



Oakland Reentry Court (ORC)

Reentry Team Manual

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REENTRY COURT TEAM

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United States District Judge

The Honorable Donna Ryu

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Oakland Reentry Court (ORC) is to combine court programs with treatment and community-based resources to create wrap-around services that promote the adoption of prosocial behaviors and target the reduction of recidivism in the community.

Goals

1. Reduce substance abuse dependency and related criminal activity
2. Enhance community safety
3. Provide resources and support to ease the transition from incarceration to reentry
4. Reward prosocial behavior while holding participants accountable for negative behavior
5. Reduce recidivism

Program Description

The Oakland Reentry Court is a comprehensive post-conviction program of the U.S. District Court. This collaborative approach combines the efforts of the Court, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Public Defender's Office, the U.S. Probation Office, treatment providers, and community stakeholders. This voluntary program involves regular court appearances, community-based supervision, cognitive behavioral therapy, substance abuse and/or mental health treatment, and pro-social community activities.

The purpose of ORC is to assist participants in successfully reentering the community. The participants will have access to community-based resources, such as job training and placement, education, treatment, counseling, and mentorship. They will report frequently to the probation officer, who will match client needs with available resources. They will also appear twice monthly before a Federal Judge, and the Reentry Court Team, to discuss progress toward meeting their goals.

The program is designed to span at least one year, based on each participant's progress. Each participant must be willing to take part in all program components. Participants who successfully complete the ORC, will be eligible for up to one year off of their remaining term of post-conviction supervision.

Program Partners

➤ **Federal Judges**

The Judge will provide encouragement, guidance and support for the participants, recognizing their accomplishments and celebrating their victories. At the same time, the Judge will hold participants accountable in the event they fail to comply with the terms of the program.

➤ **Assistant United States Attorneys**

The Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) is a federal prosecutor designated to serve as a liaison from the U.S. Attorney's Office to the Re-Entry Team. The AUSA is committed to the success of each re-entry court participant. That commitment includes:

1. Encouraging and supporting the successes and accomplishments of each participant;
2. Giving constructive input on overcoming hurdles or difficulties; and
3. Holding each participant accountable if he falls below what is expected of a participant in the program.

➤ **Assistant Federal Public Defenders**

Although an Assistant Federal Public Defender (AFPD) generally represents clients brought to federal court for violations of supervised release or new criminal conduct, as a member of the Re-Entry Team, the AFPD is not intended to be the defense attorney for each participant. More specifically, participants are not being represented during the Re-Entry Team meetings by the AFPD.

➤ **US Probation Officers**

Participants will be thoroughly assessed by the Reentry Court Team to insure suitability for the program. Upon entrance to the program, participants will begin attending programming aimed at removing barriers to employment, education, housing, and substance abuse and mental health treatment. The probation officer will work with the participant to identify problems that they are facing and propose referrals and resources.

➤ **Treatment Providers**

The Treatment Provider will work with the participant to help them identify triggers and appropriate responses to those triggers. Additionally, the treatment provider will work closely with the Re-Entry Team to develop a relapse prevention program designed to address client specific needs.

Eligibility

Referrals: The U.S. Probation Office may receive referrals from other probation officers, or members of The Reentry Court Team.

Although it is preferred that a reentry court cohort of participants begin programing simultaneously, the Reentry Court Team may elect to accept new participants at any time based on the needs of the court and availability of space for new participants. The ideal number of participants is between eight to twelve.

- A) Screening: The U.S. Probation Office will oversee the screening process by use of a variety of assessments including but not limited to the Post-Conviction Risk Assessment (PCRA), Prognostic Risk Factors Checklist, and mental health/substance abuse assessments by a treatment provider.

The Reentry Court Probation Officer will make a recommendation to the Reentry Court Team for acceptance based on the results of the screen process. The Reentry Court Team will discuss the appropriateness of the potential participant and the Reentry Court Judge will make the final determination for acceptance.

B) Criteria:

- Post-Conviction Risk Assessment (PCRA) score of *Moderate* or *High*.
- A minimum of 24 months of remaining supervision
- Willingness to participate and abide by program rules
- Complete necessary assessments
- Jurisdiction in the Northern District of California

* Referrals with current or former sex offenses, will not be considered for participation.

Structure

The ORC is a four-phase program designed to be completed in a period of no less than 12 months. However, participation will not ordinarily exceed 24 months. The phases vary in length, and are determined by the goals of each phase. After successful completion of the four phases, participants **will receive one year off of their supervision period?** and will enter aftercare. The aftercare portion of the program is tailored to the needs of the individual participant, which may include continued programming intended to provide ongoing

support throughout the remaining period of supervision.

The tools and resources provided will encourage participants to take responsibility for their actions, develop an understanding of their criminogenic patterns, and the impact of their behavior on self, family and community. Throughout participation in Reentry Court, the participant will work toward the development of a positive community-based support network.

Finally, the participant will prepare and present a comprehensive relapse prevention plan prior to graduation from Reentry Court. Treatment services will be tailored to the individual needs of each participant. Upon completion of the ORC, regular testing will be administered for the duration of supervision.

Program Phase Components and Resources

- Court twice monthly (Second and Fourth Wednesdays)
- Drug testing
- Office Visits
- Home and community visits
- Curfew
- Individual Therapy
- Group Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Employment and Vocational referrals
- Community Service Projects

Weekly Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) sessions are a Reentry Court program component for all participants throughout the program phases and aftercare period. CBT is a short term treatment, which is goal-oriented in nature. It takes a pragmatic approach to problem-solving by emphasizing a change in thinking and behavior patterns. The rationale behind Cognitive Behavior Therapy is that thinking drives behavior, and if participants can learn to control their thinking, they can learn to control their behavior which will empower them to have greater control of their outcomes.

There are many CBT curriculum programs in existence. Examples of CBT include Courage to Change, Thinking for a Change, Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), and Staff Training Aimed at Reducing Re-Arrest (STARR). Reentry court participants will benefit from a CBT program available through the U.S. Probation Office.

Program Phases

Phase I: Getting on the Tightrope (Acute Stabilization): Recognizing the problem and starting the treatment process.

In Phase I, the decision to manage addiction and take strides toward sobriety is likened to walking on a tightrope. The goal for this phase is for participants to be honest, participate, acknowledge their addiction, and make the decision to participate in the treatment process. The tightrope walker must master balance, focus, perseverance, and the ability to adapt to environmental factors to put one foot in front of the other on the tightrope. The participants must develop this same skillset to fully participate in the treatment process, and make strides toward sobriety. Just as an aspiring tightrope walker practices over a safety net, the participants will learn to utilize their support network of treatment providers, probation officers, Reentry Court team members, and community partners.

- At least 60 days
- Set individual goals and develop a plan to achieve the stated goals for Phase I
- Court twice monthly
- Weekly office check-in
- Drug/alcohol testing a minimum of four times per month

Frequency of testing may vary depending on the need and screening method determined to be appropriate for each participant (Urine collection and/or sweat patch, breathalyzer or any other method of testing at the discretion of the Reentry Court Team).

- Monthly community contact
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- **Curfew from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.**
- Treatment at least once weekly (Individual/and or group)
- Peer support group
- 30 days sobriety, no unexcused absences from treatment or programming

❖ Phase I exit essay: Tell the story of your decision to “get on the tightrope.” What resources do you need to continue achieving success walking the tightrope? What obstacles did you encounter? How were you able to overcome those obstacles? What did you learn about yourself in the process?

Phase II: Taming the Lion (Clinical Stabilization): Utilizing treatment services to address personal needs

In Phase II, learning to sustain participation in treatment services to manage addiction is

likened to taming a Lion. The goal for this phase is for the participant to acknowledge that “taming” their addiction takes specific tools, techniques, and continual practice. One cannot simply walk into a Lion’s cage and expect to train the big cat. The Lion is powerful and must be dealt with intentionally and systematically. Here, the participant will learn to employ the daily skills necessary to manage the behavior of their lion.

- At least 90 days
 - Set individual goals and develop a plan to achieve the stated goals for Phase II
 - Court twice monthly
 - Weekly office check-in
 - Drug/alcohol testing a minimum of four times per month
Frequency of testing may vary depending on the need and screening method determined to be appropriate for each participant (Urine collection and/or sweat patch, breathalyzer or any other method of testing at the discretion of the Reentry Court Team).
 - Monthly community contact
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
 - Curfew from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.
 - Treatment at least once weekly (Individual/and or group)
 - Peer support group
 - 45 days sobriety, no unexcused absences from treatment or programming
- ❖ **Phase II exit essay: How have you begun to “tame your lion?” How is life different now than before you began taming? What specific skills and techniques from treatment are you using to manage your addiction? What resources do you need to continue achieving success in taming your lion? What obstacles did you encounter? How were you able to overcome those obstacles? What did you learn about yourself in the process?**

Phase III: The Juggling Act (Pro-Social Habilitation): Combining all Re-Entry Tools for pro-social living; this includes establishing a sober network and engaging in pro-social activities

In Phase III, learning how to handle “day to day” life in addition to managing an addiction is likened to learning to juggle. The goal for this phase is for the participant to learn to establish a routine that balances Reentry Court, treatment, probation responsibilities, family life, community involvement, pro-social leisure activities, and the development of a sober support network. Learning to juggle takes patience and practice. One cannot just throw a ball up in the air and hope that it lands back in their hand. Through this process, the participant will learn to organize and prioritize their daily activities, meet responsibilities, maintain sobriety, and introduce new pro-social activities into their routine.

- At least 90 days
 - Set individual goals and develop a plan to achieve the stated goals for Phase III
 - Court twice monthly
 - Weekly office check-in
 - Drug/alcohol testing a minimum of four times per month
Frequency of testing may vary depending on the need and screening method determined to be appropriate for each participant (Urine collection and/or oral swab, breathalyzer or any other method of testing at the discretion of the Reentry Court Team).
 - Monthly community contact
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
 - **Curfew from 11:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.**
 - Treatment at least once weekly (Individual/and or group)
 - Peer support group
 - 60 days sobriety, no unexcused absences from treatment or programming
- ❖ **Phase III exit essay: What has been most rewarding about learning “to juggle?” What has been most frustrating about the experience? What are some new, pro-social behaviors that you have introduced into your routine during this phase period? What are some behaviors that you have discontinued during this phase period? What resources do you need to continue achieving success in the juggling act? What obstacles did you encounter? How were you able to overcome those obstacles? What did you learn about yourself along the way?**

Phase IV: Becoming the Ringmaster (Adaptive Habilitation): Continuing to build on resources to maintain a healthy lifestyle and begin developing independence

In Phase 4, establishing and maintaining a healthy, pro-social lifestyle is likened to becoming the ringmaster of a circus. A ringmaster is adept at managing all of the activities under the big top. The goal for this phase is to build on the pro-social habilitation of the previous phase, while remaining accountable with additional autonomy and independence. In this phase, the participant brings all elements of the program together as they prepare for graduation.

- At least 90 days
- Set individual goals and develop a plan to achieve the stated goals for Phase IV
- Court Bi-Weekly
- Weekly office check-in
- Drug/alcohol testing a minimum of four times per month
Frequency of testing may vary depending on the need and screening method determined to be appropriate for each participant (Urine collection and/or sweat

patch, breathalyzer or any other method of testing at the discretion of the Reentry Court Team).

- Monthly community contact
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- **Curfew from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.**
- Treatment at least once weekly (Individual/and or group)
- Peer support group
- 8 months sobriety and no unexcused absences from treatment or programming to complete Phase IV and successfully complete the Oakland Reentry Court Program.

❖ **Phase IV exit essay: How have you tied all of your experiences in Reentry Court together to “Take the show on the road?” How is life simpler now than when you started the program? How is life more complicated now than when you started the program? What resources do you need to continue achieving success as you take the show on the road? What changes are you the most proud of in yourself? What resources do you need to sustain these changes after graduation? What obstacles have you encountered? How were you able to overcome those obstacles? What did you learn about yourself in the process?**

Aftercare: Taking the Show on the Road: Sustaining a pro-social lifestyle with an increased level of independence

In Aftercare, transitioning out of the reentry court program is likened to “Taking the show on the Road.” Just as a traveling circus takes all of its performers and exhibitions on the road so too a participant must continue to implement the strategies and techniques that were learned through the four phases of the program. The goal of aftercare is to offer the participant continued support as they navigate life with a greater degree of independence and autonomy. Much of the structure of aftercare will be tailored to fit the unique needs of each participant, but regular group attendance will be a requirement throughout the aftercare period. Even after graduation, the participant will still have access to all of the support that was present while they were in the reentry court program.

- The remaining term of post-conviction supervision after the reduction of the sentence has been awarded
- Individualized aftercare plan to be developed with Reentry Court Probation Officer based on needs specific to each graduate of the San Francisco Reentry Court Program
- Monthly community contact
- To encourage support and mentorship, **reentry court graduates will participate in monthly group meetings with other participants**
- Aftercare assignment: In collaboration with service providers, complete and submit an approved comprehensive relapse prevention plan.

Measuring Progress

Participation will last for no less than 12 months (52 weeks) of satisfactory performance. The 12 months need not be consecutive. Participation shall not exceed 24 months. The U.S. Probation Office will chart the progress of each participant to include: length of sobriety; attendance and participation in all required court programming (CBT, substance abuse/mental health treatment, employment/life skills planning).

Incentives

- Reduced supervision upon successful completion of Reentry Court
- Public acknowledgement of success by the Court
- Promotion certificates at each step and graduation
- Graduation reception
- **May also include: Gift certificates, Candy, or Bus passes**

*Above list are possibilities of incentives and not inclusive.

Sanctions

- No credit given toward 52-week program total for any period in which performance is unsatisfactory
- Judicial reprimand
- Curfew adjustment
- Geographic and association restrictions
- Location monitoring
- Placement in a Residential Reentry Center
- Custody period

- Referral to the district court for revocation of supervised release, imprisonment, or suspension from the program

* The Court reserves discretion on imposing sanctions.

Policy on missed groups, individual appointments, and drug tests

It is required that every participant notify their probation officer for any missed groups, individual appointments, or drug tests.

All unexcused absences will be staffed by the Reentry Court team for a joint, appropriate Court action.

Minimum Requirements for Graduation

- Stable living arrangement
- Must be employed unless excused for acceptable reasons (e.g. school, training)
- No unexcused court sessions
- At least 8 months clean and sober

Termination

All serious non-compliance will be staffed with the reentry Court team to determine if the conduct warrants termination.

An example of serious non-compliance may include, but not limited to, continual failure to appear for group sessions, appointments, and any arrest for a **Grade A or B** violation.