

CHEMUNG COUNTY

H.O.P.E COURT

(Heroin Overdose Prevention Effort)

Handbook for Participants



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Welcome to
Chemung County H.O.P.E Court
(Heroin Overdose Prevention Effort)



This Handbook is designed to:

- Answer questions
- Address concerns
- Provide information about HOPE Court

As a participant in the HOPE Court Program, you are expected to follow instructions given in Court by the Hope Court Judge and follow the treatment plan developed with you by the Coordinator and your treatment provider. This handbook will explain what is expected of you and will provide general program information.

Please feel free to share a copy of this handbook with your family and friends.

CHEMUNG COUNTY HOPE COURT

EXPECTATIONS

What is Hope Court?

The Chemung County **Hope** Court is a special part of Elmira City Court. It is a judicially supervised treatment program for people who face non-violent criminal charges and who also have a **substance use disorder**. **Hope** Court is a voluntary program that includes regular Court appearances before the HOPE Court Judge. If you are accepted into HOPE Court, you will be expected to follow a treatment plan, which may require changing some aspects of your life.

What is a treatment plan?

A Treatment Plan will begin with an evaluation conducted by staff at your treatment provider and in most cases, that will be Trinity.

This plan may include some of all the following:

- Check-ins with HOPE Court Coordinator
- Sessions with the HOPE Court Peer Advocate
- Outpatient Treatment
- Inpatient treatment/ Residential treatment
- Halfway House or Transitional Housing Placement
- Regular and random drug testing
- Counseling (individual and group)
- Mental Health counseling

Not following treatment recommendations may result in removal from the HOPE Court program and your case returning to the regular Court calendar. This will not mean that you are being discharged from any treatment you are enrolled in.

The Coordinator, Treatment Provider, and Peer Advocate will also help you with other areas of your life according to your individual needs. This may include referrals for:

- Safe and supportive housing
- Narcan training and supplies distribution
- Public Assistance/ SNAP
- Insurance navigation
- Recreational Activities
- Recovery supports

If such referrals are made, follow-up and participation will become a requirement of your treatment plan.

You are expected to follow these recommendations and referrals. If you refuse to follow your Treatment Plan if may result in your removal from the program.

How can I participate in the HOPE Court Program?

HOPE Court is a voluntary program. During plea bargaining or sentencing discussions on appropriate non-violent crimes you may be offered the choice of participating in Chemung County HOPE Court or remaining in Criminal Court for sentencing on your pending charges. Acceptance into the program will lead to your charges being placed on 'pause' as you work towards stabilization. Successful completion of the HOPE Court program may result in a more favorable sentence.

How Long will I be in HOPE Court?

The amount of time you spend in the HOPE Court program will be determined by your individual progress but will be no less than 3 months.

What's In it for me?

Access to Recovery Resources

HOPE Court staff can assist you in obtaining resources that you need that may have kept you in the same patterns of substance **abuse** and illegal activities from your past. These may include access to affordable housing, clothing, food and other basic necessities, medical insurance, transportation and recovery resources that you may not even be aware that you need.

A Legal "Pause":

HOPE Court is designed to save your life and to get you immediately connected to treatment services. Agreeing to participate and being accepted into HOPE Court means that your legal case is placed on a temporary pause until you are physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared to address your legal consequences.

A Lighter Sentence:

In most cases, successful completion of the HOPE Court program will result in having a lighter sentence imposed. (Talk to your attorney about your specific case.)

A Second Chance:

This program offers you the chance to achieve stability and move forward in your life by addressing the substance use issues that lead to your involvement in the criminal justice system.

A Healthy Lifestyle:

The HOPE Court program will help you take control of your life in many ways. Even more important than the things you will learn not to do (**such as abusing drugs and alcohol** and committing any more crimes) are the things you will learn how to do: practice self-care, advocate for yourself, find the recovery path that is the most effective for you and begin to learn skills that will help improve countless areas of your life.

Acknowledgment of your hard work:

The HOPE Court program recognizes the progress you make and provides incentives for your dedication to following your treatment plan.

We are here to help you!



RULES:

What are the rules and regulations?

To succeed in the HOPE Court program, there are certain expectations that must be followed:

1. Remain engaged in the stabilization process.
2. Attend all HOPE Court check-ins with the team.
3. Attend all scheduled treatment and support services appointments.
4. Abide by an 8:00pm curfew and check in with the Coordinator by 8:00pm every night.
5. Follow all treatment recommendations made by the Coordinator and clinical staff.
6. Honesty is the key to recovery. To participate in this program, you must be willing to remain honest and accountable.

ASK THE COORDINATOR OR DEFENSE ATTORNEY TO EXPLAIN TO YOU ANYTHING IN THIS HANDBOOK THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND!

What if I Don't Follow the Rules?

Not following the rules may lead to court responses in increasing severity and possible removal from the Hope Court program.

Some examples of rule violations include but are not limited to:

- New arrest or any other police contact
- Leaving or Termination from a Treatment Program
- Breaking the rules at a Treatment Program (not resulting in termination)
- Failure to take a drug test (urine screen and/or alcohol tests)
- Attempts to adulterate drug tests
- Missing or arriving late for group / individual treatment appointments / court appearances or any other HOPE Court appointments
- Failure to follow the direction of the HOPE Court Judge or Coordinator
- Demonstrating a lack of program progress

Incentives for progress in HOPE Court may include:

- Recognition from those in attendance
- Verbal praise by the Judge
- Encouragement from Judge and team
- Transition to independent recovery
- Credit towards Phase 1 of Drug Court

Responses in HOPE Court may include:

- Increased drug testing
- Increased frequency of HOPE Court appearances.
- Verbal admonishment
- Written assignments
- Returning case to regular Court calendar

In addition to the basic incentives – HOPE Court can provide participants with access to resources that can help them **stay clean** and keep them out of the judicial system. People who are actively participating in the HOPE Court program get help in accessing services and programs to help with things like housing, transportation, getting food or clothing and lots of other basic needs.

HOPE Court Overview

Court Supervision

You will be required to appear in front of the HOPE Court Judge on a regular basis. The Judge and the entire HOPE Court team will be given progress reports regarding your drug tests, attendance, and participation in your treatment program. These reports will come from the HOPE Court Coordinator, probation officer, treatment and/or mental health counselor, and the members of the HOPE Court support program with whom you are working. The Judge will ask you about your progress and discuss any problems you may be having.

Throughout your time in HOPE Court, you must come to Court as directed. If you are doing well, you will be encouraged to continue working towards the goal of a transition from HOPE Court supervised recovery to another treatment court, such as the Chemung County Drug Court, or recovery independent of the Court System.

You are expected to arrive on time and stay until court is finished unless the Judge dismisses you earlier. This also applies to virtual Court check-ins.

Treatment Attendance

As a HOPE Court participant, you are required to attend all of your scheduled Treatment sessions in addition to your Hope Court appearances.

Treatment sessions include group and individual counseling, peer support services, and all other sessions as directed. You will be on time for all sessions. If you are late, you may not be allowed to attend and may be considered absent. You are responsible for scheduling all needed appointments and for your prompt appearance at all of them.

Required Paperwork

All members of the HOPE Court Team must be able to communicate about your eligibility for and progress in the program. Prior to entry into HOPE Court, you will be required to sign releases of information to allow this to happen. You must also sign additional releases as needed to arrange further treatment, counseling, or support services referrals.

Legal Paperwork

All HOPE Court participants will be required to sign a HOPE Court Waiver of Speedy Trial. Your lawyer will also sign this document. In addition, your lawyer will sign a Consent of Defense Counsel to Ex Parte Communications. This allows HOPE Court staff to be able to evaluate you and communicate with you about your legal situation without your lawyer having to be present.

Remember that moving successfully through the program will be based upon your own progress and your ability to stay focused on what you must do to meet all HOPE Court expectations and rules.

Completion of HOPE Court

The Program Expectations are explained in the following pages. They are your steps to your recovery.



STEPS TO RECOVERY!

HOPE COURT PROCESS

The Chemung County HOPE Court is a program that lasts a minimum of 90 days. Total program length is based upon individual progress. Progress, in this case, is measured by demonstrating that your life and your recovery is stable enough to move forward in dealing with your legal issues and treatment recommendations.

HOPE Court Intake:

During this time the HOPE Court staff will work with you to monitor the development of your treatment plan and to answer any questions you have about the program.

During Intake you will:

- Complete an intake interview and substance abuse evaluation with the HOPE Court Staff
- Submit to random drug screenings and alcohol sensor tests
- Attend HOPE Court Sessions
- Indicate your acceptance of treatment recommendations and your desire to cooperate with the HOPE Court Program

If you are not already involved in a substance abuse treatment program, you will be referred for treatment (inpatient or outpatient, depending on level of need) and you need to follow all treatment recommendations.

Treatment Expectations:

There are several things to keep in mind when engaging in substance abuse treatment when you are participating in HOPE Court. Here are some more specifics:

- Your treatment provider and Peer Advocate work with the courts but are employees of CASA Trinity of Chemung County. Any outpatient treatment referral will be to that program as it allows us to have access to a wide range of information regarding your progress in treatment
- While the HOPE Court Coordinator may do your initial evaluation and treatment recommendation, all therapeutic decisions made beyond that point will be up to the treatment team at Trinity. HOPE Court staff will simply be monitoring your progress and reinforcing their clinical decisions. HOPE Court staff and Trinity work as a team to manage your care.

Peer Support Services:

As part of the Hope Court program, you will be expected to work with a Peer Specialist. A Peer Specialist is an individual in sustained recovery, who not only provides a source of support but also can assist you with working through any barriers you may be experiencing. There are many benefits to working with a Peer, including but not limited to:

- Peer Specialists have lived experience as individuals in recovery and can provide support and understanding from the perspective of someone who has experienced substance use disorder.
- Peer Specialists help with navigating and connecting with the various resources available in the community.
- Peer Specialists provide advocacy and support during the recovery process.
- Peer Specialists assist with skill building and promote self-empowerment to meet recovery goals.

Legal Expectations:

As one would expect, there are still legal expectations for HOPE Court participants to keep in mind, including:

- In most cases, your criminal case will be put “on pause” for 90 days. During this time, you are expected to work on getting and keeping yourself **clean** from all illicit substances.
- If you have been instructed to attend a court session, YOU MUST ATTEND. If you have questions about these sessions, you can ask the HOPE Court Judge or Coordinator.
- Following successful completion of HOPE Court, you may find that some charges may be reduced or dropped altogether, or sentencing can be positively affected for successful completion.
- You are asked to contact the HOPE Court Coordinator every day of the week, including on weekends and holidays, on their cell phone at 607-221-3758. This must be completed by 8pm every day. Failure to do so can result in an infraction being noted in your case file.
- Any new charges that you get while participating in HOPE Court may result in your dismissal from the program.

Relapse Triggers and Relapse Prevention

Relapse and triggers happen at any time, in many ways. The Coordinator and treatment counselor will help you identify them and discuss ways to either prevent bad situations or to work through them when they cannot be avoided.

Relapse Triggers Can include:

- Hanging around people who are actively using
- Going to places where you used in the past
- Spending time thinking about the “good times”
- Bad luck, disappointment
- Good luck, celebration events, holidays
- Taking certain medicines, even if prescribed



Important Names and Numbers

My treatment Agency/Counselor's name and phone number:

My Peer Advocate's name and phone number:

My Attorney's name, address, and phone number:

My thoughts, notes, important names, numbers, and appointment reminders:
