



# Family Intervention- Infant Toddler Court



## Participant Handbook

### WELCOME

Welcome to the Family Intervention-Infant Toddler Court (FIC/ITC), a component of the Harris County Success Through Addiction Recovery (STAR) program.

We recognize that if you are reading these words, things are not going too well for you right now. You have either had your children taken away from you, or you are facing a jail sentence for failure to comply with court orders. Regardless of the exact nature of your situation, one thing is certain – you have a problem with alcohol, drugs, or (most likely) both, and that is the reason you are where you are. Believe it or not, you couldn't be in a better place. The FIC/ITC is going to help you get your life back.

This handbook is designed to give you all the information you need to successfully participate in this program. However, no written guide can possibly answer every question. Please ask any FIC/ITC team member at any time if you are uncertain regarding program rules, policies, or any other matter related to drug court. There is no such thing as a dumb question; this is your life, and you are responsible to know what is going on.

### What is the Infant and Toddler Court?

The Infant and Toddler Court (ITC) is an additional component of the STAR Family Intervention Court specializing in cases referred by Child Protective Service (CPS) involving infants and toddlers aged zero to three.

*What is my child.....telling me?  
What is my child.....feeling?  
What is my child.....seeing?  
What is my child.....experiencing?*

The purpose of the ITC is to increase opportunities for infants and toddlers to be safe, have stable and nurturing permanent homes, receive services early on, in areas of, early childhood development, and physical and mental health. Secondary objectives of the

ITC are to decrease the recurrence of abuse, support and encourage families, and decrease mental health, physical health and behavioral issues associated with abuse. Desired objectives of the ITC as they relate to you are:

- Increasing parent-child visitation
- Improving permanency, safety and well-being
- Preventing the cycle of abuse
- Preserving and supporting families where possible and providing links to needed services
- Increasing the level of ECI screening and services for all infants

#### MISSION

**Mission of the FIC/ITC.** The mission of the Family Intervention-Infant Toddler Court (the “FIC/ITC”) is to effectively provide for the safety and welfare of children by optimizing opportunities for the recovery and healing of substance abusing parents (the “clients”) via early intervention, education, and treatment using a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, and judicially supervised approach to the entire family which balances understanding with accountability.

**Mission of the ITC.** The purpose and mission of the Infant and Toddler Court is to achieve improved permanency, safety, and well-being outcomes for abused and neglected infants and toddlers and their families in Harris County; and to preserve and support families where possible.

#### The FIC/ITC team will, at all times:

- ❖ treat clients with dignity and respect;
- ❖ make every effort to respond fully to any questions clients have so that the client always knows what is expected from him or her;
- ❖ provide clients with honest feedback on his or her progress in the program;
- ❖ respect clients’ right to make choices, and allow clients to experience the natural consequences of his or her choices;
- ❖ give clients every possible chance to succeed; and
- ❖ make the best possible choices for clients’ children.

## OVERVIEW

Family Intervention-Infant Toddler Court is a long-term, judicially supervised program designed to assist you in your recovery from addiction. Although you as the parent are the main target of the interventions, the determining factor in **all** FIC/ITC decisions is what is in the best interest of the children. We hope, and will work very hard to ensure, that this includes your involvement in your child's life; however, this is up to you.

You will be referred to treatment programs based on the severity of your addiction and your current social situation (employment, housing, transportation, etc.). Active participation in all treatment activities is mandatory. Just showing up is not enough (although that is also required); you must participate in groups, complete all outside treatment assignments, and fully follow your treatment plan. Treatment length can be from 6 to 9 months, the biggest portion of which will be outpatient treatment. (Please see the Phase Description below.)

In addition to formal treatment, you are required to attend self-help recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, and/or Narcotics Anonymous. Just as with treatment, just showing up at meetings is not enough. You are expected to learn and use the skills these groups teach; this includes getting and working with a sponsor. This activity will continue throughout your involvement in FIC/ITC, and hopefully afterwards as well.

You will participate in the development of a formal service plan based on your needs. This may include detailed assessments in the areas of education, job skills, social skills, physical health, parenting skills, and psychological functioning. Referrals to appropriate programs to provide assistance in identified areas will be provided so that you can effectively provide emotional, psychological, physical, and economic support for your self and your family. You are expected to make full use of all program referrals.

You will be held strictly accountable for your participation. That means that when you do well, you will be given full credit for your accomplishments. It also means that when you do not follow program rules you will be held fully responsible. To monitor your progress, you are subject to random alcohol and drug testing. You will also make regular court appearances to report on your progress. (See Phase Description below for how often you are expected to come to court.)

This is a brief description of the entire program. Make sure you read and understand all of the rest of this handbook, because you are responsible for knowing everything in it.

## **FIC/ITC Team Members**

The FIC/ITC Team is a team of judges, attorneys, and social services professionals established to review client progress and together decide on how best to assist each client with his or her recovery. The Team Members, and their job descriptions, are as follows:

- ***Judges.*** The Judge, Judge Bonnie Hellums, and Associate Judge, Judge Meca Walker, of the 247<sup>th</sup> Family Intervention Court are the leaders of the FIC/ITC team. The judges attend all team meetings, staffings and pre-hearing conferences and hold the team accountable for providing services and support for FIC/ITC clients. The judges will also hold clients accountable for complying with program rules and regulations, and will discuss client progress with the clients at court appearances.
- ***Coordinator.*** This team member is responsible for the administration of the FIC/ITC. The Coordinator is responsible for obtaining, collecting all pertinent information regarding your case from your treatment program and any other services in which you are participating. This information is then provided to all FIC/ITC team members at your pre-hearing conference. If you are in FIC/ITC because of contempt proceedings, the coordinator will also serve as your caseworker. The coordinator is also responsible for providing you with an orientation to the FIC/ITC, and is available to answer any questions you have regarding the program, or to respond to any concerns or complaints you may have. In the space below, write the Coordinator's name and phone number below.

**Regina Jones, LCDC    Phone: 713-368-6594**

- ***Assistant Coordinator.*** The Assistant Court Coordinator assists with program implementation and administration duties. The Assistant Coordinator assists with gathering all information for the preparation of the staffing reports, conduct mental health and domestic violence screenings/assessments as necessary assist with referral to appropriate services, and monitor client/children's progress in services.

**Sarah Bogard, MA, LPA    Phone: 832-964-6104**

- ***Parent Attorney.*** The Parent Attorney is the clients' lawyer. The Parent Attorney will provide clients with legal advice regarding their case, and will make sure clients' interests are protected at all times. The Parent Attorney will attend

all FIC/ITC staffings, hearings and proceedings where his or her client's case is discussed, participate in all team decisions regarding FIC/ITC cases and hold the FIC/ITC team accountable for providing appropriate services for clients.

**Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Assistant County Attorney.** The Assistant County Attorney represents TDFPS in TDFPS cases, ensures that the viewpoint of TDFPS is fully represented, applies appropriate prosecutorial pressure when same is deemed necessary by the FIC/ITC team, will attend all FIC/ITC hearings and proceedings when TDFPS cases are discussed, participate in all FIC/ITC team decisions, and monitor the team for compliance with all relevant state laws involving TDFPS cases.
- **Domestic Relations Office (DRO) Attorney.** The DRO Attorney represents the DRO in non OAG cases and cases and the State of Texas in OAG cases, ensures that the viewpoints of the DRO are fully represented, applies appropriate prosecutorial pressure when same is deemed necessary by the FIC/ITC team, and attends all FIC/ITC hearings and proceedings when DRO cases are discussed.
- **Child's Attorney.** The Child's Attorney shall look out for the best interest of the child in TDFPS cases. The Child's Attorney will attend all FIC/ITC hearings and proceedings, and will participate in all FIC/ITC team decisions.

**Child's Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

- **TDFPS Caseworker:** The TDFPS Caseworker is the primary client contact with the FIC/ITC team for TDFPS cases. All TDFPS related issues should be directed to the assigned TDFPS Caseworker, Supervisor, or Program Director. This team member is employed by TDFPS and will ensure that all appropriate guidelines are followed regarding TDFPS cases. The TDFPS Caseworker will attend all FIC/ITC hearings and proceedings and participate in all FIC/ITC team decisions regarding your case. The TDFPS worker will:
  - ❖ Establish a plan for parents that includes goals and objectives that must be met in order to comply with the TDFPS proposal – may include counseling, psychological evaluations, parenting classes, and drug testing as determined by caseworker, supervisors, and Family Intervention Court team Members.
  - ❖ Coordinate with children, foster parents, biological parents, Family Intervention Court Team members, supervisor, therapists and drug counselors to accomplish a goal best suited for the child.

- ❖ Coordinate and supervise visitation between children and parents and accurately describe relationships to fellow Family Intervention Court Team Members.
- ❖ Create and submit legal documents and testify in court regularly, and attend court weekly.
- ❖ Accomplish regular case actions at an accelerated rate for the purposes of case planning.
- ❖ Monitor children in the home monthly and provide updates regarding children regularly.

**Caseworker:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Treatment Providers.** It is the responsibility of the treatment providers, upon referral of a Family Intervention Court (FIC/ITC), to provide the FIC/ITC client with the appropriate level of care for substance abuse/dependence treatment within the specific time frames established in contracts and working letters of agreement between the court and treatment agency. Treatment providers must be licensed by Texas Department of State Health Service (TDSHS) and comply with all TDSHS rules regarding client treatment. If applicable, appropriate treatment services for clients with dual diagnoses will be provided. Timely submission of all client progress/status reports will be submitted to the FIC/ITC coordinator each Tuesday, no later than 12:00 P.M. Any change in FIC/ITC client status will be reported immediately to the FIC/ITC coordinator. One liaison from each treatment agency where an FIC/ITC client is placed, will attend all pre-court hearing staffing sessions and report relevant information regarding client compliance in treatment. The treatment providers will also attend FIC/ITC hearings and make recommendations regarding client treatment needs. Treatment providers shall complete and submit all required data collection documents requested by the court in a timely manner.
- **STAR Partners.** STAR Partners are educational institutions, community-based agencies, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations that provide important services such as literacy training, job training, and child-care.
- **Child Advocates.** Child Advocate volunteers are appointed by the Judge as the Guardian Ad Litem to represent the best interest of the child(ren). The Child Advocate volunteers and the Advocacy Coordinator work closely with the DFPS caseworker, the attorneys, other service providers and the parents. Child Advocate volunteers monitor the children’s placement, their medical needs and their educational needs. Child Advocates also observe family visits. Child Advocate volunteers and the Advocacy Coordinator will attend the FIC/ITC

staffings, hearings, proceedings and will participate in all team decisions regarding FIC/ITC cases. The Child Advocate volunteers ensure that the needs of the child(ren) are being met while in DFPS custody.

Child Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Treatment Types**

Treatment programs are of two basic types, residential and outpatient. In a residential program, you live at the treatment center, participating in recovery activities throughout the day. The vast majority of FIC/ITC participants begin in residential treatment. The length of stay in a residential program is between 30–90 days with scheduled treatment events averaging 30 per week.

After completing a residential program, you will move to an outpatient program. This type of program provides a specified number of hours of counseling each week (between 2–10 hours/week, depending on the level of care). You live elsewhere independently. Your outpatient treatment will last from 4–8 months; as you progress, your level of participation will decrease.

### **Random Alcohol/Drug Testing**

Throughout your participation in FIC/ITC you will be expected to provide urine, hair, and/or breath specimens for alcohol/drug testing. You will participate in a random testing program on a 24/7 basis, in some cases, you will be directed to call a phone number daily to see whether you must provide a specimen that day. You can also be tested at your treatment program, the courthouse, and/or if the FIC/ITC team believes there is good cause to do so. If you don't provide a specimen, we will treat that the same as a positive result.

The only way to recover from addiction is to not use alcohol and/or other drugs. Therefore, you are expected to maintain **total abstinence** from alcohol and/or any drug not prescribed for you by a doctor. If you test positive, we will assume you have used. Please don't try to explain away a positive drug test by claiming it was caused by second-hand smoke, or you just held it in your hand, or someone put it in your drink; we won't believe you, and you will do yourself more harm than good. Honesty is the best policy – remember, there is no situation that is so bad you can't make it worse by lying.

## **Court Appearances**

Your participation in FIC/ITC requires you to make frequent appearances in court. You will attend sessions held specifically for FIC/ITC participants. When attending FIC/ITC sessions you are expected to dress and act appropriately. Please observe the following guidelines:

1. Be on time for all court dates. If you know you will be late, contact either your caseworker or the Coordinator before the session begins.
2. Don't talk with your neighbor while court is in session, if you need to speak to your attorney, step outside the courtroom and move down the hall. Speak in a soft voice.
3. Do not leave the courtroom without approval or until dismissed by the judge presiding.
4. Turn off cell phones and pagers. Do not speak on a cell phone inside the courtroom at any time.
5. Do not wear:
  - headphones,
  - sunglasses,
  - hats or caps,
  - tube-tops, halter tops, tank tops, shorts, low-rider or excessively baggy pants,
  - clothing or jewelry with obscene or inappropriate writings or symbols,
  - revealing clothing,
  - anything your grandmother wouldn't approve of.
4. Do:
  - dress neatly and cleanly,
  - maintain appropriate grooming and hygiene,
  - treat FIC/ITC staff and other participants as you would like to be treated.
5. Do not use obscene or profane language.
6. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum.
7. Do remain in court until the judge excuses you.

## **Incentives and Sanctions**

Accountability is a two-way street. Incentives and sanctions are used by the court to motivate compliance with the recommended treatment plan. If you are treatment compliant, you received encouragement and incentives for continuing to do well. If the you are not compliant, sanctions may include a reprimand or increased intensity of treatment to enforce the importance of compliance with court orders.

Incentives are given to clients in order to recognize program compliance. The FIC/ITC team utilizes two different types of systems to award incentives to the clients. Incentives can be recommended by the team. However, the program also utilizes a rewards system based on the accumulation of accomplishments met each week. Each week, clients will bring their responsibility chart for the week, which includes all of the short term goals. This may include bringing binders to court, attending all AA meetings, obtaining a sponsor, as well as any other short-term goals the client may have for their self. When the client attends court, the Judge will give clients a check for each accomplishment met that week. The clients will then be able to turn in those checks for a reward.

Behaviors that can result in sanctions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Positive or missed drug tests;
- Excessive absences from treatment activities;
- Lack of timely progress toward treatment goals;
- Failure to complete a court-ordered sanction;
- Missed court appearance;
- Missed appointment with any drug team member;
- Missed visitation with children;
- Continual tardiness for court appearances;
- Failure to comply with courtroom dress and behavior policies.

The following are examples of possible sanctions you may receive:

- reprimand from the judge
- community service
- brief incarceration
- pay for positive drug tests
- termination from program
- written assignments
- spend a day in court
- phase reduction
- extra drug tests at your expense

Examples of possible incentives you may receive are as follows:

- recognition from the judge
- decreased court appearances
- increased visitation with children
- certificates/awards for sobriety

- gift certificates for food, clothing
- phase promotion
- credit for community services
- tickets to community activities
- appearance moved to front of docket
- travel privileges

Remember, whether you are sanctioned or achieve incentives is completely up to you. We hope you are given many more incentives than sanctions. We would much rather praise and celebrate you for doing well, how about you?

### **Program Phases**

The FIC/ITC program consists of four phases, or levels. The length of time to successfully complete the program is between 12 to 24 months. The initial program is 12 months, however, a case extension may be granted for an additional 6 months, if needed. Twelve months may seem like a long period of time, but with the complex issues clients' face, more time may be needed. There is an additional 6 months for monitored return for cases where the children have been returned to the family, but CPS is not ready to close the case.

In order to advance to the next phase, clients have to fulfill the requirements of the phase they are in. The FIC/ITC team will evaluate whether clients advance to the next phase. If clients fail to progress during a specific phase, the FIC/ITC team may decide to recommend to the Judge that a client receive a sanction. Sanctions may include but are not limited to, returning to a previous phase, increased AA attendance, increased sponsor contact, and ultimately being discharged from the program.

Clients may relapse, go through periods of time where they are lacking the motivation to change, however, the program is designed with that in mind. Each client and case are different, and while we strive to close cases in 12 months, it is not always possible. The key to success is getting back on track and not giving up.

**Benchmarks.** In order to remain in the program, phase requirements must be met in a timely manner. A benchmark review is a designated time to look at overall client progress based on current phase and phase requirements. These benchmark reviews will be held with the client, team and the Judge prior to staffing in a roundtable format. Phase requirements will be looked over with the client and the timeline of program completion will be looked at to determine if the potential for successful completion of the program is present. If it is not, decisions will be made whether or not continuation in the program is in the best interest of the client. These reviews will be held every 3, 6, 9 and 12 months.

## Exhibit A

\*Highlighted sections indicate goals and expectations for clients concurrently enrolled in Infant and Toddler Court

Phase	Goals	Client Expectations	Phase Completion
<b>I</b> <b>Intensive Treatment</b> <b>6 – 12 Weeks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admitted to &amp; actively participating in treatment</li> <li>• Completion of all assessments</li> <li>• Children’s needs assessed</li> <li>• Abstinence</li> <li>• Education/Vocation plan development</li> <li>• Discharge/housing plan development</li> <li>• ECI/developmental assessment for child</li> <li>• Identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in relationship with child to work on</li> <li>• Build on/maintain the relationship between the parent and child/ren</li> <li>• Develop a visitation plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly court appearances</li> <li>• Attend all treatment activities as scheduled</li> <li>• Donate all UA’s as directed</li> <li>• Negative drug tests</li> <li>• Keep all appointments</li> <li>• Appropriate and consistent visitations with children</li> <li>• Maintain satisfactory progress toward service plan(s) goals</li> <li>• Obtain a 12-Step sponsor</li> <li>• Complete steps 1 through 3</li> <li>• Participate in a parent/child relationship assessment</li> <li>• Active participation in visitation and visit coaching (if recommended)</li> <li>• Be knowledgeable about child’s health and developmental outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent court attendance</li> <li>• Completion of all required assessments</li> <li>• Consistent and appropriate visitations with children</li> <li>• Compliance with any sanctions</li> <li>• Compliance with all court orders</li> <li>• 6 weeks of consecutive clean UA’s in this phase</li> <li>• Team recommendation</li> </ul>

\*Highlighted sections indicate goals and expectations for clients concurrently enrolled in Infant and Toddler Court

Phase	Goals	Client Expectations	Phase Completion
<b>II</b> <b>Stabilization</b> <b>3 Months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued abstinence</li> <li>Continued progress in treatment</li> <li>Implementation of education/vocational plans</li> <li>Development of relapse prevention plan</li> <li>Progress toward stabilization of housing and job situations</li> <li>Improvement in parenting skills</li> <li>Improvement in interactions with children</li> <li>Begin acknowledging the affect child's removal had on the child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court appearances every other week</li> <li>Attend all treatment activities as scheduled</li> <li>Attend all support group meetings as directed by treatment provider</li> <li>Donate all UA's as directed</li> <li>Negative drug tests</li> <li>Appropriate and consistent visitations with children</li> <li>Maintain satisfactory progress toward service plan(s) goals</li> <li>Actively engage in step work with 12-Step sponsor</li> <li>Complete steps 4 through 5</li> <li>Obtain 12-Step Home Group</li> <li>Begin participating in any necessary parent/child interventions</li> <li>Continue visiting and visit coaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent court attendance</li> <li>Timely completion of all treatment assignments</li> <li>Consistent and appropriate visitations with children</li> <li>Compliance with any sanctions</li> <li>Compliance with all court orders</li> <li>Completion of relapse prevention plan</li> <li>Appropriate support group attendance</li> <li>Minimum of 8 weeks of consecutive clean UA's</li> <li>Team recommendation</li> </ul>

\*Highlighted sections indicate goals and expectations for clients concurrently enrolled in Infant and Toddler Court

Phase	Goals	Client Expectations	Phase Completion
<b>III</b> <b>Family</b> <b>Strengthening</b> <b>and Skills</b> <b>Building</b> <b>3 Months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued abstinence</li> <li>Continued progress in treatment</li> <li>Continued progress in education/vocation plan</li> <li>Stable housing arrangement</li> <li>Active use of relapse prevention plan</li> <li>Development of aftercare plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly court appearances</li> <li>Attend all treatment activities as scheduled</li> <li>Successful discharge from formal treatment</li> <li>Regular attendance at support group meetings</li> <li>Ongoing, active step work with sponsor</li> <li>Donate all UA's as directed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent court attendance</li> <li>Timely completion of all treatment assignments</li> <li>Initiation of aftercare plan</li> <li>Consistent and appropriate visitations with children</li> <li>Compliance with any sanctions</li> <li>Compliance with all court orders</li> <li>Appropriate support group attendance</li> </ul>

Phase	Goals	Client Expectations	Phase Completion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of formal structured treatment programs</li> <li>Family reunification takes place or is imminent</li> <li>Continue strengthening relationship with child</li> <li>Continue working on understanding the needs child is trying to communicate and appropriate responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean drug tests</li> <li>Appropriate and consistent visitations with children</li> <li>Maintain satisfactory progress toward service plan(s) goals</li> <li>Ongoing, active step work with sponsor</li> <li>Complete Steps 6 through 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment, or evidence of verifiable attempts (6/week) to find employment OR enrollment/attendance in education program</li> <li>Minimum of 12 weeks of consecutive clean UA's</li> <li>No positive Hair Follicles</li> <li>Team recommendation</li> </ul>

Phase	Goals	Client Expectations	Phase Completion
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>IV</b> <b>Foundation for the Future</b> <b>3 Months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued abstinence</li> <li>Active participation in aftercare plan</li> <li>Stable housing, employment, or educational status</li> <li>Custody of children</li> <li>Introduction to alumni mentoring program as mentor</li> <li>Stability for client and children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court appearances as required</li> <li>Consistent attendance at support group meetings</li> <li>Continued step work with sponsor</li> <li>Completion of all service plan(s) goals</li> <li>Donate all UA's as directed</li> <li>Clean drug tests</li> <li>Appropriate and consistent interactions with children</li> <li>Complete Steps 10 through 12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent court attendance</li> <li>Consistent and appropriate interactions with children</li> <li>Compliance with any sanctions</li> <li>Compliance with all court orders</li> <li>Appropriate support group attendance</li> <li>Demonstrated stability in housing, employment, and/or education program</li> <li>Minimum of 6 consecutive months of abstinence</li> <li>Team recommendation</li> <li>No positive UA's or positive hair follicle tests</li> </ul>

### Overnight Travel

Since clients are subject to random drug testing at any time, clients' ability to travel away from home shall be limited. If a client is away from home and is called to provide a specimen for drug testing, failure to comply will be treated as a positive drug test. As clients progress in the FIC/ITC program they can earn the opportunity to make short, out-of-town trips.

The following conditions and procedures apply for out-of-town trips:

1. Participants in Phases II, III and IV may obtain overnight travel permission.
2. Travel plans must be discussed with the caseworker *at least* one week prior to scheduled travel. In order to be eligible for travel permission, a client must:
  - have at least 12 consecutive weeks of demonstrated sobriety;
  - be current on all service plan goals and activities;
  - be fully engaged in all recovery activities, including treatment and 12-step groups; and
  - ensure the travel will not interfere with scheduled child visitation arrangements.
3. If the travel request is granted, the client must provide a (urine specimen) the same day he or she is scheduled to leave. The client must also provide a (urine specimen) immediately upon return. Failure to provide the (urine specimen) at either departure or arrival will be treated as a positive result.

If the client does not follow these procedures, or does not meet the requirements described above, the client will not receive travel permission, and any drug tests or program activities missed will be counted against the client.

### **Graduation**

The highest level of successful completion of the family drug court is graduation, which is the completion of all of the drug court phase requirements, as well as a successful disposition of the TDFPS suit. Graduation not only a ceremony, but recognition by the team and the court of the hard work the client has done in order to improve the lives of their children and themselves. In order to graduate a client must meet the following criteria:

- Consistent court attendance
- Consistent and appropriate interactions with children
- Compliance with any sanctions
- Compliance with all court orders
- Appropriate support group attendance
- Demonstrate stability in housing, employment, and/or education program
- No positive drug tests in phase IV
- Minimum of 6 consecutive months of abstinence
- Team Recommendation

## **Discharge**

When a client voluntarily leaves the program or is discharged due to non-compliance, that case is considered an “unsuccessful completion.” If a client fails to meet the drug court requirements, he or she may be discharged unsuccessfully from the program. Clients will receive ample notice of the possibility of such a discharge before it actually occurs. Once a client is unsuccessfully discharged from the FIC/ITC, the information obtained during the client’s participation (other than the fact that he or she was unsuccessfully discharged) will not be used against the client in any other legal proceeding, unless the client claims the FIC/ITC program harmed him or her in some way. If a client makes such a claim, the client’s entire record of participation in the FIC/ITC program may be used.

A client may also be discharged from the program if:

- he or she is charged with a violent criminal offense
- a criminal investigation is opened into the circumstances of TDFPS involvement in the client’s case
- he or she becomes physically or psychologically unable to participate in the FIC/ITC
- voluntary withdrawal
- client non-compliance
- client not progressing through phase requirements
- excessive relapse

When clients are discharged from the FIC/ITC clients need to be informed about the regular court process including, potentially being transferred back to the court of original jurisdiction, the process for obtaining an attorney as well as any other changes in procedure.

# Family Intervention-Infant Toddler Court

## Participant Hearing Check List

**Each time you attend your FIC/ITC hearing**, you are required to have in your possession the following items. Sanctions may be issued if you do not properly prepare and present.

- FIC/ITC calendar
- Pen/pencil
- Relapse prevention plan
- Discharge plan(s)/summary(ies)
- Family Plan of Service, if CPS case
- Pay stubs
- Proof of child support payments
- 12-Step meeting attendance verification sheet
- Financial information sheet
- Most recent completed step work
- Any assignments given by the court
- Documentation of a minimum of 6 attempts to obtain employment/week, if you are currently unemployed and have been approved to seek employment
- FIC/ITC participant handbook
- Proof you are actively engaged in obtaining your GED or working toward your educational goals
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_