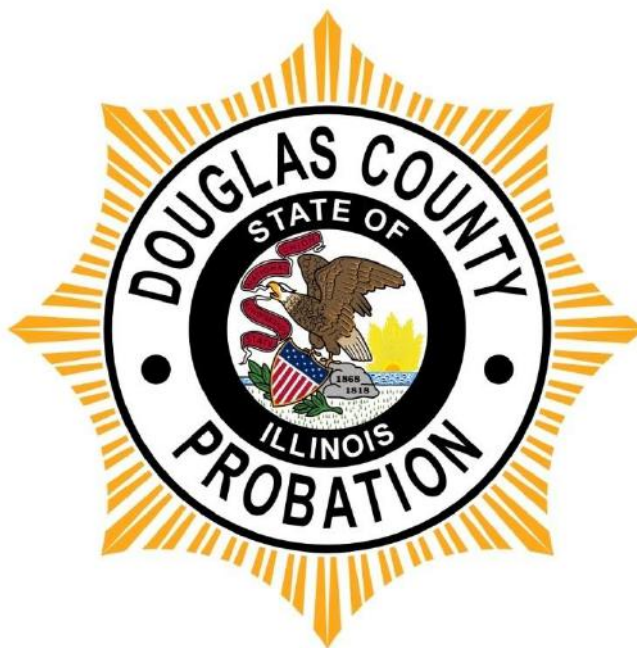


DOUGLAS COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT



CLIENT HANDBOOK

Douglas County Probation Department
401 South Center Street, Room 101
Tuscola, IL 61953
Phone: 217-253-4212
Fax: 217-253-4392

Purpose of the handbook:

This handbook has been prepared to help you to be successful during your period of Court monitoring, know what to expect, and answer some commonly asked questions.

What is Court Monitoring:

There are several types of Court ordered monitoring. One is **Probation**. This occurs when an individual has been convicted of a crime and was given an alternative sentence to jail or prison. Another is **Court Supervision**. This is ordered when an individual has been found guilty of an offense, but gets the opportunity to successfully follow certain terms and conditions to avoid a conviction. Another is **Conditional Discharge**. This is ordered when an individual has been convicted of an offense and is similar to probation, but reporting is different. There are also other special sentences for other offenses if they meet the criteria set forth in the statutes.

Monitoring can be ordered for a varied amount of months, depending on the offense and your legal history. It will include a set of general provisions, rules and restrictions that you must follow during your time. In addition, the Court may include a range of special conditions based on your particular circumstances. You will be supervised by a member of the Probation Department, who will help guide you toward success and positive change, and who will report to the Court your progress. Some terms may include counseling or rehabilitation in order to facilitate positive growth and lessen the likelihood of committing a violation. You will meet with your assigned staff member on a regular basis to track your progress and work together to achieve your goals.

“Why do you need to know that....?”

Throughout your term, we will be asking you all sorts of questions about your life. This helps to complete an accurate assessment of you, your skills and your needs. The results of the assessment will be discussed with you and a case plan will be created where you identify goals. Throughout the term of your monitoring, progress and challenges will be discussed when it comes to your case plan.

Confidentiality will be used according to statutes in regards to your information. We ask that with any treatment provider you may see, you sign a release of information for our department in order to help track your progress. Additionally, you will be signing our release of information here, so that we may communicate with your providers.

What to Expect When You Have Contact With The Probation Department:

- We are interested in how you are doing in home life, work, and treatment
- We will review your goals and provide feedback
- We will be seeing you in the office on a regular basis
- We will be visiting your residence, therefore may inquire about others living at the address, animals, etc.
- We may see you at school, work, or treatment
- We will treat you with respect and dignity
- We will be fair and impartial
- We will communicate with the Court regarding your progress
- We will provide referral information for a variety of social services

*****Talk to Probation Staff if you have questions or need help in reaching your goals. Open communication is important for success! *****

Security:

For your safety, as well as all visitors and employees, security cameras and metal detectors are used in our building. We ask that you not bring excess items to your meetings, including pocket knives, utility knives, chain wallets, backpacks, boxes, shopping bags, etc. Weapons and items that could be used as weapons are strictly prohibited.

We ask that while you are in our building, that you treat all people with dignity and respect. Please refrain from inappropriate or abusive language and behavior.

A Typical Appointment:

When you arrive for your scheduled appointment, you will go into the lobby and let the Administrative Assistant know that you are here. Then, you will complete a Monthly Report Form located on the desk in the lobby. Please know that we may be assisting someone else, so take this time to write down any questions, concerns or ideas so you will be prepared for your appointment.

We will require proof of address and proof of income/employment. Please provide this to us at your first appointment, and then any time it may change. We will also ask for vehicle information, treatment progress, community service updates and law enforcement contacts, please be prepared to provide this information.

Appointment times can vary, depending on your individual needs, but you can expect a typical appointment to last 20-30 minutes. You will be asked to fill out a self-report at your first appointment then we will conduct an informal interview with you. You can expect this appointment to take up to an hour, as this is when we are gathering lots of information about you to help our risk assessment process.

In order to give you the attention needed, we ask that you come alone to your appointments, if possible. We understand that there may be situations that arise with daycare or transportation that will not allow this. Parents of juveniles may be directed to attend office appointments and maintain contact with us. Other times, we may request parents of juveniles remain in the lobby for certain office appointments.

Public Service Work:

If you were ordered to do any public service work, this can be completed at any not-for-profit/non-profit organization. We will provide you a list of suggested sites and a log to keep track of your hours. This log should be brought to every appointment for verification of progress. If you have any questions on whether or not something counts, please contact us. You may not complete any hours for family or individuals, it must be a not-for-profit/non-profit organization.

Can I Get Off Court Monitoring Early?

We will not ask for you to be released early. If you feel that you can articulate a reason why you should be allowed an early termination, certain conditions must be met first. This can be discussed with us.

I Was Ordered to Treatment, Where Do I Go?

We will provide you with a list of treatment providers in the area. We will discuss with you which one may fit your needs based on your specific circumstances. An extensive list of treatment providers can also be found at <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

Can I Get This Expunged From My Record?

Depending on the offense, after successful completion of Court monitoring you may be able to have an offense removed from your record. You will need to speak to your attorney about this issue, as we will not be able to do this for you.

Where Do I Make My Payments?

Your monthly payments will be made to the Circuit Clerk's Office in the Courthouse. Payments can also be dropped in the night drop box located outside the front door of the Courthouse, or mailed in. Each payment must include your name and case number. Cash, money order, or certified bank checks are acceptable. You may also pay online at www.judici.com.

What If I Can't Make My Payment?

Payments are typically due on the first Monday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the Circuit Clerk's Office. If you cannot make your payment, you **must** appear in Court to explain that to the Judge on that day at 9:30 am. Failure to do so could result in a body attachment (similar to a warrant). If the first Monday of the month falls on a national holiday in which the Courthouse is closed, pay or appear is moved to the second Monday of that month. Check with us if you are unsure of which holidays the Courthouse will be observing.

Things to Remember:

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Tuscola, IL 61953

Phone: 217-253-4212

Fax: 217-253-4392

Douglas County Circuit Clerk's Office

P.O. Box 50

Tuscola, IL 61953

RISE Behavioral Health and Wellness: 217-253-4731

RISE After Hours Phone: 217-253-2913

Courthouse hours of operation: Monday- Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

****It is your responsibility to keep us and the Circuit Clerk's Office aware of your current address and phone number. ****