



SPECIALIZED DOCKETS AND INFUSING THE IDEAS OF SPECIALIZED DOCKETS INTO COURT PROCEDURE

Abbie Badenhop

Hon. Denise Herman McColley

Henry County Family Court

Typical Specialized Dockets

Mental
Health Courts

Drug Courts

OVI/DUI
Courts

Domestic
Violence
Courts

Child Support
Enforcement
Courts

Re-entry
Courts

Sex Offender
Courts

Veterans
Courts

Family
Dependency

Human
Trafficking

Truancy
Courts

Features of Specialized Dockets

- Development of a plan for the specialized docket (may need to be approved by state agency)
- Establishment of a Treatment Team
- Establishment of regular docket time for these cases at which all accepted in the program participate
- Development of participant handbook, agreement, etc.
- Development of individual family's service/treatment plan and goals
- Agreement of family due to voluntary nature of participation
- Phases
- Sanctions and Rewards
- Graduation upon successful completion

Treatment Team



- The treatment team is composed of mental health representatives, GAL, parenting coordinator, specialized docket coordinator, and others who may be appropriate in a given case.
- The treatment team members meet or provide a report prior to each hearing to review the case and to make recommendations as to further orders, sanctions or rewards for the family.

Immediate Sanctions

- Potential Sanctions:
 - Contempt of court and its possible punishments
 - Having to do a particular activity ordered by the court
 - Parenting time changing to supervised, to allow less time with the children, to impose restrictions on where and under what circumstances it occurs, or to eliminate parenting time
 - One parent given more rights regarding decision making, etc.
 - Moving to a phase requiring more frequent hearings
 - Dismissal from the program
 - Report made to Children's Services and possible removal of children



Immediate Rewards

- Potential Rewards:
 - Allowing a parent more time or unsupervised time with children
 - Allowing a parent the opportunity to have the children for a particular activity
 - Congratulations by the court
 - Parents allowed to share rights as to decision making, etc.
 - Possible rewards such as gift certificates for a family activity, etc.
 - Moving to a phase requiring less frequent hearings
 - Children's return to home(s) if removal has occurred

Possible Procedures to Infuse Practices of Specialized Dockets

- Frequent hearings
 - Making clearly understandable and enforceable orders
 - “Homework” assigned by the judicial officer
 - Relying on the Parenting Coordinator to report progress
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- Clearly defined consequences and rewards
 - Continuing with the role of the Guardian ad Litem as a spokesperson for the best interests of the children
 - Others?



**Issues to consider with a Specialized Docket
or with Infusion of Practices into Regular
Docket:**

- Time and Money (of course)
- Buy-in by practitioners
- Availability of Services in the Community and in the Court

Consider the Possible Advantages

- Parents following orders due to accountability checks by the Court
- Better outcomes for children
- Eventual fewer (or no) additional hearings
- Better identification of necessary services due to the “team” approach of dealing with the family
- Others?



**For more
information,
please visit:**

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JCS/SpecDockets/