

DO YOU...

Have an open child protective services case or a child who has recently entered foster care?

Struggle with drugs or alcohol?

If you answered yes to both questions you may be eligible for intensive support services and substance abuse treatment.

"FRC IS A GREAT PROGRAM IF YOU WANT TO GET SOBER AND GET YOUR CHILDREN BACK."



For more information:

specialtycourts@vbco.org

**Van Buren County
Reunification Court**

**212 E. Paw Paw Street
Paw Paw, MI 49079**

**VAN BUREN COUNTY
Family Reunification Court**



WHAT IS REUNIFICATION COURT?

A voluntary, intensive treatment program for child welfare involved parents with substance abuse problems & their children. The purpose of this program is to protect the safety and welfare of children while giving parents the tools they need to become sober, responsible caregivers.

Reunification Court is designed to be a 5 stage program, with increased activities in the early phases and decreased activities in the later phases. It takes participants an average of 12 months to complete.

You do not have to complete the entire program before your children are returned to your care. You can be reunified when you demonstrate stable recovery behavior.

Your DHHS worker and the Court want to see stable, compliant behavior before they will recommend reunification with your children and this program helps you achieve that goal.

How is Reunification Court different from what I'm already doing?

FRC asks more of parents and offers more support. Everyone works harder to help you recover and safely reunify with your children.

In FRC, you will have a case manager who is available to meet with you weekly and will communicate with your DHS worker.

Your case manager will attend your court hearings and will advocate for you based on your progress.

-You will have accountability and will test regularly for drugs and alcohol.

You will participate in recovery activities such as self-help meetings, individual and group counseling.

You will talk to a Judge about your progress biweekly instead of every three months.

You will be rewarded for progress with praise, applause in court, gift cards and or encouragement.

Sanctions are imposed in response to dishonesties & violation of court orders to keep you accountable and moving towards the goal of reunification.

Additional services include in-home case management and treatment, peer support, transportation assistance, dental services, funding for a GED and/or vocational training and after-care support.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Do Reunification Courts work?

National studies show that parents in RCs are more likely to successfully complete treatment compared to parents who do not participate in RCs.

National research shows that children of RC graduates are **more likely to be reunified** with their parents and **less likely to re-enter foster care**.

Why is it an average of 12 months long?

The length of time a person stays in substance abuse treatment is directly connected to their likelihood to stay drug & alcohol free long-term. The longevity of the program and the amount of treatment provided are key reasons Reunification Courts have the **best outcome** of any substance abuse program available.

Why are there sanctions for non-compliance?

To get you back on track **to be reunified** with your children. Without Reunification Court, the violation for non-compliance of court orders is jail or termination of your parental rights.

Is Reunification Court hard?

There are rules and accountability designed to help you maintain **lifetime recovery**, not just long enough to get CPS out of your life only to have re-involvement later. It takes hard work to be successful.

