

Referral to Onondaga County CARE Court



WHAT IS CARE COURT?

The primary focus of the court is to rapidly connect individuals with substance use disorders who are arrested with misdemeanor and certain allowable felonies to treatment. CARE Court does not make promises to participants regarding the disposition of their criminal case. The CARE Court will connect participants with the services they need to become stable and sober. When they have completed CARE Court, your Court, defense counsel, and the district attorney's office will be notified and the legal proceedings will resume. In some instances, participants will be referred to another Problem Solving Court.

The Onondaga County CARE Court is presided over by the Honorable James H. Cecile, staff members, and agencies committed to help individuals stabilize and make positive changes.

This program follows the [10 Essential Elements of Opioid Intervention Courts](#) model.

IS THIS CASE ELIGIBLE?

1. Allowable felonies and Misdemeanor case.
2. Defendant is at high risk for drug overdose.
3. Defendant is willing to engage in substance use disorder treatment.

YES TO 1-3 = ELIGIBLE

HOW DO I REFER?

Use the CARE Court Referral Form OR Contact the CARE Court Resource Coordinator at 315-671-2805.

Adjourn case for 90 days to all for a stabilization period.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The participant is expected to:

- appear at CARE Court as directed,
- abstain from all mood-altering substances,
- comply with the intake process with their designated treatment facility,
- engage in random drug testing at court/treatment.

Individuals facing a violation of probation or probation misconduct can be considered for the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call Brigid Stone, CARE Court Resource Coordinator, at 315-671-2805.

ENTRY

1. The pre-entry form is used for screening; the process will identify the defendant's overdose history, current opioid use, pending criminal charges, history of substance use disorder treatment and willingness to enter substance use disorder treatment.
 - The program and expectations are explained to the defendant before entry.
2. At first appearance, the defendant will be interviewed by the CARE Court judge for consideration into the program.
 - Program expectations are reviewed, the defendant is provided a copy of expectations and program brochure.
 - A representative from the District Attorney's office and defense counsel are required to appear at every new participant entry.
 - CARE Court community treatment partners are present to give clinical advice and direction.
3. The case manager will meet with the new participant to complete an intake form. The participant intake form is used to collect the individual's demographics and identify any barriers.
 - When barriers (ex: transportation, insurance, need for referrals) are identified the case manager will assist in problem solving and connecting the individual to services.

SUSPENSION OF LEGAL PROCESS

1. Immediately after entry, the Resource Coordinator for the CARE Court will advise the defense attorney and the district attorney of the need to memorialize the suspended prosecution during the stabilization period.
2. CARE Court has implemented the *30-day Observation Period*.
 - During the first 30 days, participant progress is closely monitored and reviewed. If a participant fails to comply with CARE Court requirements, they are subject to discharge from the program and the participant will return to court of original jurisdiction. The judge will revoke pretrial release at their discretion and if applicable.
 - This is a voluntary program and participants can choose to leave the program at any time. If they leave the program early or are released from the program due to non-compliance, the court of jurisdiction is notified immediately.
 - When an individual completes the 90-day program a summary of their progress will be sent to the court of jurisdiction, defense attorney, Cayuga Counseling - Pretrial Services and Onondaga County District Attorney's office.

PARTICIPATION

Participants are required to participate in CARE Court every Monday-Friday, as directed by court staff.

- If a participant is successfully progressing through the program, the CARE Court Judge will explore the option of reporting less frequently, and possibly virtually, if barriers exist.
- Random drug testing is held at intervention court. Every participant is expected to comply with drug testing at court and treatment. In addition to substance use treatment each participant is offered to be connected to mental health therapy.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is addressed with every participant to ensure no barriers to daily reporting. Bus passes are available and the use of Medicaid cabs will be explored.