



RECOVERY IN FOCUS · GROUP CURRICULUM · FACILITATOR GUIDE

Justice-Involved Recovery

Legal stress, supervision strategy, and the long game. Four parts, two group classes.

Topic category (billing anchor)	Relapse Prevention / Coping Skills, with Recovery-Centered Life Skills
Clinical focus	Legal stressors as schedulable relapse drivers; supervision compliance, organization, and long-view motivation as relapse prevention
Evidence base	Relapse Prevention · CBT (stress and cognition work) · MI stance toward mandated clients
Format	One participant packet · two group classes of about 2 hours each · Class 1 = Parts 1–2 · Class 2 = Parts 3–4
Group rules	2 to 12 clients, same time · at least 1 active Medi-Cal beneficiary · no minors mixed with adults

This file: facilitator guide

class agendas, scope guardrail, FIRP

Companion file: participant packet (print one per member)

4 parts · 8 exercises · 1 vignette · one-folder system
· long-game work

FACILITATOR GUIDE

How to run this session

- **RESPECT THE MANDATE HONESTLY:** many members are here because a court sent them, and pretending otherwise insults the room. Name it early: court cards start plenty of real recoveries, and the session's job is making the time count either way.
- **LINK:** shared PO frustrations and court-calendar dread bond this room instantly; steer the bonding toward strategy (honest-and-boring) before it becomes a grievance meeting.
- **NO CASE DETAILS:** the packet says it and you enforce it: no charges, no case specifics, no legal advice. Patterns and strategy only.
- **LAND IT CLINICALLY:** every segment lands on the loop (consequence stress pushing toward old behavior) and its counters. Travis's "witness, not a friend" is the spine.

Mixed-functioning group adjustments

- Read everything aloud; the one-folder system can be demonstrated with an actual folder as a prop.
- Lower-functioning rooms: run the whole session on the legal calendar with skills scheduled, honest-and-boring, and the folder. Members with reading barriers get help setting phone alarms in the room.

SCOPE AND VENTING GUARDRAILS

No legal advice, ever: "talk to your lawyer" and "ask your PO directly" are complete answers, delivered warmly. Expungement/relief gets mentioned as a direction, never as a promise about anyone's case. **Slip disclosures:** if a member discloses a recent slip with supervision implications, protect them from group speculation, affirm the honesty, and route same-day to their counselor regarding disclosure strategy; you document per facility policy, and members should know this group is not a confessional shield. **The venting cap:** system grievances get airtime because they're real, then get converted: "and what does that resentment cost your week?" Two rounds of venting maximum, then strategy.

HOOK SOURCE NOTE: the court-date/PO-meeting wobble pattern is clinical consensus rather than a single statistic; present as "ask counselors." California record relief (PC 1203.4-type dismissal and related reforms) is real and evolving; keep it directional and route specifics to legal aid.

CLASS 1

Parts 1 and 2 (about 2 hours)

Opening (10 min)

Frame: "A lot of recovery runs with the system watching. Tonight is strategy: how to keep legal stress from taking your sobriety, and how to make the time count double." Icebreaker: "One word for how the legal process feels." Board the words; acknowledge them as real; promise the night converts them into moves.

Part 1: Legal Stress Is a Relapse Driver (40 to 50 min)

Teach (5 min or less): the perfect-storm triad (stakes, control, waiting), the shame layer, the loop, and the one gift: it's schedulable.

PLAIN "What do the days around court or a PO meeting feel like in your body?"

DEEPER "The stress of consequences pushes toward the behavior that made the consequences. Where have you felt that loop pulling?"

- **Exercise 1** (yes/no): item 1 (court got me here) deserves a destigmatizing beat: mandated beginnings count.
- **Exercise 2** (my legal calendar): members map their 90 days and attach a scheduled skill to each spike window; cross-reference the Stress and Coping sessions by name.

Part 2: Working With Supervision (50 to 60 min)

Teach (5 min or less): honest-and-boring, the record-building reframe, the slip-disclosure principle (counselor and lawyer guide the how), and the resentment price tag.

- **Exercise 3** (yes/no): item 1 (avoidance made it worse) is near-universal; the hands teach it.
- **Travis vignette + Exercise 4:** read aloud. "Every boring month is a page" and "a witness, not a friend" are the lines to board. Question 3 (your file's last 90 days) is the pivot from venting to strategy.

Close Class 1 with the talk-it-out questions, venting cap applied. Assign: identify your avoided letter or requirement; just identify it.

CLASS 2**Parts 3 and 4 (about 2 hours)**

Opening (10 min)

Check in: what's in the avoided pile? Opening it happens in Part 3 with support, and say so.

Part 3: The Paperwork Game (50 to 60 min)

Teach (5 min or less): logistics revoke more supervision than malice; the one-folder, one-calendar, photograph-everything system, demonstrated with a real folder.

- **Exercise 5** (the audit): go around on "the gap that could actually hurt me"; set every member's one-hour setup date in the room. Members help each other set phone alarms live; this is the most concretely protective twenty minutes in the packet.
- **Exercise 6** (yes/no): item 2 (the avoided letter) converts to a commitment: opened this week, support person nearby.

Part 4: The Long Game (45 to 55 min)

Teach (5 min or less): terms end; completions are credentials; record relief exists as a direction with legal-aid routing; the record argues for you if you feed it.

- **Exercise 7** (the long-game line): go around on "what clean completion makes possible in two years"; custody, licenses, jobs, and self-respect will all show up; link the matches.
- **Exercise 8** (the final-hearing statement): written by all, read by volunteers. The best moment this session offers; let it breathe.
- **Skill of the day:** one boring page: folder built, dates alarmed, one letter opened. Promise the check-in.

Close with the group questions and the summary read aloud.

FIRP scaffold (one note per member, per class)

Class 1. Focus: member's relapse-prevention objective, plus today's topic: legal stressors as relapse drivers and supervision strategy. **Intervention:** *Educated group on legal stress as a schedulable relapse driver, including the consequence-stress loop and shame load; facilitated mapping of each member's 90-day legal calendar with coping skills scheduled to identified spike windows; educated group on compliance strategy (consistency, proactive communication, disclosure routed through counsel) and processed system resentment toward its recovery cost; facilitated vignette analysis of record-building through sustained compliance; linked members' patterns and processed responses.* **Response:** individualize; document any slip disclosure and routing per policy. **Plan:** identify avoided requirements; return for Class 2.

Class 2. Focus: same objective, plus today's topic: organizational relapse prevention and long-view motivation. **Intervention:** *Reviewed avoided-item identification; guided each member through an organizational audit and setup plan (single document folder, alarmed date calendar, completion records) with in-session calendar entry completed; converted one avoided requirement into a supported action commitment; educated group on post-supervision trajectory including completion credentials and record-relief routing to legal aid; guided articulation of a long-view purpose statement; assigned the organization setup.* **Response:** individualize, including audit gaps closed in session. **Plan:** complete folder setup and open the avoided item with support; legal-aid routing where requested; individual follow-up where indicated.

COMPLIANCE NOTES: 2 to 12 clients, same time; at least one active Medi-Cal beneficiary; no one 17 or under mixed with adults (outside a certified school site). Facilitator: licensed/registered clinician or certified/registered AOD counselor, in scope. Participant list each class; one note per member per class with attendance plus that member's specific response, provider-signed, finalized within 3 business days (service day counts as day 0), tied to that member's problem list or objective. No legal advice is given; land every segment on the substance-use and relapse link.