



**LORAIN COUNTY  
FAMILY REUNIFICATION COURT**

**REUNITING FAMILIES ONE RECOVERY AT A TIME  
LORAIN COUNTY DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT**

*Participant Handbook*

Sherry L. Glass, Presiding Judge  
Courtney Porter, Coordinator/Case Manager

Lorain County Court of Common Pleas  
Domestic Relations Division  
225 Court Street – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Elyria, OH 44035

Who is eligible?

- Parents currently involved with LCCS who have children who have been adjudicated abused, neglected and/or dependent (temporary custody or protective supervision)
- Individuals must be assessed as having a DSM-V diagnosis of drug and/or alcohol dependency

What is the purpose?

- To assist parents in maintaining sobriety, while addressing case plan issues
- Allows for intense case management through the corroboration of the team
- To expedite permanency in placement for children whose parents are unable or unwilling to maintain sobriety and comply with Court orders

Is participation in Drug Court voluntary?

- Yes. However, once a participant agrees to begin Family Reunification Court, the program requirements become Court ordered and are implemented as a part of the Lorain County Children Services Case Plan.

Who makes up the Family Drug Court team?

- Judge and Magistrate, Program Coordinator/Case Manager, LCCS Supervisor, individual LCCS caseworkers, treatment service providers, individual counselors, Voices for Children/GAL representative, YWCA case manager, Nord Center therapist, Faith House case manager and any involved service provider representatives.

What are the benefits to joining the Family Drug Court?

- Participants have access to a range of services for substance abuse/dependence
- Case Management services to assist with linkages to local services, such as employment, educational or vocational opportunities, housing assistance, and transportation assistance
- Incentives

How long does participation in Family Drug Court last?

- While this technically depends on the client's progress, the Family Reunification Court program can last up to 18 months...with the goal being between 9 and 12 months, if continuous progress is made. Progression through the Family Drug Court is based upon performance in the treatment plan and compliance with the Family Drug Court phases.  
**Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 6 (D).**

When has a client successfully completed the program?

- When he/she has completed their treatment program, maintained their sobriety and achieved the LCCS case plan objectives
- When the client and his/her children have been reunified
- If the client has been unsuccessful, but their children can be, or are currently in alternative permanent living arrangements

What are the participant's rights and responsibilities? Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 1(D).

- To have fair, consistent treatment to address substance abuse and mental health needs.
- To have regular contact with the LCCS caseworker and/or the Court Coordinator to discuss concerns about programming.
- Completion of their alcohol/drug treatment program, including attendance at sober support activities/groups/meetings
- Cooperation with weekly, random drug testing
- Continuous progress on their LCCS case plan goals
- Comply with sanctions for infractions
- Engage in the sober support community
- Abstain from drug and alcohol use

How does a client get referred to Family Drug Court?

A client can be referred to Family Drug Court at various points during his or her involvement with Lorain County Children Services. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 1(C).**

- A client can be referred by LCCS caseworker at the time of the referral to the Alcohol and Drug Services assessor if an official complaint with the Domestic Relations Court has been made or a dispositional hearing has been held
- Eligibility for Family Drug Court will be determined by all team members once an assessment has been completed and a diagnosis has been made in conjunction with the DSM-V and OhioMHAS standards
- The Judge has the discretion to admit/deny a participant to the program
- Clients who are not Court involved, even if they have been diagnosed with substance dependence, are not eligible for referral to Family Drug Court

Once eligibility for FRC is established, the client is referred to the FRC Coordinator/Case manager at which time the Coordinator/Case Manager will meet with the client to discuss the parameters of the program and to complete all necessary paperwork (Release of Information, Release of Information specific to relations between the Court and LCCS, Contract of Participation, Demographical/Medical Information form, and waivers of participation).

### **Eligibility**

Specific criteria to enter the Family Reunification Court was collaboratively developed, reviewed and agreed upon by all relevant parties at the inception of the program in 2000. However, those criteria will be reviewed periodically by the Advisory Committee. The specialized docket judge has discretion to decide admission into the program. The written legal and clinical eligibility criteria do not create a right to enter the specialized docket. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3 (C).**

## Program Entry

Referrals can be made from Lorain County Children Services directly to the Family Reunification Court Coordinator/Case Manager. Referrals may also come from the primary clinician through Lorain County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Inc., who works in conjunction with the primary LCCS caseworker, for clients who are engaged in both services. A drug/alcohol assessment must result in a diagnosis of chemical dependency. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 4.** Further, potential participants' children have been adjudicated abused, neglected and/or dependent by the Lorain County Domestic Relations Court.

Parental drug/alcohol abuse causes or contributes to approximately 35-55% of all cases of child abuse or neglect. In an effort to address this issue, House Bill 484 (Section 340.15 of the Ohio Revised Code) states "A public children services agency that identifies a child by a risk assessment...as being at imminent risk of being abused or neglected because of an addiction of a parent, guardian, or custodian of the child to a drug of abuse or alcohol shall refer the child's addicted parent, guardian or custodian...to an alcohol and drug addiction program..."

Lorain County Children Services (LCCS) and LCADA are working in collaboration to provide assessments and make referrals to treatment, assist in case management, handle crisis intervention, and case consultation. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 1(C).** LCCS has designated 2 specific caseworkers and a Direct Services Supervisor to work between the Court, LCCS and treatment providers for Family Drug Court clients.

- An individual LCCS caseworker contacts the LCADA designee when concern of drug/alcohol abuse is a factor. The FDC/LCCS Liaison consults with the caseworker, reviewing relevant case notes, documentation, and prior history.
- The LCADA assessor will review the referral information, contact the individual and schedule an intake assessment. To remove any barrier due to transportation or other concerns, the assessment can be conducted at the LCCS office, the individual's home, or the Lorain County Correctional Facility.
- Numerous variations of testing formats are used to conduct the evaluation (listed in the Forms Used category)
- The assessor reviews and evaluates the responses, then makes a diagnosis and recommendations based on DSM-V criteria and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) protocols for determining the necessary levels of care, if any.
- The assessor and/or the FDC/LCCS Liaison informs the caseworker of the diagnosis and specific treatment recommendations
- The client is informed of the recommendation, which then becomes a specific requirement of their LCCS specific case plan.
- All time frames are expedited as much as possible (all referrals to FDC should be made between 30-45 days of obtaining a Substance Use Disorder diagnosis).

Participants are subject to compliance monitoring by the Family Reunification Court team. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 6(E).** Participants are required to comply with office visits with the Program Coordinator/Case Manager, if requested. They are also directed to comply with Lorain County Children Services home visits (both announced and unannounced) as well as compliance with

LCCS Family Team Meetings (scheduled at 6 months, 9 months and 12 months, or as directed by the agency).

Participants considered for the Family Drug Court must meet **clinical criteria** to enter the program. Clients must have a diagnosis of Substance Use Disorder, in accordance with DSM-V criteria and Ohio Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) protocols. The clinical assessment also contains the recommended services the participant is to receive. The specialized docket judge shall have discretion to decide the admission into a specialized docket in accordance with the written eligibility criteria. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 3 (B)**. All chemical dependency, mental health, and other programming assessments shall include available collateral information to ensure accuracy of the assessment. All screenings and assessments for treatment determinations are provided by programs or persons who are appropriately licensed and trained to deliver such services according to the standards of their profession.

Upon acceptance into the Family Reunification Court program, the client will be screened by the Mental Health professional on the treatment team or a designee at the agency, to review for a diagnosis, medication management protocols, the need for further psychological or psychiatric testing and/or any additional referrals or recommendations.

The written legal and clinical eligibility and termination criteria do not create a right to participation and participant may be subject to further screening by the Family Reunification Court treatment team. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3 (C)**.

Acceptance into the Family Reunification Court program is at the discretion of the presiding Judge and based upon, but not limited to, the following considerations: **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3 (B)**.

- Potential participant to meet with the FRC Coordinator or Case Manager to review program guidelines
- Potential participant's history of addiction and prior treatment or interventions if any
- Potential participant's willingness to participate in the program and the level of commitment
- Potential participant's willingness to complete the FRC packet including various releases of information
- Case plan objectives for reunification with children
- Potential participant's agreement to comply with the recommended OhioMHAS certified treatment program.

Once the Judge has determined the participant is a valid candidate for the specialized docket program, the participant will be invited to observe the Court proceedings during a regularly scheduled court docket. The participant will be addressed by the Judge or Magistrate about the program, be given a generalized outline of the program components and the expectations of the program. The participant is advised to schedule an appointment with the Family Reunification Court Coordinator/Case Manager if interested in learning more or signing up for the program. At the time of the meeting, the potential participant is required to sign a release of information form to provide for communication about confidential information, participation and progress in treatment, and compliance with program requirements. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 4**. They are given a program handbook which includes a program description. Clients are explained the guidelines for program compliance and noncompliance, including criteria for termination.

As the client would have already had a substance abuse screening at the time of referral to the program, the client is advised of their referral for mental health counseling. They are scheduled for

an intake assessment on the day of the meeting and/or within the next 2-3 business days. The goal is to have all necessary assessments completed within 14 days of the meeting to accept the client into the program.

The specialized docket promptly assesses individuals and refers them to appropriate services.

**Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 4** Participants are to be placed in appropriate treatment services and programs and will be monitored by the treatment team members (for substance abuse and mental health), as well as the Lorain County Children Services caseworker to monitor compliance with court requirements. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 4 (C).**

Participant will then voluntarily enter the program and is officially ordered into the program. If not done so already, the caseworker from Lorain County Children Services may add the client's participation in the Family Reunification Court program to their case plan and become a part of the recommended programming by Lorain County Children Services. Participant will then be assigned a start date and attend their first status review hearing.

### **Summary of Treatment and Programming Requirements**

#### Services and programs:

- Intensive Outpatient Treatment
- In-patient Residential Treatment
- Aftercare
- Sober support functions/meetings/activities (3-4 times per week)
- Mental Health assessment and/or ongoing treatment
- Family and/or Individual counseling
- Parenting and Family Counseling through the Pregnant/Postpartum Women's program
- The Key (in-patient drug treatment facility for women)
- Timothy House (LCADA's men's day treatment program)
- Lorain County Department of Job and Family Services
- Genesis House Battered Women's Shelter
- Help Me Grow/Early Intervention Programs

#### Ancillary services:

- Domestic Violence Counseling
- Parenting supports (Parents as Teachers, Triple P Parenting, Parent Mentoring)
- GED classes
- Job Training programs
- Department of Job and Family Services (PRC program)
- YWCA (residential, parenting programs and case management)
- Urban Minority Alcoholism/Drug Abuse Outreach Program -UMADAOP
- Babies First program
- Early Intervention programs (Help Me Grow, HeadStart)
- Medication monitoring and Medication Assisted Treatment
- Transportation
- Housing referrals (Coordinated Entry, Recovery Housing, Faith House- Transitional Living)

## Treatment Team

The Family Reunification Court treatment team is chaired by the Judge, and they attend weekly treatment team meetings. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)**. The treatment team is responsible for the daily operations of the specialized docket. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 Recommended Practice (B)**. Treatment team members agree to serve on the team for a minimum of one year. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 Recommended Practice (C)**. If the team member should not be available to serve for their term, their represented agency agrees to send someone in their place with the same recommended time commitment.

### Lorain County Domestic Relations Court

- **Sherry L. Glass (Presiding Judge)** is responsible for attending and presiding over all treatment team meetings, responsible for engaging in meaningful discussions with all participants, making administrative decisions related to the ongoing participation in the program, referring client for necessary services, and overseeing the case in regard to the safety and wellbeing of the children involved. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)**. The Judge has the discretion to decide the admission into and/or termination from the program in accordance with the written legal and clinical criteria for the program. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 3 (B)**.

- **Charlita Anderson-White (Magistrate)** is responsible for attending all treatment team meetings and conducting said meetings when the Judge is unavailable, responsible for engaging in meaningful discussions with all participants and referring client for necessary services. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)**.

is responsible for conducting the legal eligibility screening, preparing all written weekly status reports when the Case Manager is unable to do so, collects and maintains statistical information and other confidential records including drug testing information and results, participation in all treatment meetings, conduct all pre-team meetings, provide minimal case coordination with other team members, and provide limited transportation for participants to MH and AoD appointments. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)(6)**.

- **Courtney Porter (Program Coordinator/Case Manager)** is responsible for conducting the legal eligibility screening, preparing all written weekly status reports when the Case Manager is unable to do so, collects and maintains statistical information and other confidential records including drug testing information and results, participation in all treatment meetings, conduct all pre-team meetings, provide minimal case coordination with other team members, and provide limited transportation for participants to MH and AoD appointments. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)(6)**. She is also responsible for conducting field drug screens, completing intake paperwork with prospective participants, preparing all written weekly status reports, collects confidential records including drug testing information and results, participation in all treatment meetings, conduct all pre-team meetings, provide case coordination with other team members, and provide transportation for participants to MH and AoD appointments. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)(7)**.

### Lorain County Children Services

- **Caseworkers to FRC** is responsible for attending all pre-team meetings, all treatment team meetings, acting as a liaison between the Family Reunification Court and Lorain County Children Services. Ensures the well being of the children and assists the treatment team with monitoring

parents' compliance with the child protection case plan. Provides reports and recommendations to the treatment team during pre-team meetings and treatment team meeting and participates in discussions regarding incentives, sanctions, phase advancement, successful completion, and termination. Notifies the treatment team and court of any compliance problems on the child protection case plan. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 1 (B)(10).**

Lorain County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services

- **Julie Strinka, LSW (Treatment Counselor)** is responsible for providing individual counseling for Family Reunification Court participants through LCADA, for attending all pre-team meetings, all treatment team meetings, acting as a liaison between other LCADA treatment clinicians, sponsors and the Family Drug Court team. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 9 (C).**

Elyria YWCA

- **Minnie Whitten and/or Danielle Siglin** is responsible for attending all treatment team meetings, providing case management for participants who are residents of the Elyria YWCA and assessing client referrals from Family Reunification Court for appropriateness for their housing program. They will report weekly on the client's status in their program and advocate for client when necessary.

Voices for Children (Guardian Ad Litem program)

- **Traci Stamco (GAL training coordinator)** is responsible for attending all treatment meetings, providing information from the GAL assigned to the case (if any) and relaying information to the Court about compliance with parenting referrals, attendance at family meetings and visitation with the children.

Faith House

- **Kara Thomas, LSW (Housing case manager)** is responsible for attending all treatment team meetings, providing case management for participants who are residents of the Faith House program and assessing client referrals from Family Drug Court for appropriateness for their housing program.

Nord Center

- **Rachel Bartlett, MA (MH treatment counselor)** is responsible for providing individual counseling for Family Reunification Court participants through the Nord Center, for attending all treatment team meetings, making internal referrals for medication management when necessary and coordinating said treatment with all parties involved. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 9 (C).**

Lorain County Prosecutor's Office

- **Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for LCCS- Nikki Dertouzos, JD-** The Family Reunification Court incorporates a non-adversarial approach **Sup.R.,Appx. I, Std. 2(A) and (B)**, while recognizing the distinct role of the prosecutor in pursuing justice and protecting public safety and victim's rights **Sup.R.,Appx. I, Std. 2(A)**. The designated APA will review referrals along with the treatment team, will attend treatment team meetings and court hearings.

Lorain County Bar Association

- **Defense Counsel, Attorney Anita Lambert** - The Family Reunification Court incorporates a non-adversarial approach **Sup.R.,Appx. I, Std. 2(A) and (B)**, while recognizing the distinct role of



defense counsel in preserving the constitutional rights of the program participant **Sup.R.,Appx. I, Std. 2(B)**. Defense Counsel is invited to attend treatment team meetings **Sup.R.,Appx. I, Std. 2(C)**. Counsel will: Review possible sanctions, Explains the circumstances that may lead to termination; and explains the effect that termination from the specialized docket may have on the participant's case.

The Family Reunification Court program works with the Lorain County Prosecutor's Office and the Lorain County Bar Association attorneys to advise them of the Family Reunification Court model and keep them apprised of any changes to the program that would affect court filings or attorney involvement. The Prosecutor's Office has assigned specific Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys to handle Children Services matters and those assigned are aware of the program and its benefits to participants.

The Lorain County Bar Association attorneys have the role of representing clients in official court proceedings and filings related to both Family/Domestic Relations Court matters and Criminal matters. While there are no prerequisites that Family Reunification Court participants have criminal filings in conjunction with any Domestic proceedings filed by Lorain County Children Services, we do on occasion have participants who have criminal involvement. Attorneys have the role of preserving the constitutional rights of anyone charged with an offense. In relation to the Family Reunification Court, attorneys have sought the assistance of the specialized docket in aiding their clients maintain or regain custody of their children. Attorneys have advocated for their clients to participate. The participant has the right to request that Defense Counsel be present for the portion of the treatment team meeting concerning the participant. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 2 (C)**.

### **Treatment Team Meetings and Status Review Hearings**

The treatment team meets on Wednesday at 1:15 p.m. in the Judge's courtroom for discussion about current participants and any pending referrals to the program. The status hearings begin at 2:00 p.m. on the same day. The Coordinator/Case Manager, the Substance Abuse counselor and the Children Services representatives meet as a pre-team meeting on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m.

The treatment team engages in ongoing communication, including frequent exchange of timely and accurate information about a participant's overall performance. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 6(D)**. Team members may communicate in person, via email, telephone, or other electronic communication. Team members agree to sign a confidentiality agreement to keep information secure and confidential.

Participants sign a participant agreement and release of information which indicate that the treatment team will be communicating about their case on a regular basis and how that information may be transmitted.

The Judge has ongoing judicial interaction with each participant and engages in meaningful discussion with the participants during status hearings. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 7 (A)**. Participants will appear before the Judge on a weekly basis during the initial phase of the program. Thereafter, the participant will regularly appear before the Judge to review the participant's ongoing progress through the docket. The participant's progression through the specialized docket is based upon the

participant's performance in the treatment plan and compliance with the specialized docket. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 6(D).**

The participant may be required to bring writing assignments or requested documents (for employment, children's appointments, medication changes, etc) to Court at their status review hearings. Should a participant fail to show for a status review hearing with no prior call, the Court has the discretion to issue an arrest warrant or issue other sanctions as deemed appropriate by the treatment team and the Judge.

### **Phases**

Program phases are the steps in which a participant is measured towards compliance with the case plan. Each participant is given a handout of the program phases and how progression through the program works. Phases are the steps in which a participant's performance and progress through the specialized docket are monitored. Participants are required to appear weekly in the initial phase of the program. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 7(B).**

Phase advancement is not solely based on preset timelines. Program participants are advanced weekly through the phases when the treatment team discusses their sobriety, mental health status, progress in treatment and compliance with all court orders. The time between status review hearings is increased or decreased based upon compliance with treatment protocols and observed progress. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 7(C).**

## Phase 1 –Stability phase

### GOAL:

Participant will be engaged in treatment and must show a commitment to the assessment process and a willingness to engage in treatment as recommended. The Family Reunification Court (FRC) team will identify needs and make appropriate referrals to meet those needs.

### EXPECTATIONS:

#### **Treatment: (Drug testing, sober supports, case management)**

- Comply with random drug screens
- Attend sober supports/sober support activities weekly (and provide verification)
- Obtain Sober Mentor/Sponsor and obtain additional numbers for sober support contacts
- Identify a home group/activity for Recovery
- Compliance with Substance Use Treatment plan (comply with assessment & identify treatment needs through case management. **If in residential**, write your goodbye letter, begin and complete Step 1, complete Steps 2 and 3, present your Autobiography, 20 Harmfuls, Triggers and the Relapse Prevention- 7 day plan. **If in Day Tx**, you'll have completed your goodbye letter to your drug, Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and present a Petition to Move Forward. **If in IOP**, you'll have completed Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and completed a Relapse Prevention plan.)
- Attain sobriety and reduce risk
- Attend and cooperate with all individual clinical care sessions
- Avoid all mood altering substances (opting for non-narcotic prescriptions)

#### **LCCS case plan: (Parenting, Employment/Education, Housing, etc.)**

- Compliance with LCCS case plan (actively engaged in treatment based on AOD recommendations; compliance with random drug screens at LCCS request and provider request; signing releases of information for all providers; providing CW with relative information when appropriate; following visitation schedule if appropriate)
- Submit housing applications, if necessary and/or follow through with Coordinated Entry
- Attend all doctor/counseling/therapeutic appointments, unless excused by FRC Coordinator and/or the FRC Case Manager
- Begin to model appropriate behavior.

#### **Mental Health/Medical:**

- Participant will complete a Mental Health Diagnostic Evaluation with Nord Center, develop a treatment plan and identify any barriers to progress in mental health, sobriety and parenting. Client will be referred to Psychiatrist if determined necessary. Participant will complete assignments with reminders and prompts.
- Take medications, if any, as prescribed
- FDC Case Manager will assist in making appointments and/or transporting to any necessary appointments.

#### **Legal/Case Management Needs/Additional programming/Other:**

- Resolve criminal matters, warrants; no new arrests

- Client may not miss scheduled AoD, LCCS, Mental Health/NORD or Court directed appointments, unless excused by FDC Coordinator and/or the FDC Case Manager
- Weekly court review hearings with the Judge

## **Phase 2 – Preparation**

### GOAL:

Begin growth & development (i.e. internalizing treatment needs) and utilize recovery tools on regular basis.

### EXPECTATIONS:

#### **Treatment: (Drug testing, sober supports, case management)**

- Submit to random drug screens
- Comply with the Substance Use treatment plan (**If in residential**, write your goodbye letter, begin and complete Step 1, complete Steps 2 and 3, present your Autobiography, 20 Harmfuls, Triggers and the Relapse Prevention- 7 day plan. **If in Day Tx**, you'll have completed your goodbye letter to your drug, Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and present a Petition to Move Forward. **If in IOP**, you'll have completed Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and completed a Relapse Prevention plan.)
- Develop positive peer relationships and utilize sober supports in daily activities
- Continue to model appropriate behavior.
- Have regular contact with Sober Mentor/Sponsor (3x/week or as indicated by the sponsor)
- Participant will identify their own sober support attendance plan including additional meetings as back-up if unable to get to intended meetings
- Attend and cooperate with all individual clinical care sessions
- Avoid all mood altering substances (opting for non-narcotic prescriptions)

#### **LCCS case plan: (Parenting, Employment/Education, Housing, etc.)**

- Compliance with school/work/GED, if part of case plan
- Submit employment applications (a minimum of 5 per week) if necessary
- Comply with LCCS case plan requirements (begin to identify stable source of income/employment; apply for benefits; maintaining basic needs of children; maintain a safe home environment for children based on CW observation during HV's; regular attendance and increased progress during visitation based on CW feedback; attendance at all recommended appointments for client and/or children)
- Client may not miss scheduled A/D, LCCS, Nord or Court directed appointments, unless excused by FRC Coordinator and/or the FRC Case Manager

#### **Mental Health/Medical:**

- Take medications, if any, as prescribed
- Participant will complete assignments without prompts from professionals
- Participant will identify and recognize individual barriers to progress, the symptoms of increased stress, anxiety and depression, and will identify strategies/tools to reduce these symptoms with prompting. Client will complete assignments with minimal reminders and prompts. If referred to Psychiatry, client will comply with the referral process and any recommendations of the assessor.

**Legal/Case Management Needs/Additional programming/Other:**

- Resolve criminal matters, warrants; no new arrests
- Attend all court review hearings with Judge, unless excused, every 1-2 weeks

**Phase 3 - Implementation**

GOAL:

Participant will demonstrate independent use of recovery tools and demonstrate the ability to care for the needs of his/her child(ren) on a regular basis.

EXPECTATIONS:

**Treatment: (Drug testing, sober supports, case management)**

- Compliance with LCADA treatment plan (Work on relapse prevention, including identifying and acknowledging triggers, as well as completion of treatment assignments as directed by clinician) **If in Day Tx**, you'll have completed your goodbye letter, Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and present a Petition to Move Forward. **If in IOP**, you'll have completed Steps 1, 2, and 3, as well as working on treatment assignments as directed by staff, and completed a Relapse Prevention plan.)
- Proof of participation in sober support activities
- Client to have regular contact with their sponsor (2-4 times per week) and comply with any other directive of their sponsor
- Attend and cooperate with all clinical care sessions (Attending AlAnon if recommended by treatment provider)
- Avoid all mood altering substances (opting for non-narcotic prescriptions)

**LCCS case plan: (Parenting, Employment/Education, Housing, etc.)**

- Seek, obtain, or maintain employment (if eligible)
- Submit employment applications (a minimum of 5 per week) if necessary
- Attend review hearings with Judge every 2-3 weeks, as scheduled and unless excused
- Comply with LCCS case plan requirements (be able to identify safe/appropriate housing options; identify any family/3<sup>rd</sup> parties as possible alternative housing options; demonstrate ability to meet financial needs of children; increase in visitation; be able to identify independent plan for transportation for self/children; progress noted from self and childrens' providers – medical/educational/MH; plan for child care)
- Maintain sobriety and utilize all sober supports
- Use recovery tools and case plan suggestions on a regular basis
- Client may not miss scheduled A/D, LCCS, Nord or Court directed appointments, unless excused by FRC Coordinator or FRC Case Manager

**Mental Health/Medical:**

- Participant will recognize symptoms of increased stress, anxiety and depression, use strategies/tools to reduce these symptoms with reduced prompting, begin to develop plan for long term, independent management of personal mental health and have increased awareness of their symptoms, as well as completing all assignments without reminders and prompts
- Take medications, if any, as prescribed

**Legal/Case Management Needs/Additional programming/Other:**

- Attend any necessary program components (including, but not limited to MH treatment, individual case management, DV groups, GED classes, etc.)
- Resolve criminal matters, warrants; no new arrests
- Schedule and attend all necessary appointments and maintain contact with FDC Case Manager regarding follow up appointments and transportation barriers.

#### **Phase 4 – Transition**

##### GOAL:

Participant will maintain ongoing stability in their recovery program and will have met the needs of their child(ren) for purposes of reunification and/or stabilization of the family unit.

##### EXPECTATIONS:

##### **Treatment: (Drug testing, sober supports, case management)**

- Attend and cooperate with all clinical care sessions
- Avoid all mood altering substances (opting for non-narcotic prescriptions)
- Participation in sober support activities and actively engage with Sober Mentor/Sponsor
- Comply with Substance Use treatment plan (Complete documentation of 30 days of abstinence after completing the prevention plan, complete treatment assignments as directed and look at moving to a less intensive level of care)
- Maintain sobriety and safety plan; Attending AlAnon if recommended by treatment provider
- Engage in positive peer and group activities in the sober support community
- Active participation in treatment planning, job development, or employment
- Advancement to next level of AoD programming

##### **LCCS case plan: (Parenting, Employment/Education, Housing, etc.)**

- Attend court review hearings with Judge every 3-5 weeks, as scheduled
- Compliant with all LCCS case plan requirements (housing secured; income/employment secured and verified; extended visitation has been occurring; parent demonstrates increased knowledge of age-appropriate parenting skills based on CW report)
- Attend all appointments unless excused by FRC Coordinator or the FRC Case Manager
- Comply with random drug testing
- Use recovery tools and treatment team suggestions on a regular basis
- Actively engage with child(ren) and participate in family-friendly activities

##### **Mental Health/Medical:**

- Take all medications, if any, as prescribed
- In regards to individual mental health component, participant will recognize symptoms of increased stress, anxiety and depression, use strategies/tools to reduce these symptoms with minimal prompting, formalize a plan to manage mental health independently, and complete assignments without reminders and prompts

##### **Legal/Case Management Needs/Additional programming/Other:**

- Scheduling and attending all medical appointments without oversight from the FRC team
- Resolve criminal matters, warrants; no new arrests
- Client may not miss scheduled A/D, LCCS, Nord or Court directed appointments, unless excused by FDC Coordinator or the FDC Case Manager

## **Phase 5 – Maintaining**

### GOAL:

Participant will have completed all Family Drug Court (FDC) goals and expectations.

### EXPECTATIONS:

#### **Treatment: (Drug testing, sober supports, case management)**

- Engaging in positive peer and sober support activities
- Successful completion of Aftercare programming through AoD treatment provider
- Compliance with Substance Use treatment plan (having met 2 or more of the following: obtained safe and stable housing, adequate employment or having educational needs met, no new arrests, utilizing functional recovery support network, improved family relationships and implementation of relapse prevention strategies)
- No positive drug screens in the past 4 months

#### **LCCS case plan: (Parenting, Employment/Education, Housing, etc.)**

- Compliance with the LCCS case plan requirements (successful completion of AOD treatment; successful completion of other services – MH/DV – reunification plan to be executed; legal issues addressed; negative drug screens; living in sober housing; having maintained children in the home; financial stability/employment)
- Attend review hearings with Judge every 5-8 weeks as requested unless excused
- Participation in graduation ceremony
- Maintain employment or active involvement in GED/educational programming
- Secure and maintain stable housing
- Financially meeting the needs of the child(ren)
- Client may not miss scheduled A/D, LCCS, Nord or Court directed appointments, unless excused by FRC Coordinator or the FRC Case Manager

#### **Mental Health/Medical:**

- Participant will be able to recognize symptoms of increased stress, anxiety and depression, regularly use strategies/tools to reduce impact of stress without prompting, begin to use independent mental health plan and complete assignments without reminders and prompts

#### **Legal/Case Management Needs/Additional programming/Other:**

- Resolve criminal matters, warrants; no new arrests

## Rewards/Incentives

Immediate, graduated, and individualized incentives govern the responses of a specialized docket to the participant's compliance. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 10.** Possible incentives given are:

- Assistance with finding jobs, locating community resources for payment of debts to utility companies, finding child care, etc.
- Reduction in frequency of Family Reunification Court attendance
- Financial assistance (when available through grants) for rent/deposit, UBER, utilities, BMV reinstatement fees and obtaining state documents (Birth Certificate/SS card/ODL/State ID)
- Encouragement and praise from the judge
- Reducing supervision contacts
- Increasing or expanding privileges
- Encouragement to increase participation in positive activities the participant finds pleasurable, such as writing, art work, or other positive hobbies
- Gifts of inspirational items, including books, pictures, and framed quotes
- Gift cards for restaurants, movie theaters, recreational activities, or personal care services
- Gifts of small personal care items, hobby or pet supplies, plants or small household items
- Graduation from the program **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 10 Recommended Practice (C) (1-14)**

## Sanctions

Immediate, graduated, and individualized sanctions govern specialized docket responses to the participant's noncompliance. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 10.** Graduated sanctions are used to help the participant conform behavior to program requirements. Sanctions are crafted in an individualized and creative manner, as well as in a progressive manner based on the infraction. Sanctions are issued when there is non-compliance with both program protocol and the treatment plan. Sanctions are a deterrent to negative behavior, as well as encouragement for future compliance.

- Warnings and admonishment from the judge
- Demotion to an earlier specialized docket phase
- Incarceration at the Lorain County Jail
- Removal of privileges (i.e. No visitors during in-patient stay, 24 hour supervision and/or House arrest)
- Decrease or cancellation of visitation/contact with children (no visitation or supervised visitation)
- Increase in AA/NA meetings
- Increase contact with Coordinator/Case Manager (i.e. daily)
- Move from outpatient to inpatient status
- More frequent drug/alcohol screens
- Resumption of weekly Family Reunification Court attendance
- Refusing specific requests, such as permission to travel



- Denying additional or expanded privileges or rescinding privileges previously granted
- Individualized sanctions, such as writing essays, reading books, or performing other activities to reflect upon unacceptable behavior
- Requiring community service or work programs
- Termination from the specialized docket
- Loss of driving privileges

**Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 10; Recommended Practices (D)(1) through (12).**

### **Completion criteria**

In order to meet **completion criteria**, participants must have successfully completed the 5 Phase system of the Family Reunification Court program and have completed all Family Drug Court goals and expectations.

Participants will be provided with the written completion criteria. **Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 3 (A).**

Participants will have also addressed/completed the following: **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 6(E).**

- Successful completion of Aftercare programming through AoD treatment provider
  - Compliance with Substance Use treatment plan (having met 2 or more of the following: obtained safe and stable housing, adequate employment or having educational needs met, no new arrests, utilizing functional recovery support network, improved family relationships and implementation of relapse prevention strategies)
  - No positive drug screens in the past 4-6 months
  - Compliance with the LCCS case plan requirements (successful completion of AOD treatment; successful completion of other services – MH/DV – reunification plan to be executed; legal issues addressed; negative drug screens; living in sober housing; having maintained children in the home; financial stability/employment)
  - Attend review hearings with Judge every 6-8 weeks as requested unless excused
  - Participation in graduation ceremony
  - Maintain employment or active involvement in GED/educational programming
  - Secure and maintain stable housing
  - Financially meeting the needs of the child(ren)
  - In regards to mental health, participant will be able to recognize symptoms of increased stress, anxiety and depression, regularly use strategies/tools to reduce impact of stress without prompting, begin to use independent mental health plan and complete assignments without reminders and prompts
  - Displayed responsibility for his/her behavior and a change in thinking, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Sup.R. Appx. I, Std. 3 (A).**

The judge has discretion to determine when the participant will successfully complete the program. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3 (B).** The process for determining when a participant has successfully completed the program includes:

- How the participant is nominated for successful completion
- Treatment team review of compliant behavior and accomplishments
- Treatment team recommendation
- Judicial decision that participant successfully completed specialized docket
- Award of a certificate
- Graduation ceremony

### **Termination criteria**

Cases may meet **unsuccessful termination criteria** for any reason at the discretion of the Court.

**Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3(A)**. Other possible grounds may include:

- Failure to appear for hearing
- Failure to consistently maintain sobriety
- Failure to comply with treatment plan and make progress in treatment
- Refusal to acknowledge drug/alcohol dependency
- Failure to meet other Case Plan objectives (as outlined by the AoD treatment plan and/or the Lorain County Children Services case plan)

Participants may receive a **neutral discharge** from the Family Reunification Court for reasons that may be out of their control, at the discretion of the Court. Participants who had serious medical or mental health reasons for not being able to complete the program or who had an agreed change in their Lorain County Children Services filing status may be considered as neutral discharges from the program. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3(A)**. The specialized docket judge has discretion in determining termination from the specialized docket. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 3(B)**

### **Substance Monitoring**

Participants in the specialized docket are required to comply with substance use monitoring.

**Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8**.

The Family Reunification Court monitors a participant's substance use by random, frequent, and observed alcohol-and drug-testing protocols. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8 (B)**. Following a "random number generator" assignment for random screens, the participants are called by the Family Reunification Court Coordinator/Case Manager or the Coordinator's designee and advised to be available for a drug screen [either via an instant urine drug screen (UDS) or by reporting to the Lorain County Forensics Lab)]. Participants may also be substance use tested via oral saliva swabs (as directed by the Lorain County Children Services caseworker). If drug testing is conducted by the treatment provider or sober living entity, those results will be provided to the FDC, in a timely manner, for review by the treatment team.

- Drug screens are random. The Court Coordinator/Case Manager or a designee calls the participant randomly and advises them to be available to submit to a sample within 1-2 hours of being called. Clients are either tested "out in the field" or are advised to report to

the Lorain County Forensics Lab within a designated time frame (typically 10am-11am or 1pm-2pm). **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(B) and (C).**

- Drug test results are interpreted as follows: **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(D).**
  - No show = positive
  - Diluted sample (failing specific gravity and abnormal Creatinine levels) = positive
  - Zero levels = negative
  - Initial decrease of levels to zero = negative (when first entering FDC)

The LCADA clinician providing the initial clinical assessment will design an Individualized case plan which includes recommendations for alcohol- and drug-testing. The LCCS caseworker will then review that clinical assessment to determine what level of treatment is required and the level/frequency of drug testing. The Family Drug Court will maintain a minimum of one time per week testing on all participants. All treatment team members are aware of the designated treatment and monitoring plans. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(B).**

The Coordinator/Case Manager and/or the designee utilize a protocol for I.D. verification of all participants for purposes of urine collection. The collector then observes the sample being given (**Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8 Recommended Practice**) and has the participant sign a consent form for chain of custody with the urine sample. The testing cups and saliva swabs obtained from Redwood Laboratories (Alere Technologies) as well as the Lorain County Forensics Lab utilize protocols for testing, reliability and validity of the testing process and offers confirmation testing for un-confirmed positive tests that are provided. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(A).**

Should a participant test positive at intake, they are advised that reduction in levels is expected. If levels have not consistent reduced, continuation in the program is at the discretion of the Judge. The team would consider any appropriate sanctions at that time. Should a participant relapse during the treatment process, the treatment team will review the participant's dedication to remaining sober and the LCCS case plan recommendations regarding relapse. Should LCCS change their position regarding reunification should a participant relapse, that will be discussed with the participant. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(C).**

The treatment team is immediately notified by the collector (Coordinator/Case Manager or designee), the Forensics Lab and/or the treatment facility should an individual test positive, fail to submit to testing, submit an adulterated sample or the sample of another individual, or make attempts to dilute the sample. All acts listed are considered positive tests and will be sanctioned immediately. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(D).**

The Family Reunification Court instant drug screens, the Forensics Lab and/or the Redwood Laboratories testing includes the participant's primary substance of dependence, as well as a sufficient range of other common substances. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8(E).**

The Family Reunification Court maintains a computer database of all drug testing results, whether instant urinalysis, Forensics Lab or Redwood Laboratories confirmation results from urinalysis and/or oral saliva sample results. That database is secure and is only viewable by the Coordinator and the Juvenile Clerk who inputs the information. For all drug testing, the participant is responsible for traveling to the testing location during specific hours indicated. The participant is

expected to arrive promptly for testing and provide a sample within the time allotted. **Sup.R., Appx. I, Std. 8.**

Should the participant contest the urine screen results, the participant may make a request in writing with the Court Coordinator/Case Manager to have another sample tested and pay the laboratory cost for the test with the written request. While waiting for the laboratory test, sanctions are not issued. However, if the test returns as positive, then a more severe sanction may be issued for deception plus the use. If the test returns negative, then the court may allow the laboratory fee to be held for future laboratory tests. Lorain County Family Reunification Court may utilize the confirmation laboratory services from Redwood Laboratories or testing services from the Lorain County Forensics Lab.