

**ASHTABULA COUNTY
ASSISTED OUTPATIENT TREATMENT
PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK**



**Ashtabula County Probate Court
25 W. Jefferson Street
Jefferson, Ohio 44047**

440-576-3451

***Judge Albert S. Camplese
Magistrate Richard L. Dana***

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dear Program Participant,

The court has found by clear and convincing evidence that you are a person with mental illness subject to court order. As a result, you have been committed to the Ashtabula 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 are better prepared to live safely in the community. Many people who participate in this program spend less time in the hospital than they had before participating. The AOT Coordinator, Lora Faenza will help connect you with any mental health services. Your Case Manager will provide you with additional support, and will assist you with community resources. Your Case Manager will also provide regular updates to the Care Team and Court.

You and the Care Team will develop your treatment plan based on your goals. By taking an active role in your treatment, including taking your medication as prescribed and meeting regularly with your case manager, you can help reduce the amount of time you must remain in the AOT Program. Ultimately, however, the Court determines the length of time you are in the AOT Program based on the reports from the Care Team.

If you have any questions about the AOT Program, please do not hesitate to ask the AOT Coordinator or any of the Care Team Members.

Sincerely,

Magistrate Richard Dana

MEET THE CARE TEAM!

While participating in AOT, you will be working with a **Care Team**. The Team will consist of the Family Drug Court Magistrate, the AOT Coordinator, Mental Health Providers, Catholic Charities, and your Defense Attorney if you request their presence.

- You
- Your family or support system
- Magistrate: Richard Dana
- AOT Program Coordinator: Lora Faenza (440) 228-0681
- Your Case Manager: _____
- Your Counselor: _____
- Psychiatrist: _____
- Your Attorney: _____
- Catholic Charities

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

While in the AOT Program, you will be asked to be an active partner in the program. The AOT Care Team encourages you to:

- Participate in developing your treatment plan with the Care Team;
- Attend all regularly scheduled court appearances;
- Take medications you are prescribed and report any issues with side effects;
- Keep all appointments with treatment providers;
- Inform your case manager of any change of address or phone number.
- Notify your case manager if you:
 - Run out of medication
 - Miss an appointment
 - Are bothered by side effects of your medication
 - Are hospitalized
 - Have contact with the police or emergency responders

WHAT ARE CARE CONFERENCES?

The AOT Magistrate monitors your performance and progress at the Care Conferences. **Care Conferences are held every Monday afternoon at 2:00p.m.** Care Team Members attend the Care Conferences. You have the right to request the attendance of your attorney during the Care Conference.

All discussions in the Care Conferences are confidential and are not to be repeated or discussed out of the courtroom. Each week, the AOT Magistrate will acknowledge the importance of confidentiality at the beginning of each Care Conference.

You will individually be called before the Magistrate to discuss your performance and progress. You will be questioned by the Magistrate regarding your treatment, activities, goals and individual circumstances. You will have the opportunity to address the Magistrate to share progress or concerns.

HOW OFTEN DO I ATTEND?

Care Conferences are every Monday afternoon at 2:00p.m. At the end of your Care Conference, you will receive notice of the date of your next appearance.

As you continue to meet the requirements of the AOT Program, the level of monitoring by the Court will decrease, and eventually may be lifted altogether.

However, should you not adhere to the requirements of the program and 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

WHAT DO I WEAR?

Always arrive on time for your Care Conferences and always be open and honest with the Magistrate and Care Team. You must wear appropriate clothing in the courtroom. Appropriate is defined as:

- ♦ Pants, shirts, sweaters, skirts or dresses.
- ♦ All shirts must have sleeves, either long or short. No cut off sleeves, tank tops, halter-tops, mid-drift or low-cut tops are allowed.
- ♦ Shorts are not permitted.
- ♦ Pants must be pulled up to the waist.
- ♦ No hats are permitted.
- ♦ Clothing should not display any alcohol, drug advertising or sexual promotion of any kind.

If you work prior to court, and your work clothing is not appropriate for court, you will need to bring clothing with you to change into before entering the courtroom.

WHAT IS ?

The courtroom must be a place where individuals can disclose positive and negative information to the Magistrate without the threat of that information being shared with persons not permitted to have it. Therefore, **what you see and hear in the courtroom must stay in the courtroom!**

The information kept by the AOT Coordinator about your progress and Treatment Team meetings is confidential and kept in a locked file cabinet. No one, other than a member of the Care Team Member, can have access to these files.

IN-COUNTY PROVIDERS

Ashtabula County agencies have been provided information regarding the AOT program. Some of these providers are members of the AOT Care Team, and any additional providers have been made aware of our program, and are planned to assist any individuals who are participating in the AOT program, and help identify potential referrals.

Mental Health/Substance Use Providers

- **Community Counseling Center**
2801 C Court, Ashtabula, OH 44004
(440)998-1811
<http://www.cccohio.com>
- **Signature Health**
4726 Main Ave., Ashtabula, OH 44004
(440) 992-8552
<http://www.signaturehealthinc.com>

Substance Use-Only Providers

- **Lake Area Recovery Center**
2801 C Court, Ashtabula, OH 44004
(440)998-0722
<http://www.larc.cc>
- **BrightView Health**
210 S Ridge Rd E, Ashtabula, OH 44004
(440) 306-7186
<https://www.brightviewhealth.com/>

Hospital Systems

- **University Hospitals**
Conneaut: 158 W. Main Road, Conneaut, Ohio 44030
(440) 593-1131
Geneva: 870 W. Main St. Geneva, Ohio, 44041
(440) 466-1141
<https://www.uhhospitals.org/>
- **Ashtabula Regional Medical Center**
2420 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004
(440) 997-2262
<https://www.armchealth.org/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

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

AOT is a minimum of 90 days. Your original commitment may be extended up to 180 days or more by the Court at the recommendation the Care Team.

2. 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.

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

Your psychiatrist has prescribed the medication they feel 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, not taking your medication may result in any of the appropriate consequences listed above.

4. Am I allowed to speak to the Magistrate?

Yes, you are encouraged to speak to the Magistrate and respectfully voice any concerns you may have.

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

No. Your mental health provider will bill your insurance for the services they provide. You may be responsible for medication co-pays if your insurance requires it.

**Remember, the AOT Care Team is here to help!
Please discuss any questions or concerns you have with them.**