

North Carolina Judicial District 29B

Participant Handbook

Henderson County Adult Recovery Court
(ARC)



EDITION: 1

FOR OFFICIAL USE

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North Carolina Adult Recovery Court Participant Handbook

Table of Contents

1. **Welcome to the Henderson County Adult Recovery Court Program (ARC)**
 - Mission Statement/Vision Statement
 - Introduction
 - Program Goals
 - Your Commitment

2. **Understanding the ARC Program**
 - Program Overview
 - Court Team
 - Phases of the Program
 - Eligibility Criteria

3. **Your Role and Responsibilities**
 - Attendance and Punctuality
 - Treatment Engagement
 - Court Appearances
 - Drug Testing
 - Behavior and Conduct
 - Communication

4. **Treatment and Support Services**
 - Individualized Treatment Plan
 - Counseling and Therapy
 - Supportive Services
 - Community Resources

5. **Confidentiality and Privacy**
 - Confidentiality Rules
 - Release of Information
 - Confidentiality Agreement

6. **Progress and Graduation**
 - Advancing Through Phases
 - Graduation Requirements
 - Early Termination
 - Discharge Planning

7. **Sanctions and Incentives**
 - Sanctions for Non-Compliance
 - Incentives for Compliance
8. **Appeals and Grievance Procedures**
 - Appeals Process
 - Grievance Procedure
9. **Appendices**
 - Contact Information
 - Acknowledgment of Receipt

1. Welcome to the Henderson County Adult Recovery Court Program

Mission Statement

At the ARC, our mission is to transform lives by providing a compassionate and effective alternative to traditional justice approaches for individuals facing substance use challenges. We are dedicated to fostering recovery, accountability, and community reintegration through evidence-based treatment, judicial oversight, and collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Our aim is to break the cycle of addiction and criminal behavior, promoting public safety and creating a path toward lasting positive change.

Vision Statement

Our vision is a society where individuals struggling with substance abuse are met with understanding and support rather than judgment and punishment. We envision a future where the ARC serves as a model of innovation, fairness, and rehabilitation, helping participants regain control of their lives, rebuild relationships, and become productive members of their communities. Through our efforts, we aspire to create a ripple effect of healing, ultimately contributing to safer neighborhoods and a brighter collective future.

Introduction

Welcome to the Henderson County Adult Recovery Court (ARC). This program is designed to support individuals on supervised misdemeanor or felony probation in their journey towards recovery. Your handbook serves as a comprehensive guide, addressing any queries you may have, outlining expectations, and detailing what you can anticipate during your time in the ARC.

Throughout your participation in the ARC, you will be subject to specific requirements and rules that must be met. In exchange, the ARC team is committed to aiding you in the treatment process by providing structure and support. Adherence to directions from the presiding Judge and the ARC team is essential. Additionally, you are responsible for following the case plan collaboratively developed by you, the court team, and your treatment provider, and complying with probation requirements.

This handbook offers essential information to guide you through the various steps leading to graduation. We encourage you to share this resource with your family and close friends, enabling them to understand the work you are undertaking to maintain sobriety and garner their support.

The overarching objective of the program is to assist you in refraining from alcohol and other substances. While positive drug screens or setbacks in treatment do not automatically result in termination from the program, sanctions can be imposed for each offense. If you encounter challenges in abstaining from drugs or alcohol, the team may adjust your case plan to include additional treatment sessions, meetings, and/or increased drug screening. Decisions regarding termination from the ARC will be made by the team after a thorough review, with the Judge ultimately making the final decision.

Program Goals

Our program aims to:

- Assist participants in overcoming substance use disorders.
- Reduce criminal recidivism.
- Promote public safety and community well-being.

Your Commitment

By participating in this program, you commit to:

- **Show up, be honest, and try your best.**
- Active engagement in your recovery journey
- Adherence to program rules and requirements.
- Attending all required sessions and court appearances.
- Making positive changes in your life and community

2. Understanding the Adult Recovery Court Program

Program Overview

The Henderson County ARC Program is an alternative to incarceration designed to help individuals with substance use disorders receive treatment and support instead of facing traditional criminal penalties.

Court Team

Judge: Kim Justice
ADA: James Capps
Public Defender: Zach Neill
Court Coordinator: Daniel Conway
Probation Chief: Stephanie Hessler
Probation Office: Casey Mesler
Hope Coalition: Dr. Michelle Geiser
Hope Coalition: Ashley Osteen
Blue Ridge Health: Taylor Ludwig
Pardee Hospital: TBD
Treatment Providers
And other supportive staff and organizations

Phases of the Program

The program is divided into five phases, each with specific requirements and goals. You'll progress through these phases based on your performance and compliance with program guidelines. Phases one and two have a minimum of 90 days. Phases three, four, and five have a mandatory minimum of 120 days. **The minimum amount of time for the ARC program is 18 months.**

Eligibility Criteria

To participate, you must have a diagnosable substance use disorder or co-occurring disorders with substances being one of them. Your legal representation can help determine your eligibility. Your lawyer will then refer your case to the district attorney who will screen for legal eligibility. If found eligible by the D.A., then the ARC Coordinator will do a Risk and Needs Triage (RANT). The RANT will determine your risk of recidivism with the justice system and your need for supportive treatment.

2. Program Requirements

As an ARC participant, you will be required to abide by the following rules: Failure to do so may result in a sanction or termination from the ARC program.

1. You must be completely honest about your addiction and/or treatment concerns with yourself, the ARC Team, and all treatment providers regarding any issues that affect your program requirements while in ARC. HONESTY will always be your best policy and is the first step in recovery. Honesty may prevent you from being sanctioned; however, dishonesty will ALWAYS result in a sanction.
2. ANY AND ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ARC TEAM IN WRITING. You cannot take any drug that will test positive (prescribed or otherwise). You cannot consume any alcohol-based products (i.e., cough syrup, hand sanitizer, mouthwash, breath strips, non-alcoholic beer, and wine) containing alcohol-based products while in the program and using cough syrup is not a valid defensive against a positive for alcohol. You must get permission from the probation officers and coordinator before consuming any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, etc.
3. You are not permitted to use CBD, kratom, or any mind-altering legal substances (i.e., kava) that are purchased from the gas station, smoke shop, or other store.
4. You may not drink any fluid excessively before testing and must avoid environmental contaminants, over-the-counter medications, or foods that can reduce the accuracy of the tests. Diluted drug screens will be addressed accordingly in that they are treated as a positive screen. If you have questions about this, please talk to the coordinator or your probation officer.
5. You will be sanctioned for using synthetic substances such as K2 or Spice that are designed to avoid detection by standard drug tests. Switching to a new substance of abuse (for example, switching from heroin to an unauthorized prescription opioid) will be presumed to be an effort to defraud the drug test. You may receive two sanctions in such circumstances, one for substance use and one for the effort at deception.
6. Abide by a 6:00 p.m. curfew through Phase 1 and/or as directed by the Judge and keep ankle monitor always charged.
7. Turn in your self-help meeting verification sheets at each court session.
8. Do not leave the county without permission. You must get permission from your probation officer prior to leaving Henderson County.
9. Do not make threats toward other participants or staff or behave in a violent manner or disrupt treatment. Violent or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Court. This may result in immediate termination of the ARC Program.
10. Do not bring drugs, alcohol or weapons into any treatment, case management or probation officer meeting, court, appointment, or event.

11. Dating or any other type of intimate relationship with another ARC participant is PROHIBITED.
12. Borrowing money from or loaning money to another ARC participant is PROHIBITED.
13. Dress appropriately for court, probation appointments, treatment sessions and coordinator meetings. (No ripped or tattered clothing, no halter or tank tops, no miniskirts, no coveralls, shorts, no clothing showing midsection, no hats, bandanas or visors, and no clothing with offensive language or pictures).

Attendance and Punctuality

You must attend all required sessions, groups, appointments and court appearances promptly. If you cannot attend due to a legitimate reason, notify your probation officer in advance.

Treatment Engagement

Active participation in your individualized treatment plan, including counseling and therapy, is crucial to your success in the program.

Court Appearances

Attend all court hearings as scheduled. Show respect and honesty when addressing the judge, treatment team, and other participants. Please wear proper attire to court. No white t-shirts or “tank tops”.

Drug Testing

Random drug tests are mandatory. Refusing or failing a drug test may result in sanctions. Show up on time. If you are going to be late or have an emergency, contact your probation officer right away.

Behavior and Conduct

Maintain respectful and appropriate behavior in all program-related activities and interactions. There will be no intimate relationships with other participants in the ARC program.

Communication

Keep your probation officer and treatment providers informed of any changes in your contact information, employment, or living situation.

Community Service

All participants are expected to do a minimum of 50 hours of community service. The Judge may also order additional hours as a sanction response for non-compliance. All community service must be approved through probation. Please see your probation officer for referrals to community organizations that provide community service.

4. Treatment and Support Services

Individualized Treatment Plan

You will have a treatment plan tailored to your needs, which may include counseling, therapy, educational programs, and other services. You and your treatment provider will create this plan.

Counseling and Therapy

Participate actively in counseling and therapy sessions to address your substance use disorder and mental health.

Supportive Services

Explore available resources for housing, employment, education, and other needs to support your recovery journey.

Community Resources

Learn about community resources that can assist you in maintaining your recovery.

5. Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidentiality Rules

All information shared in treatment and court proceedings is strictly confidential. Violation of confidentiality rules may result in consequences.

Release of Information

Your treatment team may need to share information with other agencies for your treatment and supervision. You'll be asked to sign release of information (ROI) forms for this purpose. You must provide ROIs for all treatment providers to participate in ARC. The treatment providers will provide basic information such as attendance, participation, drug screen results. The treatment team will not be sharing personal information you share with your treatment providers unless it is something that could be harmful to you or others.

Confidentiality Agreement

You are required to sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure you understand and respect the importance of confidentiality.

6. Progress and Graduation

Advancing Through Phases

Your progression through program phases will be determined by your accomplishments, involving the fulfillment of specific requirements specified in your treatment plan. Each phase is associated with a minimum duration, with 30 consecutive days of compliance required to transition from phases one and two. Advancement to Phase three necessitates 60 consecutive days of compliance, Phase four requires 90 days, and Phase five mandates 120 consecutive days of compliance.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from the program, you must meet specific criteria, demonstrating your commitment to recovery and personal growth. Please remember recovery is a lifelong journey. Even after graduation, you will need to continue working towards your recovery with an aftercare plan.

Early Termination

Failure to comply with program rules or court orders may result in early termination from the program. If a participant does not adhere to their treatment program or is deemed a “public safety risk” they have the possibility of early termination.

Discharge Planning

Upon completion of the program or early termination, you'll receive a discharge plan to support your transition to a drug-free and law-abiding life.

7. Sanctions and Incentives

Sanctions for Non-Compliance

Consequences for non-compliance with program rules and court orders may include increased supervision, community service, or, in extreme cases, jail time or removal from the program.

Incentives for Compliance

Compliance with program requirements may lead to incentives such as reduced supervision, court recognition, or other rewards.

8. Appeals and Grievance Procedures

Appeals Process

If you disagree with a decision made by the court or your probation officer, you have the right to appeal. Follow the appeals process outlined in your program documents.

Grievance Procedure

If you have concerns or complaints about the program or its staff, a grievance procedure is in place for you to address these issues.

9. Appendices

Contact Information

Contact details for key program personnel and agencies.

- Probation Officer: 828-393-4225 or 828-577-6811
- Court Coordinator: 828-845-0391
- Public Defender: 828-694-4273
- Blue Ridge Community Health Services (Chimney Rock): 828-692-4289
- Blue Ridge Community Health Services (7th Ave): 828-696-8263
- Pardee Hospital: 828-696-1000
- Hope Coalition: 828-388-7979

Acknowledgment of Receipt

Please sign and return this acknowledgment to confirm that you have received and understood the contents of this handbook.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Judge: _____ Date: _____

ADA: _____ Date: _____

Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

