



Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court

Participant Handbook

The 8th Judicial District is
comprised of:
Brown, Door, Kewaunee,
Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie
and Waupaca Counties.



Established 2011

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WELCOME

Welcome to Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court Program. This handbook is designed to answer your questions and provide information about our program. As a participant of the Veterans Court Program, you will be expected to follow the rules and regulations described in the participant contract and this handbook, as well as any directions or instructions given by the Veteran's Court Judge or any Veterans Court Team member.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court (NEWVTC) is to aid our Veterans who have stumbled, and entered the justice system. We will help them get back on their feet by using resources available in our community, while constantly being aware of public safety needs. **'Leave No Veteran Behind.'**

INTRODUCTION

The Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court (NEWVTC) is a court that is specifically designated and staffed to handle cases involving offenders (Participants) with veteran status through an intensive, judicially monitored program of alcohol, drug, mental health treatment, rehabilitation services, and strict community supervision. The NEWVTC concept originated based on principles from other successful treatment court programs.

The NEWVTC is built upon a unique partnership between the criminal justice system, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and local providers which combines treatment and support intervention with the authority and personal involvement of the Veterans Treatment Court Judge. The NEWVTC is dependent upon the creation of a non-adversarial courtroom atmosphere, where a judge and a dedicated team work together toward the common goal of breaking the cycle of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness and/or criminal behavior. This goal also reflects a dedicated commitment to public safety.

Because of the unique problems and opportunities that present themselves in working with veterans involved in the criminal justice system, treatment and rehabilitation strategies are "reality-based" and recognize that:

- Veterans are most amenable to successful intervention when they are in the crisis of initial arrest and incarceration, so intervention must be immediate and up-front.
- Preventing gaps in communication and ensuring offender accountability are critically important; therefore, NEWVTC supervision will be highly coordinated and very comprehensive.
- Community safety is paramount.

Benefits of the Program

When you have successfully completed and graduated from the Veterans Court Program, you will have obtained the following rewards and benefits:

- You will be clean and sober
- You will have more job or education opportunities
- You should have better relationships with family and friends
- You will have a better understanding of yourself
- You will have a positive outlook on life
- You will be connected with the VA
- You will develop a positive Legacy

THE NEWVTC TEAM

The Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court team consists of individuals from a variety of disciplines that come together to handle cases involving dependent offenders through an intensive, judicially-monitored program of drug and alcohol treatment, rehabilitation services, and mental health services. The following is a list of the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court Team members and a summary of each individual's role:

- **Circuit Court Judge:** presides over your non-adversarial court appearances for Veterans Court, makes all decisions regarding your participation in the Program, and leads the team in creating a participant-focused recovery program.
- **Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator:** maintains a confidential NEWVTC court file for each participant and attends team meetings and the veterans court sessions.
- **Probation and Parole Agent:** monitors participants, who are under the supervision of the Dept. of Corrections, by conducting office, home, and job visits and drug testing.
- **District Attorney Representative:** participates in team meetings and attends court sessions.
- **Public Defender's Office/Defense Attorney** participates in team meetings and attends court sessions.
- **Law Enforcement Representative(s):** represents law enforcement at team meetings and relays information about Veterans Court to local law enforcement.
- **Veterans' Justice Outreach (VJO):** serves as a liaison between the veteran participant, Veterans Court Program, and the VA Medical Center or Clinic. Conducts needs assessment and designs the treatment program for each participant in coordination with their providers and advocates for the special needs of the veteran population. Facilitates VA services, coordinate reports from VA departments, checks and assist with determining eligibility for services, and assists with case management for VA services. The VJO also attends team meetings and veteran's court sessions.
- **County Veterans Service Officer:** determine benefit eligibility; attend team meetings and veterans court sessions.
- **Mentor Coordinator:** recruit and train volunteer veteran court mentors and supervises and monitors mentors for accountability, as well as attending team meetings and veterans court sessions.

- **Treatment Personnel:** provides rehabilitative therapy sessions, drug screening, case management and monitoring for participants. Additionally, consistent with legal and ethical limitations, shares information regarding the progress of a participant to all Veterans Court team members.

COURT PROCEEDINGS

As a Veteran Court Program participant, you are required to appear before the Veterans Court Judge for hearings on a regular basis. The number of appearances depends on the phase you are in. Failure to appear could result in a warrant being issued for your arrest and detention in jail until you can appear before the Veterans Court Judge. During each Veterans Court hearing, the Veterans Court Judge may discuss the case with each participant. Sanctions will be imposed for violations and incentives are used to recognize success. All Veterans Court participants must be in the courtroom at 9:30 a.m., unless otherwise excused by the Veterans Court Judge. Participants should dress in a manner that reflects their respect for the Court, the other participants and themselves.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Program Rules

Veterans Court participants are required to abide by the rules outlined in the participant contract, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Totally abstain from the use of illegal drugs and alcohol, and avoid misuse of prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.
2. May not enter establishments where alcohol is primarily sold unless granted specific permission by the Judge (e.g. taverns, bars, liquor stores and events with beer stands/tents etc.) Participants are required to have an approved safety plan before entering any residence or business in which alcohol is present. A single, approved plan may apply to all residences and businesses whose primary purpose does not include the sale of alcohol.
3. Must inform treating physicians that he/she is in a veterans court program and may not take narcotic or addictive medications or drugs without the prior approval from the court.
4. Must attend and be on time for all court, supervision, and treatment sessions as well as mentor meetings as scheduled.
5. Must submit to random alcohol and drug testing if required by the court.
6. May not violate federal or state criminal laws, or local ordinances.
7. May not associate with people who use or possess drugs or abuse alcohol.
8. May not possess any firearms, unless granted specific permission by the Judge.
9. Must keep the Veteran's Court Team, treatment provider, and probation and parole agent informed of his/her current address and phone number at all times.
10. Must inform the Veteran's Court Team and probation and parole agent if aware of another Veterans Court participant violating rules of the program or supervision.

11. May not consume poppy seeds, mouthwash or any hygiene item containing alcohol, or non-alcohol beer and/or wine.
12. Must abide by their individualized time management plan*.
13. Must abide by all other rules and regulations imposed by the Veterans Court Team and his/her probation and parole agent.

**NEWVTC participants are required to document that they have followed their assigned time management plan each week, including a combination of the following activities: support group meeting attendance, substance abuse treatment, drug screens, employment, job searches (30 minutes per job application), school, community service work, Veterans Court appointments, or Veterans Court attendance.*

SANCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS

Any violations of the rules of the Veterans Court Program may result in the immediate imposition of sanctions, as determined by the Veterans Court Judge. Sanction may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Jail
- Curfew/check-in time
- Electronic monitoring
- Increased supervision
- Day reporting
- Increased drug testing
- Increased court appearances
- Increased support group attendance
- Warnings
- Team intervention/round table
- Community service work
- Verbal and/or written apologies to judge and group
- Forfeited clean time
- Increased time in phase/return to lower phase

ACHIEVEMENTS & INCENTIVES

The Veterans Court Judge and the Veterans Court Team will acknowledge and reinforce compliance by Veterans Court participants by providing a variety of motivational incentives. Incentives can include, but are not limited to, the following: recognition, modification to phase requirements, gift cards, praise from the bench, medallion or coin, and bus or gas card.

SUPERVISION & TESTING

A critical component of successful NEWVTC participation involves intensive supervision to determine compliance with the rules of the NEWVTC program. Supervision is provided by various members of the Veterans Court Team. The minimum schedule of supervision is outlined in each phase of the program

Each client is subject to random testing for the purpose of detecting the unauthorized use of alcohol or controlled substances. Every participant is subject to testing at any time. Upon request, the Veterans Court participant shall immediately deliver the requested sample. If a sample is not produced, is not of sufficient quantity, or is adulterated in any way, it will be treated as a positive sample for the presence of unauthorized drugs or alcohol.

PROGRAM PHASES

PHASE I

Phases are the steps identified by the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court Team through which clients must progress in order to complete the program. The expected length of the program is approximately 18 months. An application must be made to the Court and be approved by the NEWVTC team for phase advancement.

The Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court program shall consist of four phases with the final phase being a Continuing Care Phase. The NEWVTC team shall determine when promotion to a higher phase is appropriate. When the participant is accepted into the NEWVTC program, he/she will complete a comprehensive AODA and or mental health assessment. After the assessment is completed, the NEWVTC team will determine the level and location of each participant's treatment.

Duration:	Approximately 3 to 4 months
Pro-Social Behavior Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain total abstinence • Avoid individuals who use or possess drugs and/or alcohol • Comply with all conditions of the NEWVTC program plan • Do not enter establishments where alcohol is primarily sold and avoid any premises where alcohol is sold for consumption on the premises (taverns, bars, events with beer tents/stands) unless prior team approval is obtained with a Safety Plan • Abide by individualized time management plan • Attend and be on time for all required appointments and appearances • Follow the rules and conditions set forth in the Participant Contract • Follow the rules set forth by the probation and parole agent
Supervision Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make weekly, or as ordered, appearances before the Veterans Court Judge • Office and home visits as directed by your probation rules/agent • Electronic monitoring as needed, and as ordered by the Veterans Court
Drug & Alcohol Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation and Parole: drug and/or alcohol testing as directed by the probation and parole agent • Drug and/or alcohol testing/monitoring as ordered by NEWVTC • Treatment providers: drug and/or alcohol testing as requested by the treatment provider(s)
Treatment & Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an outpatient or inpatient treatment program, as determined by the Veterans Court Team • Comply with all conditions of the treatment plan • Participate in required educational components, such as job training or life skills
Support Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a sponsor and/or mentor and maintain at least once weekly contact (s) • Participate in support groups, as established in the treatment plan
Requirements to Advance to the Next Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain at least 90 consecutive days of total abstinence from all drugs and alcohol with no illegal activity • Establish a vocational and/or educational plan and complete community service, as directed by the Veterans Court Team • Develop a realistic budget and/or obtain assistance with budget management • Meet with the CVSO (County Veterans Service Officer) to explore and determine benefit eligibility • No missed or unexcused drug test, appointment, or treatment sessions • Participation in the development of a treatment plan • Complete Phase II Advancement Application • Complete all other conditions, as determined by the Team

PHASE II

Duration:	Approximately 4 to 5 months
Pro-Social Behavior Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain total abstinence • Avoid individuals who use or possess drugs and/or alcohol • Do not enter establishments where alcohol is primarily sold and avoid any premises where alcohol is sold for consumption on the premises (taverns bars, events with beer tents/stands, casinos) unless a prior team Safety Plan is approved • Abide by individualized time management plan • Attend and be on time for all required appointments and appearances • Follow the rules and conditions set forth in the Participant Contract • Follow the rules set forth by the probation and parole agent
Supervision Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make biweekly, or as ordered, appearances before the Veterans Court Judge • Office and home visits as directed by your probation rules/agent • Electronic monitoring as needed, and as ordered by the Veterans Court
Drug & Alcohol Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation and Parole: drug and/or alcohol testing as directed by the probation and parole agent • Drug and/or alcohol testing/monitoring as ordered by the NEWVTC • Treatment providers: drug and/or alcohol testing as requested by the treatment provider(s)
Treatment & Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an outpatient or inpatient treatment program, as determined by the Veterans Court Team • Comply with all conditions of the treatment plan • Participate in required educational components, such as job training or life skills
Support Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a sponsor and/or mentor and maintain at least once weekly contact (s) • Participate in support groups, as established in the treatment plan
Requirements to Advance to the Next Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain at least 120 consecutive days of total abstinence from all drugs and alcohol with no illegal activity • Comply with conditions of the educational/vocational plan and leisure activity plan, as directed by the Veterans Court Team • Demonstrate ability to maintain a budget • Develop a payment plan and begin paying for any revocations • No missed or unexcused drug test, appointment, or treatment sessions • Comply with conditions of the treatment plan • Maintain stable housing • Complete Phase III Advancement Application • Complete all other conditions, as determined by the Team

PHASE III

Duration:	Approximately 4 to 5 months
Pro-Social Behavior Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain total abstinence • Avoid individuals who use or possess drugs and/or alcohol • Do not enter establishments where alcohol is primarily sold and avoid any premises where alcohol is sold for consumption on the premises (taverns, bars, events with beer tents/stands, casinos) unless a prior team Safety Plan is approved. • Abide by individualized time management plan • Attend and be on time for all required appointments and appearances • Follow the rules and conditions set forth in the Participant Contract • Follow the rules set forth by the probation and parole agent
Supervision Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make appearances before the Veterans Court Judge every three weeks • Office and home visits as directed by your probation rules/agent • Electronic monitoring as needed, and as ordered by the Veterans Court
Drug & Alcohol Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation and Parole: drug and/or alcohol testing as directed by the probation and parole agent • Drug and/or alcohol testing/monitoring as ordered by the NEWVTC • Treatment providers: drug and/or alcohol testing as requested by the treatment provider(s)
Treatment & Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in all recommended treatment programming as determined by the Veterans Court Team • Comply with all conditions of the treatment plan • Participate in required educational components, such as job training or life skills
Support Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a sponsor and/or mentor and maintain at least once weekly contact • Participate in support groups, as established in the treatment plan
Requirements to Advance to the Next Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain at least 150 consecutive days of total abstinence from all drugs and alcohol with no illegal activity • Comply with conditions of the vocational/educational plan and leisure activity plan, as directed by the Veterans Court Team • No missed or unexcused drug test, appointment, or treatment sessions • Comply with conditions of the treatment plan • Continue to follow the payment plan for revocation • Complete Phase IV Advancement Application • Develop an approved aftercare and relapse plan: including on-going treatment for mental and physical health, financial stability, support system, and leisure structure

PHASE IV: Continuing Care

Duration:	Approximately 4 to 5 months
Pro-Social Behavior Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain total abstinence • Avoid individuals who use or possess drugs and/or alcohol • Do not enter establishments where alcohol is primarily sold and avoid any premises where alcohol is sold for consumption on the premises (taverns, bar, events with beer tents/stands, casinos) unless prior team Safety Plan is obtained • Abide by individualized time management plan • Attend and be on time for all required appointments and appearances • Follow the rules and conditions set forth in the Participant Contract • Follow the rules set forth by the probation and parole agent and/or case manager
Supervision Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make monthly, or as ordered, appearances before the Veterans Court Judge • Office and home visits as directed by your probation rules/agent • Electronic monitoring as needed, and as ordered by the Veterans Court
Drug & Alcohol Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation and Parole: drug and/or alcohol testing as directed by the probation and parole agent • Drug and/or alcohol testing/monitoring as ordered by the NEWVTC • Treatment providers: drug and/or alcohol testing as requested by the treatment provider(s)
Treatment & Testing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an outpatient or inpatient treatment program, as determined by the Veterans Court Team • Comply with all conditions of the treatment plan • Participate in required educational components, such as job training or life skills
Support Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a sponsor and/or mentor and maintain at least once weekly contact • Participate in support groups, as established in the treatment plan
Requirements to Advance to the Next Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain at least 180 consecutive days of total abstinence from all drugs and alcohol with no illegal activity • Maintain employment or comply with vocational/educational plan and leisure activity plan, as directed by the Veterans Court Team • Fully paid for revocation • Restitution, fines, court costs, and probation supervision fees (as required) paid in full • No missed or unexcused drug test, appointment, or treatment sessions • Comply with conditions of the treatment plan • Maintain an approved aftercare and relapse plan • Complete Application for Graduation • Complete all other conditions, as determined by the Team

GRADUATION

Upon successful completion of all four phases and with the recommendation of the NEWVTC team, the Veterans Court Judge shall declare the Veterans Court participant a graduate of the Veterans Court Program. A graduation ceremony will be held in celebration of the participants' success in completing all of the established guidelines of the NEWVTC program.

MENTORING

Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court participants in the continuing care phase will be given an opportunity to assist Phase I participants in their adjustment to the NEWVTC program. Upon recommendation of the NEWVTC team, the participant can be assigned to assist a Veteran Mentor to work with a new Phase I participant. They will then be given the opportunity to assist the Phase I participant with transportation and or any other areas of the ongoing rehabilitation as needed. Six months after a Participants graduation date from NEWVTC they can apply to become a regular Mentor.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Upon completion of Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court Program, all participants will become members of the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Court Alumni Association.

SUSPENSION

A Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court participant may be suspended from the NEWVTC due to continued relapses or the emergence of new legal charges. If the treatment team recommends a participant be suspended for new legal charges, the NEWVTC participant may still attend the NEWVTC until their legal charges are resolved. If the NEWVTC participant is referred to an institutional treatment facility by the NEWVTC team, their progress or lack of progress will be monitored by the probation agent liaison. Their return to the NEWVTC program will be based upon their discharge status from the institutional treatment center.

TERMINATION/EXPULSION PROCESS

A participant in the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court can be terminated from the program for any of the following reasons:

1. Commission of a new crime.
2. Persistent failure to comply with the NEWVTC.
3. Clear evidence present that a participant is dealing drugs or driving while under the influence of an intoxicant.
4. Clear evidence present that a participant has been involved in any threatening, abusive, or violent verbal/physical behavior towards anyone.
5. Any other grounds that the NEWVTC Judge finds sufficient for termination.
6. Revocation of probation/parole/extended supervision.

Any member of the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court team may make a motion for expulsion. The motion for expulsion will be discussed at the team meeting, upon a majority vote; a recommendation for expulsion will be made to the NEWVTC Judge. The NEWVTC Judge may hold a

hearing, at the Judge's discretion. If the NEWVTC Judge agrees that there is a basis to grant the Motion for Expulsion, the NEWVTC Judge will make the initial determination that the participant's participation is terminated, findings and conclusions will be made on the record, and the NEWVTC participant will be removed from the program and returned to the original sentencing Judge (or a substitute Judge if the originally assigned Judge is the NEWVTC Judge) for imposition of sentence. If a participant has absconded for a total of four weeks, they are automatically terminated from the program and there is no process for appeal.

The participant may request a contested hearing following the termination, after which the NEWVTC Judge will make a final determination. If no request for a hearing is made, the initial decision will become the NEWVTC Judge's final determination. Although entry into the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court is entirely voluntary, successful completion of the program or expulsion from the NEWVTC, are the only two ways to leave the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court Program. While a participant may request to be terminated, the consequences or penalties are the same as a participant terminated for cause.