

Family Reunification through Recovery Court Referral Handbook

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You've Been Referred to the Family Reunification through Recovery Court (FRRC). Now what?

If you were referred at the shelter care hearing by a Magistrate, the Magistrate likely issued orders requiring you to:

1. Meet with the FRRC Coordinator.
 - Constance Sales is the FRRC Coordinator, and she can be reached by calling 330.643.4547 or by emailing her at csales@cpccourt.summitoh.net.
2. Observe an FRRC hearing.
 - FRRC hearings are held every Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
 - You are encouraged to observe in-person, but you can also arrange to observe by Zoom videoconferencing through Ms. Sales.
3. Obtain a substance use assessment or sign a release of information to provide a recently completed substance use assessment to the FRRC staff.
 - If you have completed a substance use assessment within the last six months you can sign a release of information allowing that agency to provide Ms. Sales with the assessment.
 - If you have not completed a substance use assessment within the last six months, Ms. Sales can help you schedule an assessment with an FRRC preferred provider.

If you were referred by someone other than a Magistrate, possibly your SCCS caseworker or attorney, we ask that you take the same steps as outlined above.

Why would I want to do this?

The Family Reunification through Recovery Court (FRRC) wants to quickly, creatively, and effectively partner with court-involved families to address substance use and other family challenges to create a healthy, stable home environment that allows the family to permanently reunify. FRRC is different than the traditional court process. In FRRC the Judge/FRRC Magistrate, Prosecutor, Defense Attorney, Summit County Children Services, and treatment providers work with you to help you meet the goals of your recovery plan so you can stay clean and sober, provide a stable home environment and work toward reunification with your child(ren).

“FRRC taught me to trust the process, the program showed me how to be a better mom in recovery. I probably wouldn't be clean and sober today if it wasn't for the FRRC program.”

M.R., FRRC Graduate

Am I eligible?

- Your family must have an open case with both SCCS and Summit County Juvenile Court (SCJC)
- You must have a recent substance use assessment with a current substance use disorder diagnosis.
- You *may* be excluded if you have a prior felony conviction for violence, sexual abuse or assault, or trafficking in any form of illegal or prescription substances.
- You *may* be excluded if currently involved with another specialized docket to avoid duplication of services.
- You *may* be excluded if they have prior children services involvement with any agency that resulted in the permanent surrender of a child.
- You *may* be excluded if you use a known drug of abuse (i.e., marijuana, opiates, amphetamines, etc.) with or without a valid recommendation or prescription to manage a chronic condition (i.e., pain, ADHD, PTSD, etc.).
- You must not have a mental illness or developmental delay that would prevent full, authentic program participation. Participants with co-occurring mental illness will be considered on a case-by-case basis; however, potential participants *may* be automatically excluded if previously diagnosed using the DSM-IV with a Personality Disorder or Mental Retardation other than Mild.

How do I get in?

Referral and Screening

Every effort is made to identify families that may benefit from FRRC as soon as possible and make a referral to the FRRC program. Once a referral is made, either formally by the Court or informally by any party, you should follow the steps in the “Now What” section to receive more information about whether the FRRC program is right for you.

Screening for the FRRC program is completed by the FRRC Coordinator. The FRRC Coordinator will:

1. Review program requirements with you and your attorney.
2. Conduct a brief interview with you.
3. Complete necessary releases of information for access to the limited information of substance use and mental health diagnoses from assessments.
4. Refer you to a FRRC preferred provider for a substance use and possibly mental health assessment if an assessment has not previously been completed; and
5. Provide you with any assistance you may need to make sure the assessment(s) is/are completed.

Ideally FRRC eligibility screening is completed no later than the dispositional hearing for the parent to be considered for FRRC participation – so **DO NOT WAIT!**

Clinical Assessment

You will be referred for a comprehensive substance abuse, mental health, and trauma assessment with an FRRC preferred provider. Generally, this assessment is completed within 7-10 business days of the referral. All chemical dependency, mental health and other programming assessments shall include available collateral information to ensure accuracy of the assessment. Services are arranged by SCCS and/or the FRRC program coordinator and conducted by programs or persons who are appropriately licensed and trained to deliver such services according to the standards of their profession. The clinical assessment confirms that the participant meets the FRRC's written clinical eligibility criteria and contains the recommended services the participant is to receive. The treatment team will consider, but is not obligated to follow, clinical assessments and/or recommendations. You must complete a release of information form to provide for communication about confidential information, participation/progress in treatment, and compliance with the provisions of relevant law, including HIPAA.

Acceptance into Docket

After meeting with the participant and reviewing the diagnostic information provided by the assessing agency, the FRRC Coordinator and SCCS caseworker will present the case to the FRRC team for a determination of eligibility no later than the treatment team meeting held immediately prior to the date of the hearing in which admission is sought. The FRRC Coordinator will inform the parties of the FRRC team eligibility determination as soon as possible prior to the hearing. The FRRC Coordinator will attend the hearing to speak to FRRC eligibility and provide the recommendation of the FRRC team to the Court.

Participation in FRRC is completely VOLUNTARY!
Meeting the eligibility criteria does not create a right to enter FRRC.

If willing to participate in FRRC, you will complete the FRRC Participation Agreement with your attorney. You may sign the participation agreement and be accepted into the FRRC at any point prior to or after the dispositional hearing, however most frequently participants enter the program at the dispositional hearing. The judge or FRRC magistrate has discretion to decide admission into the program. You will not begin participating in FRRC until you are ordered into the program by the Magistrate.

What will I have to do?

1. You are required to appear before the Judge or Magistrate at FRRC status hearings on Wednesdays at 3:30 or 4:30 as ordered by the Court. For at least the first 30 days you will be required to attend weekly.
2. You are required to meet with the FRRC coordinator as designated in their individual recovery plan.
3. You may be required to meet with the FRRC program coordinator at the coordinator's office or the FRRC program coordinator may meet with the participant at an agreed upon location in the community or at the participant's home.
4. You will be required to provide the FRRC program coordinator with any changes in contact information, living arrangements, employment, or medication within 1 business day of the change.
5. You must provide documentation of medical appointments, prescribed medications, community support meetings, paystubs, proof of employment, school schedules and any other documentation as required.
6. You will be required to submit to random and frequent drug testing as described in the Substance Use Monitoring Section of this handbook.
7. You will assist in creating a recovery plan based upon your individual needs. You will have prompt access to a range of appropriate and clinically necessary treatment and rehabilitation services. Services will be provided by appropriately licensed programs or persons who have agreed to be preferred providers for the FRRC program. Minimally, your recovery plan will be re-evaluated every time you move to a new phase.
8. You will be required to engage in the services outlined in your recovery plan, including attending recommended treatment services.

"The FRRC program not only gave me my life and my family back but helped me learn how to be a woman. Also taught me how to show up for life and be present for the world. "

A.F., FRRC Graduate

How does the judge or magistrate know?

The FRRC monitors each participant's performance and progress through the treatment team meetings and status review hearings. Treatment team meetings will be held every Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. The FRRC magistrate, or a substitute magistrate when necessary, chairs the treatment team meetings. The FRRC coordinator(s), FRRC director, prosecutor, defense counsel, SCCS caseworker and/or social work assistant and treatment providers will attend the treatment team meetings report on your progress on your recovery plan. Based on the progress reports, the FRRC team recommends appropriate responses to your behavior to the Court.