

Arlington County Operation Safe Station Program Description

Operation Safe Station is a collaboration between the Arlington County Police Department, the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, and the Department of Human Services. The program is designed to allow people with substance use disorders a safe means to turn in drugs while avoiding the risk of arrest and prosecution while simultaneously seeking treatment.

The eligibility requirements are as follows:

1. The participant has no outstanding arrest warrants.
2. The participant has not been previously convicted of manufacturing, giving, selling, distributing, or possessing with the intent to manufacture, give, sell, or distribute a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance.
3. The participant has not previously participated in Operation Safe Station.
4. The participant is over the age of 18 or is present with a consenting parent or guardian.
5. The participant consents to a search of his or her person and belongings.
6. The participant will commit to follow all treatment recommendations.
7. The participant does not pose a reasonable risk of harm to a peer specialist or other service provider, as determined by the assisting police officers.
8. The participant must complete and sign the Participation Agreement.

Any person who meets the above eligibility requirements may participate in the program. The individual should report to the Office of the Magistrate for Arlington County located at 2020 15th Street North, Arlington, Virginia. Upon entering the Office of the Magistrate, the individual should tell the magistrate that he or she is interested in participating in Operation Safe Station. The magistrate will call the Emergency Communications Center and a police officer will be dispatched. The individual should give any drugs or drug paraphernalia in his or her possession to the responding officer. Such substances and items will be collected and disposed of by the police department. The individual will not be arrested or charged with possession crimes related to those substances and/or items forfeited under this program, provided he or she meets the eligibility requirements. If the individual is presently on probation or parole, his or her probation or parole officer may be informed of the circumstances of the participation in Operation Safe Station.

The police officer will determine eligibility for the program based on the eligibility requirements, and determine if the individual presents a danger to others. The individual will review and sign the Participation Agreement. The individual will then be screened to determine if they have any immediate medical needs. If so, EMS will be contacted. Additionally, pursuant to the consent given by signing the Participation Agreement, the individual and his or her belongings will be searched by police officers.

If the police officers determines that there is no medical emergency, the options are: (1) to transport the individual to the Crisis Intervention Center for ongoing assessment and evaluation with any immediate or urgent clinical needs; or (2) to notify the Department of

Human Services peer specialist team and referral to Same Day Access intake the next business day for routine treatment referrals. A peer specialist will contact the individual within one business day to assist with service navigation. For individuals with health insurance, the peer specialist may assist the individual in location treatment options and coordinate a referral.