



CRAIGHEAD COUNTY STAR COURT PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Craighead County STAR (Sobriety – Treatment – Accountability – Recovery) Court Program. STAR Court is a 16-month post-adjudication voluntary program designed for an individual with alcohol-related driving offenses and alcohol addiction issues. A candidate for STAR Court enters the program by pleading guilty to the underlying charge and being sentenced to complete STAR Court requirements. The goal of STAR Court is long-term addiction recovery for participants; however, an added incentive for successful completion of the program is the potential for suspension of mandatory jail time and fines. This opportunity allows individuals to maintain stability with their family and employment while seeking and maintaining sobriety and recovery.

This handbook will provide you with a description of what the STAR Court program provides to participants, what is expected of you as a STAR Court participant, and your rights as a recipient of substance abuse treatment services. You are encouraged to share this handbook with family and friends. Although the program requirements may seem difficult and overwhelming in the beginning, once a routine is established, most participants do very well and see tremendous long-term benefits in their lives. If you have any questions about the program, or if you need clarification on any of the items found in this handbook, please contact the Public Defender, the Case Manager, or the STAR Court Coordinator.

Proceedings in STAR Court operate according to Judge Boling’s three rules:

1. Speak loudly and clearly.
2. Answer the question that is asked, and
3. Tell the **TRUTH**.

You are expected to follow these principles in all your interactions with the STAR Court team.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the STAR Court program, a person must be at least 18 years old, cannot have a history of violent crimes or sexual offenses, and must reside in Craighead County, Arkansas. STAR Court is designed for individuals who have a 2nd or 3rd impaired driving offense. Individuals charged with a 1st offense DWI who also have a history of impaired driving offenses and who had a BAC of .15 or higher may also be considered by the STAR Court team. In addition, during participation, **you are expected to refrain from all use of alcohol and drugs**. Any prescription medication must be approved by the court. Medical Marijuana is not allowed in this program. The STAR Court program is about accountability and personal responsibility, and all participants are held to that standard. It is expected that you will be **on time** for all appointments, hearings, and testing, and that you be honest and engaged with your treatment counselors and the STAR Court team members.

The STAR Court Team

The key to the success of STAR Court is the team approach. Members of the STAR Court team are the Judge, Court Coordinator, Prosecutor, Defense Attorney, Probation Officer, Law Enforcement, Treatment Providers, Case Managers, STAR Court Mentors, Monitoring Officials, Stakeholders and **YOU**. You are the most important part of the team, and the remaining members of the team are here to support you in your recovery. Your recovery process will be reviewed, discussed, and evaluated by the team prior to your review hearings. Team staffing is a closed meeting and confidentiality agreements are signed each hearing date.

Substance Abuse Treatment

STAR Court participants must undergo a substance abuse assessment with the treatment provider prior to entering the program. The assessment determines the proper level of treatment and care. The STAR Court team relies on the treatment recommendations of the treatment provider. Substance abuse counseling is very important to recovery and your success with the STAR Court program. Counseling is designed to develop self-awareness, self-discipline, and coping mechanisms necessary to maintain sobriety after participation in STAR Court concludes. As a result, attendance at treatment meetings and counseling is **mandatory**, and there is **very little tolerance** for missed treatment and counseling appointments. Based on your assessment, you may be required to participate in all types of substance abuse treatment, including outpatient or inpatient treatment, or treatment for other co-occurring issues such as criminal thinking, anger management, and domestic violence counseling.

The STAR Court team will be in regular communication with your treatment providers to discuss your treatment plan, your progress, and your attendance. STAR Court reserves the right to modify treatment plans and requirements, as necessary, throughout the program.

Treatment payments are based on your insurance and employment. These are separate from the STAR Court program fees. You need to stay current on these payments in order to continue with your treatment plan.

Recovery Support Meetings

In addition to substance abuse treatment, you may be required to attend recovery support meetings while in the STAR Court program. A list of **approved groups** will be provided by the STAR Court team. Your attendance must be documented on the forms provided by STAR Court and submitted to the STAR Court team at each review hearing you attend. If you attend two meetings in one day, only one of the meetings will count toward your requirement. If a fellow STAR Court participant is chairing or leading any meeting you attend, another meeting attendee who is not a STAR Court participant must sign your attendance form. *A fellow STAR Court participant CANNOT sign your meeting attendance form.*

Review Hearings

As a STAR Court participant, you will be required to appear in court for review hearings weekly in the first 60 days. As you move up in phases your hearing frequency will move to every other week, then every 3 weeks and in the last 2 phases, once a month. Your family and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend so they may support you in your recovery and share in your success!

Prior to each hearing, the STAR Court team will receive and review progress reports from the case manager, the supervision team members, and the treatment provider, as well as from any other team member who may have pertinent information about you. These reports will include topics such as phone calls; drug/alcohol test results; attendance at and participation in meetings, treatment, and counseling; employment; and any other achievements or concerns that have arisen since your last review hearing.

During your hearing, the Judge will discuss your progress. You are encouraged to ask questions and voice any concerns you have about your participation in the program. You are encouraged to give ideas to the STAR Court on how the program could be improved. You will also be given notice of your next hearing date. It is your responsibility to keep track of your court dates, supervision report dates, testing schedule, and treatment schedule. The AIR app is the required app that will help track all your required meetings including next hearing date, testing schedule, and treatment schedule. If you have questions about any of these, please contact your Public Defender, Case Manager, Supervision team members or the STAR

Court Coordinator. Failing to appear could result in a warrant being issued for your arrest and your detainment in jail until you can be seen by the STAR Court Judge.

Supervision Tools

The STAR Court program uses multiple tools for each participant's supervision. In the first 90 days of the program, you are required to wear a SCRAM ankle monitor. This ankle monitor is a 24-hour detection of alcohol consumption. This monitor confirms alcohol consumption and records tamper efforts. Confirmed alcohol consumption and confirmed tamper reports are not eligible for dispute. If you wish to have a trial over the results, you will need to discuss this with your defense attorney.

The program also uses Corrisoft AIR Mobile Check-In. This is an app for your smartphone that will be downloaded to your device once you're plead into the program. This app is used for nightly curfew check-ins, random location check-ins, notifies you if you are on the drug testing list for that day, has your treatment schedule, and is a form of communication between you and the Supervision team members. It is your responsibility to have a working smart phone and access to Wi-Fi. If your phone is shut off or you aren't near Wi-Fi, this may result in a missed check-in or a missed notification for a drug test. Missed check-ins and missed drug tests may result in a sanction.

If you do not have a smartphone you will need to let the Case Manager or STAR Court Coordinator know.

Supervision Reporting

If you are requested to physically report with the Supervision team members you must do so at the required time. You must also be available for random drug/alcohol screening 24 hours a day. As a result of this testing requirement, **all travel outside of Craighead County must be approved by the Court and must be made 72 hours in advance.** Failure to submit a Travel pass request in a timely manner will result in a denial.

The AIR app sends random location check-in requests throughout the day. It is your responsibility to always have your phone on you to ensure your prompt response to these location checks. If you miss the random location check-in, the AIR team will call you to remind you to check-in. Failure to comply with this location check may result in a sanction.

If you have changes in your life such as address, phone number, roommates, employment, etc., you need to inform your Case Manager, Supervision team members and/or the STAR Court Coordinator of those changes **IMMEDIATLEY.**

Mandatory Curfew

During the first four phases of the program there is a curfew. You will be required to check-in with the AIR app each night. It is your responsibility to have access to Wi-Fi for this app to work. As you phase up in the program, your curfew becomes later until you are in Phase 5. In Phase 5, you will no longer have a curfew.

There are random curfew check-ins throughout the first four phases. Random curfew check-ins happen anytime between your nightly curfew and 6am the following morning. It is your responsibility to have your phone on and in a location where you can hear the check-in notification alarm. If you miss the random curfew check-in, the AIR team will call you to wake you up as a reminder to check-in. Failure to comply with the random curfew check-ins may result in a sanction.

Drug/Alcohol Testing

Submission to frequent PBT, urine and other types of screening is required for all STAR Court participants. This testing can occur daily, and you must immediately report when called in for random screening. Drug testing is performed by the Probation Office at 410 W. Washington Ave. Jonesboro, AR 72401. The Probation Office is open Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm. Weekend drug testing on Saturdays and Sundays is performed from 9am-10am, unless otherwise told by the Supervision team members. You are subject to a drug test on any holiday and the Supervision team members will inform you of the time frame at that time.

If you are late for ANY reason, this will be counted as a missed drug screen. Missed drug screens are counted as a positive result and require your “documented days without use” to start over at day one. Documented days are the days you have had a confirmed negative drug screen. Starting your documented days over may prevent you from phasing up on time and could prevent the ability to graduate, as each phase has a minimum documented day that is required. We will ask you at each hearing how many documented days you have and any personal days you are keeping track of.

Frequency of testing may increase or decrease depending on your success in the program and which program phase you are in. All participants are observed during the entirety of the testing process. Positive test results subject you to immediate sanction, up to and including incarceration, and your documented days without use will start over. If you are contesting the results, you are allowed to request a second test at your own cost.

Participants may be required to wear or carry an alcohol-monitoring device during their time in STAR Court to assist in maintaining sobriety. If you are placed on a monitoring system after the initial 90-day period, there will be additional costs to the participant over and above

STAR Court fees. You are responsible for the payment of any such costs. If you have an inability to pay, you should immediately bring this to the attention of the STAR Court team. If it is determined that you do not have the ability to pay, the STAR Court team will investigate alternatives, but your successful completion of this program will not hinge on your ability to pay.

Participants shall not ingest any substance intended to dilute or alter a sample for testing. A diluted or altered sample will be considered a positive test result. If you attempt to tamper with a test sample or engage in any type of falsification of a submitted sample or seek to have another individual do so for you, you will be subject to immediate sanction.

The ingestion of poppy seeds in any form can result in a positive drug test. Similarly, the use or ingestion of products containing alcohol or an alcohol-derivative, such as mouthwash and cough/cold medication, can result in a positive alcohol test. As a result, the ingestion of poppy seeds and the use of products containing alcohol and/or alcohol derivatives is prohibited and will not be considered a valid excuse for any positive test.

The consumption of “non-alcoholic” beer is prohibited. Just as mouthwash and some medications, these drinks do in fact contain alcohol. Furthermore, you will find in your treatment to pinpoint triggers, and those in recovery need to abstain from all forms of the drug.

Additionally, Supervision team members may appear at your place of residence at any time to conduct drug/alcohol screening. As part of your participation in STAR Court, you agree to allow officers to enter your home to conduct testing.

NOTE: If you believe that you may test positive, you should notify the individual administering your test **BEFORE** you test. Participants are subject to drug/alcohol testing by law enforcement and probation at any time during the program. Testing may include a drug test, an oral swab, a breathalyzer, or any other form of testing deemed appropriate.

Case Management

You will be assigned a Case Manager for the entirety of your program. It will be your responsibility to reach out to your Case Manager on a weekly basis. They will be your contact for travel passes, phase up requirements, or any other concerns you might have.

Upon entry into the program, in addition to assessing addiction, the STAR Court team will assess your housing, transportation, family dynamics, education, employment, and general living needs. When appropriate, the team will refer you to local, county, and/or state agencies for additional assistance. If you need specific assistance in any areas at any time during your participation in the STAR Court program, please notify your Case Manager so they may assist you.

Program Fees

The cost of the STAR Court program is the responsibility of the participant. The program fees are in addition to any court fines, costs, testing, and treatment costs which you must pay. Supervision fees (\$35/month), court fees (\$50/month), and the alcohol monitor (\$8/day for the first ninety days), are included in the phase fees. Any additional days of the alcohol monitor, normally used as a sanction or for travel, will be an additional fee to you, the participant, that must be paid directly to the SCRAM monitoring company.

YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING A \$160 PAYMENT MONTHLY.

If you cannot make the monthly payment, an equivalent of 11 hours community service can be done upon approval from the Judge.

If you fall too far behind in your fee payments, you may be required to have weekly case management meetings and be required to prepare a budget. You will not be refused services due to an inability to pay; however, it is expected that you will develop a payment contract with the Court if you are behind. There is a possibility, in limited circumstances, to work off some costs of the program with public service work. If you need assistance, you should discuss your options with the Case Manager or Defense Attorney.

Employment

Participants must maintain gainful employment if physically able to do so. You can maintain full-time student status, or a combination of work and school, to meet this requirement. If you need assistance obtaining employment there is a list of potential employers in your Participant Handbook. If you need assistance with a resume or any training opportunities for a certain job, please reach out to the Case Manager or the STAR Court Coordinator. If you are not employed and cannot show steady income, you may be required to perform public service work until you gain employment.

STAR Court will review your employment for potential conflicts with treatment. Upon review, a change in employment may be required. Employment in locations that serve alcoholic beverages is expressly prohibited. This is to ensure that your contact with alcohol, in any form, is avoided.

Medication

Participants must notify medical professionals that they are participating in a recovery-based program and that they are subject to random drug/alcohol testing. Participants **MUST** have *prior* approval from the court to continue the use of a prescribed medication that would result in a positive drug/alcohol test. Medicinal Marijuana and CBD oil are strictly prohibited.

Please make every effort to use over-the-counter medication, such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen, for pain control. Participants MUST inform Treatment Counselors, Probation Officers and the STAR Court team *prior* to filling and taking any prescription medication. Any medication prescribed by a medical professional must be taken as prescribed.

If you are found to be taking medicines without prior approval you may be subject to an immediate sanction, up to and including incarceration, and your documented days without use will start at day one.

Graduation

To be eligible for graduation from the STAR Court program you must have met the minimum required documented days without use, have completed all treatment requirements, and completed your Pre-Graduation Application and Questionnaire. You will have a review date one (1) month before your 16-month program ends to meet with the Case Manager and STAR Court Coordinator. Upon review of your program requirements a graduation date will be scheduled.

Graduation is a very important event which occurs throughout the year. Your loved ones are invited to join you at this special ceremony as the STAR Court team congratulates you for successfully completing the program and achieving your goals. Members of the STAR Court team, Treatment team, Probation, Elected Officials, Stakeholders, and members of the media are invited to attend.

Upon successful completion of the program, the Judge will review all existing fines and payment plans with the District Court, and some may be eligible for dismissal.

Peer Support Program

The STAR Court program is actively seeking peer support participants. This is a new program that invites previous graduates of the program to help those who are currently in the program. In this program you will help others with their treatment requirements, support with their recovery, and any other needs a participant may have. This program not only gives you the opportunity to give back to the program and help others in the same situation, but it keeps you in a supportive environment of like persons seeking to live in recovery.

Termination

Participants may be terminated from the STAR Court program for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- The participant is petitioning the Court for voluntary termination.

- The participant is exhibiting violent behavior, or threats of violent behavior, toward him/herself or others.
- The participant is displaying inappropriate, disruptive, or non-compliant behavior.
- The participant is being charged with another criminal, drug, or alcohol-related offense.
- The participant is refusing to satisfactorily participate in program requirements such as:
 - Failing to appear or failing to be timely for review hearings, treatment appointments, or probation reports;
 - Repeated violation of program rules;
 - Repeated diluted, missed, or positive drug/alcohol tests.

Confidentiality

Pursuant to federal regulation and state law, participant identity and privacy will be protected. 42 C.F.R. Part 2; 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164. However, participants will be asked to sign a waiver authorizing the transfer of information among all participating agencies.

STAR Court recognizes that confidentiality is essential to maintain the effectiveness and integrity of therapy sessions. Nothing discussed within the confines of therapy or counseling will be disclosed to STAR Court team members, except for your Treatment Provider. Additionally, no information pertaining to others participating in therapy or counseling in a group setting should be discussed outside the group. This confidentiality applies to all matters discussed in the courtroom as well.

Out of an abundance of caution, if a member of the STAR Court team sees you in public, they will not speak to you unless you speak to them first. Please do not be offended.

Nondiscrimination Policy

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, STAR Court does not discriminate based on handicap or the disability status of the participant. Nor will the Court discriminate based on gender, race, heritage, age, religion, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. All federal and state laws will be followed and enforced.

Conclusion

The STAR Court program is designed to help you live in our community as a productive and responsible citizen. While all STAR Court team members are here to guide and assist you, the **ultimate responsibility is yours.**