



Galveston County
**COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND
CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

PROBATIONER HANDBOOK

Serving the District and County Courts of Galveston County, Texas

Community Supervision Handbook

Mission Statement:

To serve and protect the community by empowering individuals placed on community supervision to change their behavior and become productive law-abiding citizens.

Name: _____

Cause No: _____

Community Supervision Officer (CSO) Assigned: _____

Phone Number: _____

Reporting Location: _____ (see page 7)

Unit Supervisor: _____

Phone Number: _____

Purpose of Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to help you be successful on community supervision, which is also known as adult probation, and answer some commonly asked questions.

What is Community Supervision?

- The supervised release of a defendant 17 years of age and older, within the community in lieu of incarceration in jail or prison. You may have received community supervision for a felony or misdemeanor offense.
- The Court will require you to follow a set of conditions (rules) that outlines expectations.
- A person granted community supervision is supervised by a community supervision officer (CSO) who assists in behavioral change and reports progress and actions to the Court.
- Community supervision provides you with an opportunity to make positive changes in your life.
- Throughout your time on community supervision, you and your CSO will work together to achieve your goals.
- Community supervision typically includes financial responsibilities such as supervision fees, court fees, and restitution. Many people on community supervision have personal challenges, such as unemployment, substance use issues, or other life circumstances. Making positive changes can help you complete community supervision, avoid future arrests, and find greater satisfaction and success in life.
- Deferred Adjudication Vs Adjudicated probation. When granted Deferred Adjudication there has been no finding of guilt in your case. The disposition is "deferred" to a later date. In an Adjudicated case, the individual has been found guilty or "adjudicated" and part of their sentence included community supervision.

What is a Misdemeanor?

An offense designated by law, punishable by fine, and/or confinement in a county jail.

What is a Felony?

A serious offense punishable by terms that must be served in prison or a state jail facility.

Assessment & Your Goals

At the beginning of your community supervision term, an assessment is completed to help identify areas in which you may need assistance. You and your CSO will review your results and create a case plan to target resources which best meet your needs and goals.

During ongoing visits, the two of you will continue to review your progress, strategies, and goals. Occasionally, your officer will review your case plan with you and update as needed.

What is a Case Plan?

Yearly, or as needed, your CSO will assist in developing a case plan with you. The case plan is simply an outline of your goals, along with the strategies to achieve them, to successfully complete your community supervision. When you meet with your CSO, you will want to provide the documentation that supports your achievements, such as certificates of programs completed, paystubs, or attendance records from school.

What to Expect When You Have Contact with Your CSO

Your CSO:

- Is interested in how you are doing at home, work, and in treatment
- Will conduct visits at your home as needed or as required
- May also conduct visits at your place of employment

You can expect your CSO to:

- Treat you with respect and dignity
- Be fair and impartial
- Be available to you by phone or in person
- Discuss your activities and progress
- Communicate with the Court about your progress on community supervision and your compliance with the conditions of community supervision.

The frequency and nature of contact (such as office visits, home visits, telephone calls, family contacts, job site visits, or treatment provider contacts) will depend on a variety of factors. Your CSO can provide more detail regarding your specific contact requirements. When reporting at any CSCD office to see your CSO, you will check in through a self-service kiosk located in the lobby. Please notify the front office staff if your wait is longer than 20 minutes.

Talk to your CSO

If you have questions or need help in reaching your goals.

Open Communication is important if you want to succeed.

Security

For your safety as well as all visitors and employees, weapons and items that could be used as a weapon are prohibited. We request that you do not bring large purses, backpacks, chained wallets, boxes, packages, etc. into our offices. We also request that you refrain from inappropriate or abusive language and behavior while visiting our offices.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

When do I report to my officer?

Your officer will always schedule appointments with you in person, via phone, or mail in advance. A reminder text will be sent to the cell phone on file. Always be on time when reporting and contact your officer if you need to reschedule any visit. Always dress appropriately when seeing your officer or when appearing in court.

What if I Have Family Members or Friends Who Want to Help Me?

Although all conditions are your responsibility to complete, support from your family and friends may be an integral part of your success. You and your CSO will discuss ways in which you, your family and/or your friend(s) can work together to help you successfully complete supervision. Keep in mind children are not allowed to report with you to any of our CSCD locations.

What Documents Should I Have Available?

There are some important documents your CSO will ask you to make available in order to show your progress. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employment verification (pay stub)
- Residence verification (lease/mortgage, utility bills, letter from homeowner)
- Financial records (tax return, bank statement)
- Vehicle information (registration, title)
- Valid government issued identification
- Documents showing proof of attending or completing programs of assistance, vocational classes, or education programs
- Medication information (i.e. prescriptions or the actual bottle of medication)

What Is Community Service Restitution? And how do I start working my hours?

Community Service Restitution (CSR) is labor performed by court-mandated individuals for the benefit of both the community and the individual. CSR was established to assist you with completing your court ordered hours of community service assigned as a condition of supervision. The CSCD partners with a host of non-profit organizations and prior to working any hours your CSO will provide you with referrals for any organization to which you may be assigned. Types of work you may perform include general labor, landscaping, building maintenance, janitorial services, clerical duties and etc.

Can I be released from Community Supervision Early?

Yes! Early terminations are granted by the court to individuals who make positive progress towards achieving their case plan goals and who have complied with their Conditions of Community supervision. However, the final decision is always up to the Judge. Please ask your officer if your case(s) are eligible for Early Termination. It is the responsibility of the defendant to seek the assistance of an attorney to file a motion for early termination.

What Is Earned Time Credit (ETC)?

Some individuals on community supervision are eligible for Earned Time Credit. You could be eligible to earn time credits for completing certain pre-determined conditions of community supervision. Your time on community supervision may be reduced for completing items such as: obtaining your high school diploma or GED; paying court costs and restitution in full; or completing a rehabilitation program. Please ask your officer if your case(s) are eligible to earn time credit(s).

How do I pay my supervision fees?

Refer to the Galveston County CSCD Policies and Understandings page in this handbook for payment information. Payments can be made online or at any of our locations.

What If I Have a Complaint Regarding Community Supervision?

1. Talk to your assigned CSO, if possible.
2. If your questions cannot be resolved with your CSO, you may consider contacting your CSO's supervisor. This name and phone number should be provided to you and written down on the front page of the handbook.

How do I complete the classes I was ordered to take?

During your initial visit with your CSO, you will be provided with referrals to assist you in completing all court ordered classes and/or programs.

Additionally, you can refer to the Community Resources page in this handbook for information on other county offices available to you.

Do I have to submit to urinalysis testing?

Yes. All persons on community supervision in Galveston County are court ordered to abstain from the use of alcohol or any substance capable or calculated to cause intoxication, or the illegal use of any controlled substance. You may be asked to submit to a random drug test at any time during your term of supervision and pay the assessed fee.

Do I lose any Civil Rights while on Community Supervision?

Yes, dependent on the type of supervision you were granted some of your rights may be affected. Refer to the Civil Rights and Federal Firearms Control Act in your handbook. You will have been asked to sign a copy of this form at intake.

Serving a Jail Sentence While on Community supervision

Depending on the length of your jail sentence, you may be assigned a CSO to visit you while in custody. Your officer will review your conditions of community supervision with you, answer any questions, and help you prepare for your reentry back into the community. You may have opportunities to participate in counseling and/or educational programs while in custody. Some of these programs may qualify for Community Service Restitution hours and/or Earned Time Credit. Prior to your release from custody, you will be given specific reporting instructions for whom to contact once you are released. Keep all of your important paperwork together for review with your officer.

GALVESTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

POLICIES AND UNDERSTANDINGS

The following information is a statement of the reporting procedure, which **MUST** be followed by all defendants and some other important regulations of this department.

This is a professional office and you are expected to dress appropriately and leave your **family/friends** at home, unless your Supervision Officer requests their presence.

If illness, an emergency, or your employment keeps you from reporting as scheduled, you **MUST** call your Supervision Officer prior to the appointment time. The office hours at all office locations are Monday thru Friday 8:00am - 5:00 pm. If your Supervision Officer is not available, leave your name and telephone number and he/she will return the call as soon as possible. If you are unable to contact your officer someone can attempt to contact them on your behalf.

If you need to leave Galveston County for more than three (3) consecutive days, or leave the State for any period of time, you must obtain a written travel permit signed by your Community Supervision Officer.

No personal checks will be accepted for the payment of the monthly supervisory fee, or any other money paid to Galveston County Community Supervision and Corrections Department. You may pay by Cash, Credit Card, Money Order or Cashier's Check at our Galveston Office. Money order and Cashier's Check are accepted at our Texas City Office location. Payments should be made payable to Galveston County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (GCCSCD) and include your cause number. **Do not send cash in the mail.**

The mailing address is:

**Galveston County Community Supervision and Corrections Department
715 19th St.
Galveston, Texas 77550**

**Galveston County Community Supervision and Corrections Department
2516 Texas Ave
Texas City, Texas 77590**

OTHER TYPES OF PAYMENT METHODS

You can make a payment using your credit card **online at www.cssreporting.com**, through your CSS account.

Contact your officer for account set-up information. Once your account has been setup, all identifying information related to your account will be filled in by default.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE FEDERAL FIREARMS CONTROL ACT

Being placed on community supervision, pretrial diversion, or bond supervision affects your civil rights. Therefore, the Galveston County Community Supervision and Corrections Department feels that the following information should be brought to the attention of all defendants under departmental supervision.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

1. Misdemeanor Supervision - A person on misdemeanor supervision is not affected and may vote.
2. Deferred Felony Supervision - A person on this type of supervision is not affected and may vote.
3. Regular or Shock Felony Supervision - A person on either of these may not vote until s/he is discharged from a sentence, including any term of incarceration, parole supervision or a period community supervision ordered by any court. Once a person has completed the term of community supervision, s/he can immediately register and be eligible to vote in an election.

THE RIGHT TO HOLD PUBLIC OFFICE

1. Misdemeanor Supervision - A person on misdemeanor supervision may hold public office.
2. Deferred Felony Supervision - A person on this type of supervision may hold public office.
3. Regular or Shock Felony Supervision - A person on either one of these types of supervision may not hold public office until discharged with rights restored. If rights are not restored, the defendant may not hold public office.

Exception: A person who is on Felony D.W.I., Involuntary Manslaughter, or Intoxication Manslaughter supervision, who was placed on regular supervision for a state jail felony offense before September 1, 2007, who is on regular community supervision for a sexual offense listed in Chapter 62 of the Code of Criminal Procedure or who is placed on regular community supervision for a 3g offense on or after September 1, 2007 may not hold public office, even after discharge from community supervision.

Note: This exception no longer applies to a person placed on regular community supervision for a state jail felony offense on or after September 1, 2007 who has had his/her rights restored upon discharge from community supervision. If rights are not restored, the defendant may not hold public office.

RIGHT TO SERVE ON A JURY

1. Misdemeanor Supervision - A person on misdemeanor supervision may serve on a jury.

Exceptions: For a criminal trial, a person who is on supervision for misdemeanor theft (including a deferred adjudication) cannot serve until discharged with rights restored. If rights are not restored, the defendant may not serve on a jury.

For a civil trial, a person who is on deferred adjudication for a misdemeanor theft cannot serve. Moreover, a person who has a conviction for misdemeanor theft cannot serve on a jury unless the person has had his/her rights restored upon discharge from community supervision. If rights are not restored, the defendant may not serve on a jury.

2. Felony Supervision - A person on any type of felony supervision (including deferred adjudication community supervision) may not serve on either a criminal or civil jury until s/he is discharged and the court sets aside the accusation and dismisses the charges against the offender.

Exception: A person who is on Felony D.W.I., Involuntary Manslaughter, or Intoxication Manslaughter supervision, who was placed on regular supervision for a state jail felony offense before September 1, 2007, who is on regular community supervision for a sexual offense listed in Chapter 62 of the Code of Criminal Procedure or who is placed on regular community supervision for a 3g offense on or after September 1, 2007 may never serve on a jury.

Note: This exception no longer applies to a person placed on regular community supervision for a state jail felony offense on or after September 1, 2007 who has had his/her rights restored upon discharge from community supervision. If rights are not restored, the defendant may not serve on a jury.

RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

1. Misdemeanor Supervision - A person on misdemeanor supervision is not affected, except that persons placed on regular community supervision for a domestic violence offense may not possess a firearm. For one who has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, the prohibition on the possession of firearms and ammunition does not apply if that individual has received a pardon for the crime, the conviction has been expunged or set aside, or the person has had his/her civil rights restored and the person is not otherwise prohibited from possessing a firearm or ammunition.
2. Deferred Felony Supervision - A person on this type of supervision may possess a firearm and ammunition and can go hunting, but s/he cannot buy additional firearms or ammunitions nor carry them across state lines.
3. Regular or Shock Felony Supervision - A person on either of these types of supervision may not possess, ship, transport, or receive a firearm or ammunition. Even if an offender is discharged from community supervision and the court sets aside the verdict and dismisses the accusation against the individual, s/ he may still be barred from possessing a firearm, depending on the position taken by each local office of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms, and Tobacco.

In such a situation, it would be necessary to obtain a release from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms of the Department of the Treasury. To request information on a release, you may write to the Assistant Director, Criminal Enforcement Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, P. O. Box 784, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, D.C. 20044.

Even if a defendant obtains a release from the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, State law still prohibits a felon from possessing a firearm before the fifth anniversary of the individual's release from community supervision, and even thereafter, the felon can only possess a firearm on the premises at which s/he lives. This provision will apply to a felon discharged from community supervision whose conviction was not set aside by the court in accordance with Article 42.12, Section 20, Code of Criminal Procedure. See Cuellar v. State, 70 S. W. 3d 815 (Tex. Cr. App. – 2002).

Exceptions: A person who is on Felony D.W.I., Involuntary Manslaughter, or Intoxication Manslaughter supervision, who was placed on regular community supervision for a state jail felony offense before September 1, 2007, who is on regular community supervision for a sexual offense listed in Chapter 62 of the Code of Criminal Procedure or who is placed on regular community supervision for a 3g offense on or after September 1, 2007 may not possess, ship, transport or receive a firearm or ammunition unless a full pardon is obtained from the Governor or a release is obtained from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

I have read or have had read to me the above Civil Rights and Federal Firearms Control Act and I understand them.