _____

10. I am currently working or going to school at: _____;
if not, the reason is: _____
11. I have paid or been credited \$150 towards my VTC program fee to the Comal County Clerk.



Phase Responsibility Contract – Phase II

I, the undersigned Veterans Treatment Court Participant, acknowledge *that in addition to complying with my Veterans Treatment Court Performance Contract and Supervision Rules*, I will complete the following minimum Phase II Program Requirements **before I am permitted to promote to Phase III:**

1. I will attend VTC court sessions every two weeks or as directed and meet with my probation officer every two weeks.
2. I will attend all treatment and counseling sessions with my assigned treatment provider as directed.
3. I will attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week.
4. I will achieve at least one short-term goal and make progress toward my long-term goals.
5. I will maintain a schedule and continue to maintain a weekly planner.
6. I will conform to my personal budget.
7. I will be employed or enrolled in an approved educational program.
8. I will promptly submit to drug or alcohol testing upon request of the VTC team.
9. I will only take over-the-counter medication as listed on the “Approved Over-the-Counter Medications” list, provided in the VTC Handbook. I will have all other medications approved by my treatment provider.
10. I will take a Medical Release Form to any dental, medical, or psychiatric provider and turn in the completed original to the VTC at my next court date.
11. I will pay \$250.00 towards my VTC program fee (\$75 to the Comal County Clerk and \$175 to CSCD).
12. I will remain in Phase II until all milestones have been met. I must be sanction-free for at least 30 consecutive days, substance-free for at least 60 consecutive days, and have been in Phase II for a minimum of 16 weeks prior to promotion to Phase III.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

DATE



REQUEST FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PHASE III

I, _____, hereby request that I be promoted to the next phase of the Veterans Treatment Court. In support of my request, I affirm that I have completed all of the requirements of my current phase as shown below.

 Participant Signature

 Date

Phase Progress Report – Phase II

1. I attended VTC court sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

2. I met with my probation officer and VJO as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is:

3. I am attending the following treatment/counseling programs: _____

4. I attended all treatment and counseling sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

5. I attended the following two mutual support meetings each week:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. I achieved the following short-term goal: _____

7. The progress I have made toward a long-term goal is: _____

8. I have not missed a drug/alcohol test or had a positive result for 30 days; the dates of any positive or missed tests are: _____
9. I have not been sanctioned for any reason for 14 days; the dates of any sanctions are:

10. I am currently working or going to school at: _____;
 if not, the reason is: _____
11. I have maintained stable and sober housing
12. I have paid or been credited \$250 towards my VTC program fee (\$400 total)



Phase Responsibility Contract – Phase III

I, the undersigned Veterans Treatment Court Participant, acknowledge *that in addition to complying with my Veterans Treatment Court Performance Contract, and Supervision Rules*, I will complete the following minimum Phase III Program Requirements **before I am permitted to promote to Phase IV:**

1. I will attend VTC court sessions every three weeks or as directed and meet with my probation officer every two weeks.
2. I will attend all treatment and counseling sessions with my assigned treatment provider as directed.
3. I will attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week.
4. I will achieve at least one long-term goal and make progress toward a long-term goal.
5. I will maintain a schedule and continue to maintain a weekly planner.
6. I will conform to my personal budget.
7. I will be employed or enrolled in an approved educational program.
8. I will promptly submit to drug or alcohol testing upon request of the VTC team.
9. I will only take over-the-counter medication as listed on the “Approved Over-the-Counter Medications” list, provided in the VTC Handbook. I will have all other medications approved by my treatment provider.
10. I will take a Medical Release Form to any dental, medical, or psychiatric provider and turn in the completed original to the VTC at my next court date.
11. I will pay \$250.00 towards my VTC program fee to CSCD.
12. I will remain in Phase III until all milestones have been met. I must be sanction-free for at least 45 consecutive days, substance-free for at least 90 consecutive days, and have been in Phase III for a minimum of 16 weeks prior to promotion to Phase IV.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

DATE



REQUEST FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PHASE IV

I, _____, hereby request that I be promoted to the next phase of the Veterans Treatment Court. In support of my request, I affirm that I have completed all of the requirements of my current phase as shown below.

 Participant Signature

 Date

Phase Progress Report – Phase III

1. I attended VTC court sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

2. I met with my probation officer and VJO as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

3. I am attending the following treatment/counseling programs: _____

4. I attended all treatment and counseling sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

5. I attended the following two mutual support meetings each week:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. I achieved the following long-term goal: _____

7. I have not missed a drug/alcohol test or had a positive result for 90 days; the dates of any positive or missed tests are: _____
8. I have not been sanctioned for any reason for 45 days; the dates of any sanctions are: _____

9. I am currently working or going to school at: _____; if not, the reason is: _____
10. I have maintained stable and sober housing
11. I have paid or been credited \$250 towards my VTC program fee to CSCD (\$650 total)



Phase Responsibility Contract – Phase IV

I, the undersigned Veterans Treatment Court Participant, acknowledge *that in addition to complying with my Veterans Treatment Court Performance Contract, and Supervision Rules*, I will complete the following minimum Phase IV Program Requirements **before I am permitted to graduate.**

1. I will attend VTC court sessions every four weeks or as directed and meet with my probation officer every two weeks.
2. I will attend all treatment and counseling sessions with my assigned treatment provider as directed.
3. I will attend a minimum of two mutual support meetings per week.
4. I will achieve a long-term goal.
5. I will maintain a schedule and continue to maintain a weekly planner.
6. I will conform to my personal budget.
7. I will be employed or enrolled in an approved educational program.
8. I will promptly submit to drug or alcohol testing upon request of the VTC team.
9. I will only take over-the-counter medication as listed on the “Approved Over-the-Counter Medications” list, provided in the VTC Handbook. I will have all other medications approved by my treatment provider.
10. I will take a Medical Release Form to any dental, medical, or psychiatric provider and turn in the completed original to the VTC at my next court date.
11. I will pay \$100.00 towards my VTC program fee to CSCD.
12. I will remain in Phase IV until all milestones have been met. I must be sanction-free and substance-free for at least ninety (90) consecutive days and have been in Phase IV for a minimum of 12 weeks prior to graduation.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

DATE



Phase Progress Report – Phase IV

1. I attended VTC court sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

2. I met with my probation officer and VJO as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is:

3. I am attending the following treatment/counseling programs: _____

4. I attended all treatment and counseling sessions as directed; if I missed a session, the reason is: _____

5. I attended the following two mutual support meetings each week:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. I achieved the following long-term goal: _____

7. I have not missed a drug/alcohol test or had a positive result for 90 days; the dates of any positive or missed tests are: _____
8. I have not been sanctioned for any reason for 90 days; the dates of any sanctions are:

9. I am currently working or going to school at: _____;
if not, the reason is: _____
10. I have maintained stable and sober housing
11. I have paid or been credited my VTC program fee in full (\$750 total)



REQUEST FOR GRADUATION

I, _____, hereby request that I be considered for graduation from the Veterans Treatment Court. In support of my request, I affirm the following are true:

1. I am currently in Phase IV of VTC;
2. I have completed all of the requirements of the Veterans Treatment Court as shown in the attached Phase Progress Reports;
3. I have been substance and sanction free for the required amount of time;
4. I have paid or been credited the \$750 program fee in full;
5. I believe I am ready to graduate.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Signature

Printed Name



**Community Transition Plan
(Exit Plan)**

Name: _____ Cause No.: _____

1. I have ____ months remaining until I am eligible to be discharged from probation.
2. I will attend VTC court sessions as directed.
3. I will meet with my probation officer ____ time(s) per month.
4. I will continue attending the following treatment/counseling programs: _____

5. I will continue attending the following mutual support meetings each week:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
6. I will continue working or going to school and I'm currently employed or enrolled at: _____.
7. I will maintain stable and sober housing.
8. I will submit to random drug and alcohol testing.
9. I will abide by all laws and rules of VTC.
10. This Community Transition Plan is effective on _____.

Veteran Signature

Date

Probation Officer

Date

Judge Stephens

Date



Acknowledgment of Sanction

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have
been issued the following sanction by the Veterans Treatment Court: _____

Because of the following issue: _____

I am currently in Phase _____. I understand that I will not be eligible to phase up until I
have been sanction-free for _____ days (P I – 14 d, P II – 30 d, Ph III – 45 d, P IV – 90 d).

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Signature

Printed Name

Judge Stephens



Approved Over-the-Counter Medications

The following medications are approved for VTC participants to take without prior permission. These medications must be taken at the appropriate dosage listed on the drug’s label or a positive urine test could result. Do not take more than the dosage indicated on the label!

If you have any questions, please contact your supervision officer or treatment provider for clarification. Each drug listed below must be taken as listed and without any other additives (i.e. no Tylenol Cold or Tylenol Nighttime).

PAIN (not PM formula)

Acetaminophen 500 mg
Ibuprofen 200-800mg
Aspirin
Excedrin Migraine

JOINT PAIN

Tylenol Arthritis
Ben Gay muscle rub & thermal patches
Icy Hot muscle rub & thermal patches

STOMACH

Mylanta
Milk of Magnesia
Pepto Bismol

ANTACIDS

Zantac
Pepcid Prenatal
Prilosec
Tums/Roloids

VITAMINS

Multivitamins
Vitamins

COUGH/COLD

Delsym (non-alcoholic/pediatric)
Mucinex (not D or DM)

FLU SYMPTOMS
DM)

Theraflu
Alka-Seltzer
Benadryl

ALLERGIES (not D or

Claritin
Allegra



Medical/Dental Medication Form

MEDICAL FACILITY / CLINIC			

PHYSICIAN'S NAME (PLEASE PRINT)			

STREET ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE NUMBER	FAX NUMBER		

This is to inform you that I am currently working an abstinence-based treatment program. **I should not have controlled substances prescribed to me.**

If due to unavoidable extreme circumstances, the use of such medication should be very short term, administered by a second party, monitored closely, and no refills given without a new order. Please make every effort to use high dosage Ibuprofen and like medications for pain control.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have been presented with this form and understand my patient is involved in a treatment program.

SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN

DATE



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Veterans Treatment Court
Participant Handbook

“The small expense of restoring an individual to health and usefulness is returned manifold.”

--- Dr. Charles H. Mayo



Confidentiality Statement and Agreement

I, _____, as a participant, team member, or guest of the Comal County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC), duly recognize my responsibility to the confidentiality of all of the information, data and findings derived as a function of or on behalf of VTC and its activities. Accordingly, I hereby agree that:

1. Any information discussed at a VTC staffing shall remain confidential and will not be revealed or disseminated to anyone who is not a member of the VTC Team;
2. Names, addresses, contact information, and/or other identifying information of program participants shall remain confidential and will not be revealed or disseminated to anyone who is not a member of the VTC Team;
3. Unless the information reasonably relates to the commission of a new or different offense, any information garnered, obtained, or derived as a function of or on behalf of VTC and its activities shall remain confidential and will not be revealed or disseminated to anyone who is not a member of the VTC Team;
4. All information, data, and findings contained in VTC files shall remain confidential and will not be revealed or disseminated to anyone that is not a member of the VTC Team; and
5. It is understood that arrest warrants, supporting affidavits, or other information required by law to be public information or to be maintained for statistical purposes is not confidential.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

This form is intended to comply with requirements of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations governing Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records.



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Consent for Disclosure of Confidential Substance Abuse Information

Participant's Name: _____ Case No.: _____

Notice to Patients pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 2.22

The confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records maintained by this program is protected by federal law and regulations. Generally, the program may not say to a person outside the program that a patient attends the program, or disclose any information identifying a patient as an alcohol or drug abuser unless:

- (1) The patient consents in writing;
- (2) The disclosure is allowed by a court order; or
- (3) The disclosure is made to medical personnel in a medical emergency or to qualified personnel for research, audit or program evaluation.

Violation of federal law and regulations by a program is a crime. Suspected violations may be reported to appropriate authorities in accordance with federal regulations. Federal law and regulations do not protect any information about a crime committed by a patient either at the program or against any person who works for the program or about any threat to commit such crime. Federal laws and regulations do not protect any information about suspected child abuse or neglect from being reported under state law to appropriate state or local authorities.

After consulting with my attorney, I, _____, have read and/or understood the legal requirements regarding Notice to Patients pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 2.22 regarding the disclosure of my substance abuse treatment information and hereby consent to the release of necessary and approved substance abuse treatment information between any and all substance abuse treatment providers/counselors, etc. and the Comal County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC), including its member agencies and departments and their assigned or authorized representatives.

The purpose of and need for this disclosure is to inform VTC of my eligibility and/or acceptability for substance abuse treatment services and my treatment attendance, prognosis, compliance, and progress in accordance with VTC's monitoring criteria. This information may be released through verbal, written or electronic communication.

I understand that this consent will remain in effect and cannot be revoked as long as I remain in VTC.



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I understand that any disclosure made is bound by Part 2 of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which governs the confidentiality of substance abuse patient records and that recipients of the information may re-disclose it only in connection with their official duties.

Date: _____ Signed: _____



Comal County
Veterans Treatment Court
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Non-Discrimination Policy

The Comal County Veterans Treatment Court does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in the delivery of services.

The Comal County Veterans Treatment Court complies with the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations guidelines as noted in 28 CFR 38. This program does not discriminate against participants on the basis of religion or religious belief.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Federal Office for Civil Rights. Complaints may be filed online or by mail, fax, or email.

Office for Civil Rights – Region VI
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Jorge Lozano, Regional Manager
1301 Young Street, Suite 1169
Dallas, TX 75202

(800) 368-1019 Phone
(800) 537-7697 TDD
(214) 767-0432 Fax

OCRComplaint@hhs.gov

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/complaints/index.html>

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