

As you work through the programme, the team will tell you how you are doing and the areas to watch. We will give you extra credit if you take part in positive events not covered by the Drug Treatment Court Programme. These include meetings of the Drug Court Support Group every Tuesday afternoon in the Parnell Adult Learning Centre and meetings of other groups, such as Narcotics Anonymous. At every meeting we will tell you about the credits given or take away over the weeks and give you a written report explaining why.

How do I go on to the next stage?

You have twelve months from the date you start on the bronze phase to move on to the next phase of the programme, which is called the silver phase. If you get through the silver phase, you could find that your sentence is suspended. Most people who take the programme seriously have no difficulty in moving on to the next phase in one year. However, if there are strong reasons why you shouldn't move on, you will not be allowed continue with the programme and will be returned to court to be sentenced.

Something to keep in mind

You have to take responsibility for yourself and your behaviour. You will be treated like an adult but you must behave like an adult. If you take part with the idea that you can buck the system, you will be expelled from the programme. It's up to you.

Further information

Contact the Drug Treatment Court Co-ordinator at 01 8886294 or by e-mail at drugtreatmentcourt@courts.ie



An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna
Courts Service

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The Drug Treatment Court Programme

a guide to the induction and bronze phases

for participants

Welcome

This leaflet explains the Dublin Drug Treatment Court Programme and outlines what is involved for those who take part. For people struggling with drug addiction, the Programme is an opportunity to get their lives back on track with the help of an expert team and the courts.



Why should you take part?

If you have been struggling with your addiction for a while, have been arrested after committing a crime to feed your habit and are facing a spell in prison, the programme offers you a chance to find a new direction in your life. It will help you to manage your addiction and give you a chance to gain valuable qualifications to improve yourself. It will help you find treatment and a better place to live and let you know what you are entitled to claim from the State.

How do I take part?

You must plead guilty to the charges put to you in the District Court and then be referred to the Drug Treatment Court by a District Court Judge. You will not be referred if you are pleading guilty to serious offences.

You must persuade the judge that your crime was as a result of or linked to your drug addiction. Your solicitor can propose that you be allowed onto the programme and you can explain to the judge why you want to take part. To give yourself the best chance, you must cooperate fully with the Gardaí, the Court and the Probation Service. You have to persuade everyone involved that referring you to the Drug Treatment Court Programme will not be a waste of time.

Induction Phase

What is involved?

If you are referred to the Drug Treatment Court Programme, you will firstly take part in an assessment or induction to find out if you are suitable. This process can take up to two months to complete. As part of the process you must:

- * Sign a form to confirm that you are happy for your information to be shared within the Drug Treatment Court Team
- * Attend a meeting in the Chancery Street Courthouse with the Drug Treatment Court team
- * Start treatment or continue any treatment you are in and attend all sessions
- * Complete a health assessment with the Drug Treatment Court nurse
- * Meet a Community Welfare Officer to work out whether you are receiving all of your State entitlements
- * Meet the Education Coordinator from Parnell Adult Learning Centre to discuss your education to date and work out an education and skills programme
- * Meet a Probation Officer who will prepare a report for the Court on your suitability for the programme.

You must also agree to be tested for drugs once a week. The results will determine whether you can remain with the programme. You will be tested as part of your treatment but you may be tested at least once more in a week, if the team considers it necessary.

We have over 10 years of experience of people taking part in this programme and do not expect miracles overnight. We understand that people can slip but if they slip regularly we have to give their place to someone else. We expect you to be honest with us if you have a slip. If you attempt to hide your drug taking, the consequences will be worse than if you own up. We do not have the time to waste on people who do not do their best.

You must behave yourself and not get into trouble with the Gardaí. This will mean keeping away from those friends who you got into trouble with before. It may mean staying in at night time, instead of going out with your old friends. You may find it boring and get fed up but this is all about you taking the opportunity for a new start.

Bronze Phase

What happens after the assessment is done?

If you pass the induction phase, you will be admitted to bronze phase, which is the first of three phases of the programme (the other two phases are silver and gold). During the bronze phase, you must attend the Drug Treatment Court every Wednesday afternoon in the Chancery Street Courthouse, where a report from every member of the Drug Treatment Court Team will be given to the judge. You and your solicitor will be asked to explain why you want to go on the programme.

If you are accepted on to the programme, the criminal charges remain against you until you graduate. If you drop out, there is a good chance that you will be sent to prison. On the programme you have to:

- * Attend the Drug Treatment Court in the Chancery Street Courthouse most Wednesday afternoons and tell the judge how you are getting on
- * Attend appointments with the Drug Treatment Court nurse and other medical experts
- * Take part in weekly and random drug screenings and stay off your main drug of choice
- * Start the counselling process, as part of your treatment, to manage your addiction
- * If you abuse alcohol you must start to deal with this
- * Continue with your treatment and attend all sessions
- * Attend classes in Parnell Adult Learning Centre
- * Develop a career plan with the staff from Parnell Adult Learning Centre
- * Apply for a medical card and visit a doctor for a physical examination
- * Apply for State allowances with the help of a Community Welfare Officer
- * Meet with a Probation Officer to look at changes you need to make in your behaviour to ensure that you do not commit any further offences.
- * Apply for safe and secure accommodation for you and (where appropriate) your family.