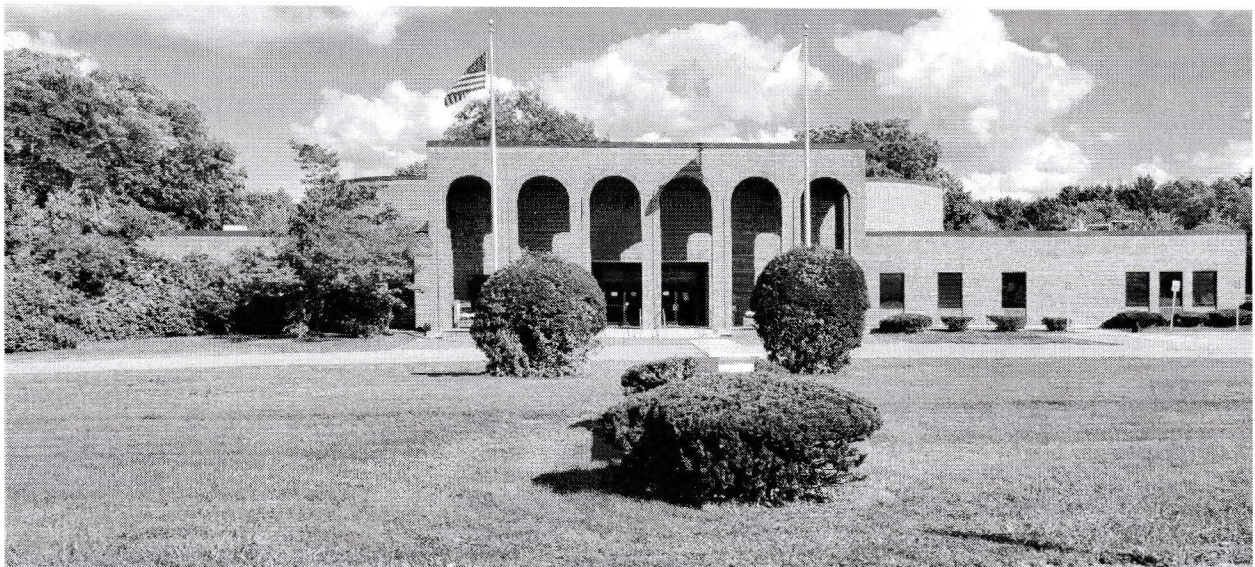


The Mental Health Session

at

Concord District Court



Enhancing public safety, treatment and quality of life for the community

A collaboration between the Concord District Court and the Department of Mental Health

What is The Mental Health Session at Concord District Court?

The Concord Mental Health Session (CMHS) is a special session of the Concord District Court. The CMHS is a court ordered condition of probation for defendants before the court who have serious mental health issues or co-occurring mental health and alcohol/substance abuse issues. Participation will be for individuals who have been placed on pre-trial probation or post-disposition probation. Participation is voluntary and your decision to participate is made in consultation with your attorney.

A. How do I get involved in the CMHS and what happens after I'm involved?

Recommendations for participation in the CMHS can be initiated by law enforcement, treatment providers, probation officers, attorneys, family members and interested participants by contacting the Clinical Coordinator directly and completing a referral form. A Judge will order you to participate in a brief screening with the CMHS Clinical Coordinator, who will make a recommendation as to whether or not you should be part of the CMHS at your next court date. You will be asked to sign releases of information for the Clinical Coordinator, in order to gather all the information needed from outside agencies. Once the screen is completed, the CMHS team will determine if the program is fitting. If you are determined to be an appropriate participant for the CMHS, you will discuss your desire to participate with your attorney. If you are ordered to attend the CMHS, it will become a condition of your probation and this will be explained to you by your attorney. Once you have decided to participate and have been ordered to the CMHS by a Judge, the Clinical Coordinator will perform an assessment of what services you need. From the assessment a personalized Service Plan will be designed. In order to participate in this program, you must agree to comply with your Service Plan and with all the terms and conditions of your probation or conditions of release. You will have regular communication with the CMHS Probation Officer and Clinical Coordinator.

B. How long will I be involved in the CMHS?

The length of participation in the CMHS is determined by a Judge and can last up to 24 months. While you are participating in the CMHS, the court will monitor your participation and progress in services through regular updates from the Clinical Coordinator and the Probation Officer assigned to work with you. Sessions will be held at least twice a month unless otherwise specified. Credit will be given for attendance and compliance with your Service Plan.

Graduation Requirements: In order to graduate, you need to be involved in the CMHS for at least 12 months. You need to remain alcohol/drug free, take prescribed medications, attend all scheduled CMHS appearances and participate in treatment.

C. *What's in it for me?*

Recovery Support: You will design your personal Service Plan with the Clinical Coordinator to identify areas of need. The CMHS will assist in connecting you with appropriate services and treatment providers.

Recognition of Progress: As you progress your achievements will be recognized during court sessions.

Opportunity: The CMHS offers you a chance to avoid incarceration on your current charges and to move forward in your life, based upon full cooperation with all conditions of probation. If you are on pre-trial probation, the CMHS offers you the chance to have your case dismissed and no conviction entered on your criminal record.

D. *What are the rules of the CMHS?*

Report to your Probation Officer as required under the terms and conditions of your probation contract.

Your Probation Officer will work closely with the Clinical Coordinator and the Judge to make sure you are able to comply with your conditions of probation and your Service Plan. Your Probation Officer may also do home visits or program visits.

Appear in court as scheduled

You will be required to appear in front of CMHS Judge at Concord District Court on a regular basis. Progress reports will be given regarding your attendance, participation in services and other components of your Service Plan by the CMHS Probation Officer and Clinical Coordinator. The Judge will ask you about your progress and discuss any problems you may be having. Some of this will be discussed in open court.

Follow my Service Plan

Your Service Plan will include, but may not be limited to, some or all of the following components, depending on your treatment needs.

- Medications
- Regular appointments with CMHS Clinical Coordinator
- Participation in outpatient counseling or day treatment
- Participation in substance abuse treatment
- No new arrests
- No alcohol or drugs (except with a valid prescription)
- Pay restitution if ordered by the court
- Remain away or have no contact with another person or certain areas if ordered by the Court
- GPS Monitoring

Your Service Plan may change as your needs change.

Medications

It is extremely important that you take the medications that your mental health provider prescribes for you. For most participants, medications are essential for managing symptoms and living successfully in the community. If you have complaints about your medications, you must tell the Clinical Coordinator as well as the prescriber. Refusal or repeated failure to take medication may result in sanctions being imposed by the Judge. Before any sanctions are imposed, you will have the opportunity to explain your reasons for not taking medications to the CMHS team.

Mental Health Treatment

Your Service Plan will require that you participate in mental health services. Your treatment providers will tell your Clinical Coordinator and Probation Officer when you are attending, when you are absent and how you are doing in your program. You must attend all scheduled treatment appointments and follow all the rules of your treatment program.

Alcohol and Other Substance Use

You will be asked about your history of substance use, and you may be required to give urine samples on a random basis during your participation in the program. You may be required to attend drug or alcohol treatment as part of your personal Service Plan. As with your mental health treatment, you must attend all scheduled substance appointments and follow all rules of your treatment program. Your substance abuse treatment provider(s) will tell your Clinical Coordinator and Probation Officer how your attendance is and how well you are doing. You will not be allowed to use illegal substances, alcohol or prescription medication that has not been prescribed to you during your participation in the CMHS.

Case Management Services

The Clinical Coordinator will assess your needs for services, develop your personal Service Plan and coordinate services with you in the community. You are required to cooperate with the Clinical Coordinator through regular communication and signing releases of information as requested. The Clinical Coordinator will provide information to the CMHS team and Judge concerning your progress. You may also be referred to additional community-based intensive and supportive case managers that will help you coordinate the services that you need in the community. Your Service Plan may require you to accept the services of a community-based case manager, who will visit you in

your home and at your treatment program and assist you with getting a variety of services.

E. *What happens if I do not follow the rules of the CMHS?*

All the rules and requirements of your participation in the CMHS are conditions of your probation or conditions of release and there are consequences (both good and bad) for your conduct while you are a participant in the program. If you cooperate with your Service Plan, conditions of probation and live a crime-free life in the community, you will be acknowledged and rewarded in a number of different ways. If you fail to comply with your service plan, conditions of probation, or commit any new offenses, you will be sanctioned. Ultimately, good participation and compliance with treatment will be rewarded, and non-compliance with terms of probation will result in sanctions, to include issuance of a surrender, revocation of probation which may result in incarceration.

Incentives

Potential rewards for cooperation and progress include:

- Recognition of Progress in Court
- Reduced frequency of appearances before the Court
- Avoidance of Incarceration
- Certificate of Completion
- Potential waiver of fees

Infractions

The following events will be treated as infractions:

- Missed treatment appointments
- Missed Court appearances without valid justification
- Failure/Refusal to take medications without valid rationale
- Refusal to give urine sample
- Positive urine sample
- Violation of rules of service program
- Threatening behavior, including verbal or non-verbal threat of violence
- Other non-compliance with your Service Plan
- Use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol