

Parenting in Recovery/ Travis County Family Drug Treatment Court Charter

Purpose

This charter is adopted by the Parenting in Recovery / Travis County Family Drug Treatment Court (PIR/FDTC) partners as a record of their unified mission and vision. It is intended to support the sustainability of the PIR/FDTC, promote accountability, and ensure consistency, as well as clarify roles and responsibilities of PIR/FDTC partners.

Introduction

The PIR/FDTC is a specialty court created to serve families who are already involved in the Child Protective Services (CPS) Court system due to substance use disorders. It is designed to effectively help parents recover from substance use disorders, guide them along the journey of recovery, and teach them to safely parent their children, thus reducing the incidence of child maltreatment.

History

The idea of a Parenting in Recovery/ Family Drug Treatment Court program first took root in Travis County in 2005, when several individuals came together to discuss the possibility of forming a drug court to serve families involved in the CPS system. These individuals were moved by the fact that a significant number of child abuse and neglect lawsuits in Travis County involved the substance use disorder of at least one parent. Family Drug Court models in other jurisdictions showed that children whose parents were involved with a Family Drug Court program spent less time in out-of-home care than children of parents who were not in a similar program. Data also showed that children of parents involved with a Family Drug Court program were more likely to be reunified with their parents, and parents had higher rates of treatment completion than their non-Family Drug Court participant counterparts.¹

In 2006, the PIR/FDTC founding members gathered a multi-disciplinary group of community partners, including judges, lawyers, social workers, child advocates, substance abuse treatment providers, and other community service providers. These agencies researched the efforts of existing drug courts and met to create a framework for the formation of a PIR/FDTC program in Travis County.

In 2007, grant-funding allowed for the hiring of a Drug Court Coordinator, provided start-up costs for the program, and funded substance abuse treatment services, housing and

¹ Family Treatment Drug Court Evaluation / NPC research, March 2007, http://npcresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/FTDC_Evaluation_Final_Report.pdf

wrap-around services. The program began serving clients in February 2008 and as of September 30th 2017; the program has assisted 248 parents and 348 children with achieving safe, healthy, and sober lifestyles.

In 2010, this charter was adopted by PIR/FDTC, to be reviewed, updated and reconfirmed by the partners on a regular basis as dictated by the charter.

Mission, Vision, Values

The **mission** of the PIR/FDTC is to provide a spectrum of court and community-based supports for parents involved in the child welfare system that promotes recovery from alcohol and drug addiction and encourages healthy lifestyle choices.

The **vision** of PIR/FDTC is for parent participants to become sober, responsible caregivers so they can ensure the safety and well-being of their children.

PIR/FDTC values:

- The best place for a child is at home, free from abuse and neglect, with clean and sober parents.
- PIR/FDTC effectively addresses participants' drug and alcohol abuse.
- PIR/FDTC empowers parents to make responsible decisions, lead self-sufficient lifestyles, and engage as family advocates and mentors to other program participants.
- Participating parents, partners, and systems are accountable to each other and the PIR/FDTC.
- PIR/FDTC provides a family-centered, strength-based, culturally competent, evidence-based, trauma-informed service delivery system.
- PIR/FDTC provides families access to a continuum of professional and community-based supports that encourages them to reach their highest potential.
- PIR/FDTC partner entities practice mutual respect, understand their roles and responsibilities, share a goal of improving the lives of children and families, and willingly consider adapting policies and procedures to better serve participants.
- The PIR/FDTC provides interdisciplinary training to partners that helps them develop the knowledge and skills required to effectively address participants' needs while remaining sensitive to the cultural diversity of families and communities.
- Partners share appropriate and relevant information/data to ensure an effective system of service delivery.
- A continuous process of data collection, evaluation, and program improvement ensures sustainability of positive outcomes, effective methods of practice, and diversity of funding.
- PIR/FDTC contributes to a stronger community by collaborating with community providers to sustain healthy, contributing parents who are productive members of our community.

Membership

This Charter contemplates a variety of opportunities for individuals and organizations to participate in the continued sustainability of the Parenting in Recovery/ Travis County Family Drug Treatment Court. Each level of participation is crucial to the success of the program.

The membership of PIR/FDTC will be comprised of two governing bodies: the Drug Court Team and the Advisory Committee, and one management body, the Management Team.

Management Team

Members: The management team will be comprised of the Drug Court coordinator, TCHHS administration, Drug Court services manager and any issue area experts deemed necessary by the management team.

Purpose: The management team is responsible for reviewing and vetting issues that impact the functioning of the drug court and providing potential solutions to the Drug Court Team and/or Advisory Committee for review and approval.

Length of participation: Members of the Management Team will serve indefinitely and meet, at minimum, twice a month.

Drug Court Team

Members: The Drug Court Team (DCT) of the PIR/FDTC will be made up of representatives who work directly with PIR/FDTC participants. The team will be comprised of representatives from the following entities: Travis County District Attorney's Office, Parent Attorney, Presiding Judge, Office of Child Representation, Child Protective Services, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA); and roles Substance Abuse Treatment, Peer Support services, Housing, Domestic Sexual Violence Advocacy services, Child and Family therapist, the Drug Court Coordinator, the Drug Court services Manager, and any other service provider(s) as agreed upon by the DCT.

Purpose: The DCT of the PIR/FDTC will oversee the operations and procedures of PIR/FDTC through:

- **PIR/FDTC Staff Meeting**, held prior to each PIR/FDTC docket to review participant compliance with court orders and make recommendations for the hearing on sanctions, dismissals, phase advancement and graduation.
- **Parenting in Recovery/ Family Drug Treatment Court Docket Review**, held weekly² to assess each participant's progress in PIR/FDTC.
- **Subcommittee of DCT – Case Management Team Meeting**, held bi-monthly to collaborate on PIR/FDTC participant service planning. The Case Management Team (CMT) is comprised of members designated by the DCT.

² PIR/FDTC is held weekly except on holidays and settlement week

- **Operations Meeting**, held monthly to review, discuss, and adjust the implementation of PIR/FDTC procedures. Additional duties of this meeting are to: 1) Review, amend, and approve documents, suggestions and references from the Management Team; 2) submit policy recommendations to the PIR/FDTC Advisory Committee; 3) refer issues to the Advisory Committee for resolution when there is an absence of consensus on the DCT 4) when deemed necessary by the Drug Court Team create and dissolve subcommittees The Presiding Judge and Drug Court Coordinator will facilitate Operations meetings.

Length of Participation: Members of the Drug Court Team will serve indefinitely except for the service providers (substance abuse treatment, housing, etc.), whose representatives may be subject to rotation as determined by the provider and/or consensus of the Drug Court Team. The membership of this committee may be expanded by the agreement of a majority of the members.

Advisory Committee

Members: The Advisory Committee of the PIR/FDTC will be made up of a leadership representative from each of the following entities: Travis County District Court, Travis County District Attorney's Office, Office of Child Representation, CASA, Travis County Health and Human Services, Department of Family and Protective Services; and roles, Attorney (experienced in representing parents in the CPS system and when possible familiar with PIR/FDTC), Substance abuse treatment provider at least three or more Community Representatives from these areas of specialization: Housing, Peer Recovery Support, Domestic Sexual Violence Advocacy, Mental Health, Case management, and/or Children's services; and a Drug Court Graduate and/or Family Representative³. Additionally, the Drug Court Coordinator and Drug Court services manager will attend the Advisory Committee meetings to represent the Drug Court Team. The committee meetings will be facilitated by a TCHHS staff member who is not a voting member. The membership of this committee may be expanded by the agreement of a majority of the members.

The committee chair will be selected by the committee members, at the January meeting and will serve for a one year term (January-December).

Purpose: The Advisory Committee of the Parenting in Recovery/ Family Drug Treatment Court will be responsible for the oversight and sustainability of the program. The Committee will:

- Approve PIR/FDTC policies
- Oversee sustainability efforts

³ Family Representative refers to an individual whose family member has been a participant in PIR/FDTC, or a parent or relative (fictive and kin) who has concluded involvement with Child Welfare and exposure to addiction and recovery.

- Monitor achievement of long-term goals
- Ensure an evaluation component
- Create and dissolve subcommittees

Length of Participation: Members of the Advisory Committee will serve indefinitely, with the exception of the Substance Abuse treatment provider and the Community Representatives. These positions can be subject to rotation as determined by consensus of the advisory committee. Each member of the Advisory Committee may identify one person who may serve as their designated representative if they are unable to attend a meeting. This representative has the right to participate and vote in the Committee Member's absence. Biannually (every two years) the members of the Advisory Committee shall renew their commitment to the PIR/FDTC by reviewing, approving and signing this charter which indicates their continued participation and support of PIR/FDTC. Each member shall sign the charter at the beginning of their budget cycle or no later than December 31st of that budget year. The advisory committee will facilitate a review of the charter, every two years, between January and June.

Meetings: The Advisory Committee will meet quarterly. Additional meetings may be called as needed or at the recommendation of the DCT and may be facilitated by phone, e-mail or other electronic means as is available to the membership. The first meeting of each year the Advisory Committee will select the decision-making process that will govern the committee for that year. The committee will utilize the principals of consensus decision-making⁴ as a guide for the process. Additionally, the committee can solicit input from community members that will inform their decision-making on issue areas impacting the PIR/FDTC.

Goals

The primary goals of the PIR/FDTC are equivalent to the 10 Key Components⁵ of drug courts within the context of a family drug court. Those Components are as follows:

- PIR/FDTC integrates alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing.⁶
- Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.
- PIR/FDTC identifies participants early and places them in the drug court program promptly.

⁴ **Consensus decision-making** is a group decision making process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also the resolution or mitigation of minority objections. Consensus is usually defined as meaning both general agreement and the process of getting to such agreement.

⁵ The 10 Key Components can be viewed in their entirety at <http://www.nadcp.org/sites/default/files/nadcp/10%20Key%20Components.pdf>

⁶ The justice system referenced in this Charter is specific to the civil process through which child welfare suits are litigated.

- PIR/FDTC provides access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services.
- PIR/FDTC monitors abstinence through frequent testing for alcohol and drug use.
- A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participants' compliance.
- Drug court participants receive essential ongoing judicial interaction.
- Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness.
- Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations.
- Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness.

Guiding Principles: The guiding principles of the PIR/FDTC are “The 11 Key Elements of Family Treatment Drug Court.”⁷ Those Elements are as follows:

- PIR/ FDTC has a steering committee composed of key stakeholders to provide advice in the design and operation of the PIR/FDTC (see above information regarding Operations and Advisory Committees)
- PIR/FDTC integrates alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing.
- Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.
- PIR/FDTC identifies participants early and places them in the drug court program promptly when they meet the eligibility criteria.
- PIR/FDTC provides access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services.
- PIR/FDTC holds frequent staffings (team meetings), where each client's progress, strengths, obstacles, and options are discussed individually, and case plans are updated as needed (see above information regarding PIR/FDTC Staff Meeting and Case Management Team Meeting)
- PIR/FDTC frequently tests participants for alcohol and other drugs.
- A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participants' compliance.
- Drug court participants receive essential ongoing judicial interaction.
- Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations.
- Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness.

Evaluation

⁷ The 11 Key Elements can be viewed in their entirety at <http://www.nccourts.org/Citizens/CPrograms/DTC/Youth/>

The PIR/FDTC is committed to collecting, maintaining, and utilizing data to improve the practice model. The PIR/FDTC will promote a sustained evaluation component as part of the program design. The elements of the evaluation will be determined and approved by the Advisory committee.

WHEREAS, the Partners desire for the PIR/FDTC to be supported and sustained by maintaining a unified mission and vision of the Partners as set forth in this charter, and WHEREAS, all the below named Partners are in agreement with the mission and vision set forth in this charter,

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree that we have read and agree with the terms of this charter.

PARTNERS:

- Austin Recovery
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Travis County
- Communities for Recovery
- Department of Family and Protective Services – Child Protective Services
- Foundation Communities
- Integral Care
- PIR/FDTC Graduate – Jennifer Ingram
- Private Attorneys – Connie Jobe, Alexandra Saenz, Susanna Castillo-Littlejohn
- SAFE Alliance
- Travis County District Court
- Travis County District Attorney's Office – Special Victims Unit
- Travis County Health and Human Services
- Travis County Office of Child Representation

Austin Recovery

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 16th day of April, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Laura S. Jorine 4/16/18
Signature Date

Laura S. Jorine/Executive Director
Name & Title


Austin Recovery
Partnering Agency/Organization

CASA of Travis County

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 16th day of April 2018
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 4/16/18
Signature Date

LAURA D. WOLF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Name & Title

CASA of Travis County
Partnering Agency/Organization

Communities for Recovery

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

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The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Robin Peyson 10/25/18
Signature Date

Robin Peyson, Executive Director
Name & Title

Communities For Recovery
Partnering Agency/Organization

Department of Family and Protective Services – Child Protective Services Division

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 30 day of April, 2018
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Lindsay B 4/30/2018

Signature Date
Lindsay van Buskirk
Regional Director

Name & Title

DFPS

Partnering Agency/Organization

Foundation Communities

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

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 4/16/18

Signature

Date

MARIO Cortez, Director of Family Supportive Housing

Name & Title

Foundation Communities

Partnering Agency/Organization

Integral Care

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

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by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 7/17/18

Signature

Date

Hugh Simmons LCSW - Director Child & Family Services

Name & Title

Integral Care

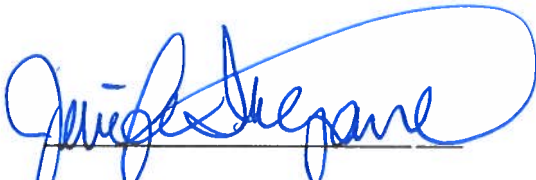
Partnering Agency/Organization

PIR/FDTC Graduate – Jennifer Ingram

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 27th day of October, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations (“Partners”).

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.



Signature Date

Jennifer Ingram
Alumni Coordinator
Name & Title

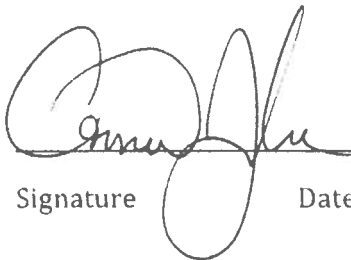
Communities for Recovery
Partnering Agency/Organization

Private Attorney - Connie Jobe

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 27th day of April, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 4/27/18
Signature Date

Attorney
Name & Title

Parents' Attorney
Partnering Agency/Organization

Private Attorney – Alexandra Saenz

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 1 day of July, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations (“Partners”).

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Alexandra P. Saenz

Signature Date

Alexandra P. Saenz

Name & Title

Partnering Agency/Organization

Private Attorney – Susana I. Castillo-Littlejohn

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 10 day of July, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations (“Partners”).

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 7/10/18

Signature Date

Susana Castillo-Littlejohn

Name & Title

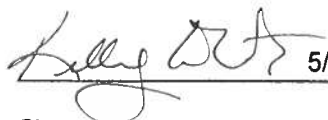
Partnering Agency/Organization

The SAFE Alliance

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 30th day of April, 2018, by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations (“Partners”).

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 5/30/2018
Signature Date

Kelly White, Co-CEO
Name & Title

The SAFE Alliance
Partnering Agency/Organization

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 30 day of April, 2018 by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

[Handwritten Signature] 4/30/18

Signature

Date

Darlene Byrne, Judge 126th J.D. Court

Name & Title

Travis County District Courts

Partnering Agency/Organization

Travis County Health and Human Services

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 26th day of October, 2018,
by and between the undersigned Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Laura Peveto 10/26/18

Signature

Date

Laura Peveto; Division Director

Name & Title

Travis County Health and Human Services

Partnering Agency/Organization

Travis County Office of Child Representation

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the _____ day of _____, 20_____,
by and between the undersigned Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

 Leslie Hill 4/23/18

Signature Date

 Leslie Hill, Atty III

Name & Title

 Office of Child Representation

Partnering Agency/Organization

Travis County District Attorney's Office – Special Victims Unit

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This charter is made and entered into as of the 30 day of April, 2018,
by and between the Partnering Agencies/Organizations ("Partners").

The undersigned is authorized to sign this Statement of Agreement as a representative on behalf of their respective partnering agency/organization and have agreed to be committed to this charter.

Margaret Moore
Signature

Date

Margaret Moore, District Attorney
Name & Title

Travis County District Attorney
Partnering Agency/Organization