

# Family Recovery Court Participant Guide

Welcome, and congratulations on joining the Family Recovery Court (FRC) program! FRC is committed in our mission to provide support, resources, knowledge, and encouragement to help you in your recovery journey.

This participant guide will introduce some important aspects of this program that you will want to know and should serve to help navigate your participation in FRC to a successful and positive outcome. There's much work to be done, so let's get started!



**“Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.”**

**Carl Bard**

# FRC Team

The FRC Team maintains contact about your progress, strengths, and challenges with the goal to support you and provide accountability throughout your time with Family Recovery Court.

## **Judicial Officers**

Laura M. Riquelme, Judge

Heather Shand, Comm.

## **FRC Coordinators**

David Moreno

Kelli Frazier

## **Attorney General Representative(s)**

Amela Zukic

Sarah Reyes

## **Attorneys for Parents**

Wendy Wall

Sandra McPhee

Kim Carrington

## **Guardian ad Litem**

Eugenia (Nina) Thompson

## **Social Workers**

Brittany Bates (DCYF)

Michael Anter (OPD)

Hillary Mower (DCYF)

Chris Page (OPD)

## **Substance use Disorder Treatment Provider**

Natalie Miller: Catholic Community Services

## **PCAP Representative**

Leslie Mingo: Brigid Collins

## **Behavioral Health Coordinator**

Christi Brua Weaver: Skagit County Public Health

# FRC Roles

## **Judicial Officer**

- Presides over FRC program
- Leads team in staffing sessions and policy meetings
- Maintains and conducts FRC proceedings to ensure program integrity
- Grants rewards or imposes responses in conjunction with the FRC team in accordance with FRC guidelines.
- Encourages and motivates FRC team and participants

## **FRC Coordinator**

- Facilitates and monitors FRC program
- Provides support to all team members
- Facilitates communication between team members
- Facilitates physical or virtual hearing rooms for staffing and FRC hearings
- Maintains incentives/rewards for participants

## **Attorney General Representative**

- Facilitates participants' entry into or exit from FRC program
- Supports FRC program by advocating for the interests and safety of all interested parties
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on progress of participants
- Maintains and provide FRC orders according to FRC guidelines and decisions from team or judicial officer

## **Attorney for Parents/Participant**

- Facilitates participant's entry or exit from FRC program
- Supports FRC program by advocating for the participant's stated interests for fair and equal participation in FRC and advancement of families in FRC
- Keeps participant informed of their legal options and conditions that promotes their best interests and participation in FRC
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on participant's progress

## **Guardian Ad Litem**

- Supports FRC by advocating for the interests and safety of the children and advancement of families in FRC
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on participants' progress
- Provides latest updates and information to FRC team pertinent to the children of the FRC program participants

## **Social Worker**

- Supports FRC program by advocating for the interest and safety of all interested parties and advancement of families in FRC
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on participants' progress
- Provides latest updates and information to FRC team pertinent to the FRC program and its participants

## **Substance Use Disorder Treatment Provider**

- Meets with participants and conducts intake to develop and monitor a safe and individualized treatment program
- Makes recommendations to FRC team regarding treatment aspects of participants
- Facilitates substance and alcohol testing as required
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on participants' progress
- Provides latest updates and information to FRC team pertinent to the FRC program and its participants

## **PCAP Representative**

- Helps to find and provide variety of support to FRC participants
- Attends FRC staffing and hearings to help assess and advise on participants' progress
- Provides latest updates and information to FRC team pertinent to the FRC program and its participants

## **FRC Participant**

- Attends all FRC hearings and court-ordered services, meetings, and random testing in a respectful and courteous manner
- Abstains from the use of illegal substances, alcohol, and any other substance not authorized by the FRC team
- Provides and signs any and all required forms, such as ROIs (releases of information), confidentiality agreement, and FRC orders
- Follows FRC team directions and FRC orders as they are provided by the court
- Engages with the program and their recovery

**FRC Hearings are held every other Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.  
in Skagit County Superior Court.**

**Participants are expected to appear in-person in Superior Court for their court appearances in Family Recovery Court, unless they have received other information from the team.**

Depending on dynamics related to medical emergencies, illness, or if a participant is in an inpatient treatment facility, FRC hearings may be available to participants on Zoom.

Check with your attorney or treatment provider if you have questions about how you are expected to appear for court.

***\*For an expanded and detailed overview of the FRC program, please refer to the Skagit County Family Recovery Court Policy and Procedures or consult with your attorney.***

# Program Overview

## **What is FRC?**

Family Recovery Court is dedicated to supporting participants through recovery with tools, education, and resources with a goal of putting participants in a better position for potential reunification with their children.

Through the dedicated professionals of the FRC program and team, there can be additional resources participants can be eligible for such as basic needs, housing, transportation, healthy activities, and educational opportunities.

## **Where is FRC?**

FRC hearings are held every other Tuesday at 1:30 p.m., excluding some holidays, at the Superior Court House of Skagit Co. located at **205 W. Kincaid St, Mt. Vernon WA, 98273.**

Attendance is mandatory and as directed by FRC court order.

## **Where can I get additional support?**

In addition to the DCYF and OPD social workers, your treatment provider is an excellent resource not just for anything related to your substance use disorder treatment, but also for assistance with housing, food, transportation, childcare, and other needs.

Please let your provider know if there are other areas in your life where you could use some extra assistance so the FRC team can make efforts to meet those needs.

# FRC Rules and Requirements

Program rules are as follows but not limited to...

- No possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or other inappropriate substances
- Attend all scheduled court dates in a prompt and respectful manner, observing courtroom rules, attire, and etiquette
- Maintain confidentiality regarding FRC participants and hearings
- Attend and participate in all court-ordered services in a respectful and courteous manner
- Submit to all drug and alcohol testing when so required
- Adhere to the requirements of FRC drug and alcohol policies and orders
- Meet or report to FRC team members or service providers when so directed (such as meetings with social workers, substance abuse treatment provider, and intake providers) in a respectful and courteous manner
- Comply with all FRC and dependency court orders such as assessments, classes, child visits, and all other services as participation in dependency court to maintain compliance with FRC
- Be honest at all times with FRC court, team, social workers, treatment providers, and other members in the FRC program

## **FRC PHASES**

In order for successful completion of the FRC program, participants must work their way through a series of phases. Each phase has its own set of time and compliance requirements that must be satisfied before the starting of a higher phase.

Each week of FRC, the judge or commissioner will say whether you are in compliance or not in compliance with the program's requirements. The expectations of each phase are attached.

Noncompliance findings can delay advancement of phases and prolong time in the program. Completing phases depends on meeting current phase

requirements and the submission of written request to advance to the next phase, which must be approved by the FRC team or judicial officer. A written request must be submitted in a timely manner in order to be considered in the current FRC week.

Please refer to the Phase attachment for your current phase, its requirements, and the length of the phase.

### **Incentives, Rewards, and Responses**

Compliance with phase requirements will be met with incentives to encourage each participant's success in the program. Rewards may include verbal recognition and praise from the court, applause, advancement in phases, certificates of completion, and a variety of prize drawings.

Findings of non-compliance or lack in progress can be met with therapeutic responses to address the non-compliant behaviors up to and including termination from program after careful consideration by the FRC team in accordance with FRC guidelines.

Please refer to the Response chart in your binder, which explains what responses you could receive for various types of behavior.

## **PROCEDURES CONCERNING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

### **Prohibited Substances**

FRC participants are expected to abstain from all mood enhancing substances. This includes alcohol, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, other illegal drugs, ADHD medications like Adderall or Ritalin, and opiate-based prescription medications. It also includes any other substance, such as spice, bath salts, kratom, or any other mood-altering substance or practice (like huffing) that is available or invented now or in the future. See below about prescribed medications.

### **Drug and Alcohol Testing**

FRC believes that drug and alcohol testing is central to monitoring participants' compliance. Tests are administered randomly or at scheduled



intervals in accordance with each participant's phase in the program. Most testing in FRC is performed by urinalysis testing, however other types of testing may be ordered to reflect the concerns of the team with respect to use. Such testing may include hair follicle analysis or cheek swabs. **A missed test is considered a positive result.**

## **Testing Procedures**

Drug and alcohol testing occurs on a random basis throughout the entire FRC program. Every sample is directly observed by a same-gender employee of the treatment agency. Participants must call the treatment provider's color-coded UA number daily, even on weekends. If the participant's assigned color comes up, they will be required to report to the treatment agency to complete a UA that day during the designated time frame.

Test results received from the laboratory are considered by the team to be accurate and final. Only the first test provided to the treatment agency on any given day will be accepted by the court for purposes of determining compliance. Additional tests paid for privately at the treatment agency, a hospital, or other treatment facility will not be considered by the court for any purpose, regardless of the results.

The FRC team is informed of all test results. A positive test result includes:

- Positive for prohibited substance(s)
- Refusal or inability to provide a sample
- Failure to provide a sample within the provided time frames
- No-shows or missed tests
- Tests that were tampered with
- Diluted test results (see below)
- High creatinine test results

All results will be reported to the FRC team. Positive test results will result in responses appropriate to the phase, attitude, history, and actions of the participant pursuant to the response chart in Appendix F.

Due to decreased availability of UA testing, cheek swabs or other forms of testing for substances will be accepted by the team. Regardless of the type

of test offered, all participants are required to participate in the testing as directed by their treatment provider and/or social worker.

### **Diluted Tests / Low Creatinine**

If creatinine levels test at 20 mg/dl or below, the sample is too diluted to provide accurate results, regardless of any other aspects of the test (i.e. gravity, etc.). These tests are invalid and are considered positive UAs.

Creatinine is a chemical waste product of muscle metabolism. When kidneys function normally, they filter creatinine and other waste products from the blood. These waste products are removed from the body through urination.

Participants are instructed not to drink more than 20 ounces of any liquid within one (1) hour of providing their urine samples. They are further advised to provide their samples as early in the day as possible and eat regular, nutritionally well-balanced meals. Protein increases creatinine, but caffeine, energy drinks, and water reduce creatinine.

### **Prescription Medication**

Except as discussed below, FRC has a no tolerance policy for prescriptive pain medication or other addictive medications or drugs of any kind.

Medication Assisted Treatment: Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) may be used as deemed medically appropriate for participants by a medical professional. The Skagit County Superior Court MAT Policy will be followed by FRC.

### **Ongoing Prescription Medication**

Medication may be used in FRC if a participant has a valid prescription, uses the medication as prescribed, and certain parameters are in place to ensure that there is transparency with the treatment provider and the team. This is to prevent misuse and to support the participant in their recovery.

If a participant is already prescribed a pain, ADHD, or other addictive or potentially mood-altering substance or will be prescribed such a substance, the participant must immediately:

- Inform the prescriber of that medication that they are in active recovery for a substance use disorder.
- Inform the treatment provider of the prescription (or any changes to it) when the participant becomes aware of the prescription or the potential need for the prescription in order to develop a plan and sign releases of information.
- Provide a copy of the prescription and any changes to the prescription to the provider.
- Sign releases of information with the treatment provider and the prescriber allowing them to communicate about the prescription, the participant's risk of misuse of the prescription, the participant's substance use disorder treatment, and any necessary management and oversight of the prescription to promote the participant's recovery.
- Work with the treatment provider and the prescriber as requested to properly manage the prescribed medication within the context of the participant's recovery.
- Provide random drug tests upon request by the treatment provider and/or the prescriber.

Random drug testing will test levels to ensure adherence to the medication plan developed between the participant, the provider, and the prescriber.

### Serious Emergencies

If a participant is in a serious accident or has a serious acute medical emergency, they must follow these steps:

1. Notify all medical providers that they are in a drug court and are not allowed to take prescriptive narcotic pain medication.
2. If the medical care provider insists on administering prescribed narcotic pain medication, the participant must follow these steps:
  - Call their substance use disorder treatment provider and/or social worker about the medical situation and all prescribed or administered medication. If possible, this should be done before taking the medication. If not possible, this must take place at the first opportunity to contact the social worker or substance use disorder treatment provider following administration of the medication.

- Sign all releases between the substance use disorder treatment provider and the medical provider.
  - Obtain and immediately provide to the court copies of all prescriptions and medical records related to the emergency.
  - Meet with or call the substance use disorder treatment provider at the first opportunity following administration of the medication to discuss the matter and follow the provider's recommendations.
3. If the team permits the participant to continue taking the prescribed medication, the participant must take the medication using the precautions as directed by the team. The participant must also stop taking the prescribed medication as soon as their physician says it is possible.
4. Bring any unused medication to the court for disposal/destruction.

### Planned Surgeries or Other Medical Care or Treatment

If a surgery or other medical procedure is scheduled that may require pain medication, participants must:

- Discuss the matter with their treatment provider, social worker, and the team as far in advance of the procedure as possible.
- If taking narcotic pain medication is approved by the treatment provider, the participant must follow the steps in 4. and 5. in the "Serious Emergencies" section, above.

Failure to follow the steps outlined above will be a serious violation of FRC rules and will result in a response.

## **COURTROOM CONDUCT**

Failure to follow courtroom rules of conduct could result a finding of noncompliance for the week and a response. The following rules apply at all times in the courtroom:

**Arrive on time and remain until FRC has adjourned (ended).**  
Participants must care for their personal needs before entering the courtroom for FRC.

**Turn off cell phones** and other electronic devices before entering the courtroom.

**Food, drink, and gum are not allowed** unless with advance permission from the commissioner or judge.

**Tell the truth** to the court at all times. Withholding information is the same as a lie.

**No profanity and/or offensive language** will be tolerated.

**Watch and listen to the proceedings.** Everyone must pay attention to what is happening in court and refrain from speaking with other individuals while court is in session.

**Proper attire** must be worn. Participants in need of courtroom clothing should speak with their attorney or the social worker. The following are not allowed in court:

exposed midriffs; shorts; hats; mini-skirts/dresses; skirts or dresses with slits higher than mid-thigh; tank tops; halter tops; muscle shirts; see-through fabric; clothing with drug/alcohol/violent themes; gang attire; shirts with plunging or revealing necklines; sunglasses, and; pants that sag below the underwear waistline.

When a participant's case is called, they are expected to stand at the microphone and speak clearly. The commissioner or judge will engage in a conversation about the participant's progress in FRC. The commissioner or judge should always be addressed as "Your Honor."

Participants must bring their binders to each court appearance as well as proof of sober support meetings since the last FRC. The binders should include the participants' current **colored** meeting slips, calendars, and court orders.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Participants and members of the FRC team are not allowed to discuss the substance or merits of the underlying dependency case with the judge without the presence of all attorneys to the case. This includes direct discussions and communications that could lead to an appearance of impropriety.

## **GRADUATION FROM FRC**

Participants who have met all phase requirements and believe they are ready to graduate must request and participate in an interview with FRC team in order to complete program. At this stage of the program, the participant should be able to identify, articulate, and demonstrate knowledge and abilities that show what they have gained through their participation in FRC. In turn, the FRC team will review ways the program has benefited the participant, discuss their challenges and successes, and engage in a discussion with the participant about their future plans and goals. At this stage, FRC would welcome any suggestions or ideas from the participant on changes that may benefit the program and future participants in FRC.

*\*For an expanded and detailed overview of the FRC program, please refer to the Skagit County Family Recovery Court Policy and Procedures or consult with your attorney.*

**We are very excited to work with you on this intense and personal journey in your RECOVERY! The FRC team is ready to work with you as you gain new and transformative insights and knowledge of yourself that can lead to a whole new life for you and your loved ones.**

**We are dedicated to commit our time energy to create a safe and positive space that will encourage you to work on sustained RECOVERY. We're ready to start when you're ready to GO!**

**-The FRC Team.**

# Resources and Contacts

## Parents' Attorneys

Wendy Wall	<a href="mailto:wendy@wallincps.com">wendy@wallincps.com</a>	(360) 336-2288
Kim Carrington	<a href="mailto:carringtonlawllc@gmail.com">carringtonlawllc@gmail.com</a>	(816) 319-8969
Sandy McPhee	<a href="mailto:email@sandymcpheelaw.com">email@sandymcpheelaw.com</a>	

## Social Workers

Brittany Bates	<a href="mailto:brittany.bates@dcyf.wa.gov">brittany.bates@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	(360) 899-0620
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For more information on services provided visit:  
[www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/)

Michael Anter	<a href="mailto:prpswmikeanter@aol.com">prpswmikeanter@aol.com</a>	(425) 330-0853
Chris Page	<a href="mailto:chriscpageprp@gmail.com">chriscpageprp@gmail.com</a>	(360) 207-7088

## Substance Use Disorder Treatment Provider

Natalie Miller	<a href="mailto:NMiller@ccsww.org">NMiller@ccsww.org</a>	(360) 757-0131
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For more information on services provided visit:  
[ccsww.org/get-help/skagit-county/](http://ccsww.org/get-help/skagit-county/)

## Brigid Collins PCAP Representative

Leslie Mingo	<a href="mailto:lmingo@brigidcollins.org">lmingo@brigidcollins.org</a>	(360) 540-1540
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For more information on services provided visit:  
[www.brigidcollins.org/pcap/](http://www.brigidcollins.org/pcap/)

## Superior Court FRC

David Moreno	<a href="mailto:dmoreno@co.skagit.wa.us">dmoreno@co.skagit.wa.us</a>	(360) 416-1200
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For more information on FRC visit:  
[skagitcounty.net/Departments/SuperiorCourt/specialtycourts/FTCmain.htm](http://skagitcounty.net/Departments/SuperiorCourt/specialtycourts/FTCmain.htm)