

Richland County Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program

Participant Handbook



Dear Program Participant,

The Richland County Probate Court has found by clear and convincing evidence that you are a mentally ill person subject to court order. As a result, you have been committed to the Richland County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board and ordered to participate in the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program.

The purpose of the AOT Program is to give you the tools you need to help manage your mental

illness so you can live successfully in the community. Catalyst Life Services will ensure that you have access to the mental health services you need, including assigning you a case manager and a psychiatrist. If you have other service needs, your case manager will help you secure those services. Catalyst will also oversee your progress in the AOT Program and provide regular updates to the court.

You and your treatment team will develop your treatment plan. By taking an active role in your treatment and following your treatment plan, you can help reduce the amount of time you must remain in the AOT Program. Ultimately,

however, it is the Probate Court that determines the length of time you are in the AOT Program based on the reports from your treatment team.

If you have any questions about the AOT Program, please do not hesitate to ask a member of the treatment team.

Sincerely,

Judge Mayer and Magistrate

Kitzler

Program Components

Members of the Treatment Team

- You!
- Probate Court Judge
- ADAMH Board Chief Clinical Officer
- AOT Program Monitor
- Case Manager
- Psychiatrist
- Other Service Providers

Program Requirements

While in the Richland County AOT Program, you will be asked to be a full partner in the program and the treatment team encourages you to:

- Participate in discussing and developing your goals with the treatment team;
- Participate in all regularly scheduled court appearances;
- Participate in the discussion of all possible medications you are prescribed and update the team on any issues with side effects;
- Participate and keep all appointments with treatment providers;
- Cooperate with psychological testing and therapy;
- Keep your case manager advised of any change of address or location;
- Obey all municipal, state and federal laws;
- Participate in each court session by giving a verbal update on your progress and program compliance.

Treatment Compliance

As you successfully progress through the AOT Program, the level of monitoring by the court and your treatment team will be reduced and eventually, may be lifted altogether. However, should you fail to comply with the requirements of your treatment plan, the Court may take any of the following actions:

- Extend the length of time that you are in the AOT Program
- Increase the frequency of your court appearances
- Order your treatment plan to be reviewed
- Order you to be picked up and evaluated for hospitalization

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long will I be in the AOT Program?

AOT is generally a minimum of 90 days. Your original commitment may be extended up to 180 days or more by the Probate Court at the recommendation of your treatment team. You may request a hearing with the court if it has been more than 180 days since your last hearing.

2. What do I need to do to complete the AOT Program?

This is up to you and your treatment team. If you are adhering to your treatment plan and have not had any psychiatric complications, the court will determine when your commitment will expire based on recommendations from the treatment team.

3. What happens if I am sick or forget an appointment?

You must contact your case manager immediately and provide a reason for missing an appointment. In addition, you must contact the person with whom you had the appointment and request to have it rescheduled as soon as possible.

4. What if I do not want to take the medications that have been prescribed?

Your psychiatrist has prescribed the medication he or she feels is best to address the symptoms of your mental illness. If you are unable to tolerate the side effects and want to request a change in medications, discuss this with your psychiatrist. Remember, refusal to take your medication may result in one of the consequences listed above.

5. Am I allowed to speak to the Judge?

Yes, the Judge or magistrate will give you the opportunity to speak at all hearings.

6. Is there any cost to participate in the AOT Program?

No.

Remember, your case manager and psychiatrist are there to help you. Please discuss any questions or concerns you have with them!