

Client Handbook

Southwest Arkansas Counseling &
Mental Health Center, Inc.



A community mental health, substance abuse and youth services center

SELECTED PROGRAMS



Revised Feb. 2018

Introduction

Thank you for choosing to seek services at the Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to serve you. We pledge to make every effort to help you to feel as comfortable as possible and to deliver first class services to meet your needs.

We understand that you may be anxious about what will happen when you or someone you care about becomes a client of the Center. We have designed a simple process to orient our clients to the services we offer. This orientation is conducted by a therapist, case manager, or other staff member and includes the following:

- An explanation of programs and services offered by the Center, hours of operation, and how to access emergency services after hours;
- An explanation of the Center's fees, your financial obligations and financial arrangements available to you;
- An explanation of what the Center expects of you as a client including participating in your treatment, keeping appointments, and paying your portion of the cost of treatment;
- The name of the staff member who is responsible for coordinating your treatment and explaining your rights, responsibilities, and any applicable program rules;
- The Center's outcomes process, how you can give input about the quality of care you receive, and your satisfaction with programming and services;
- A copy of all applicable rules for programs in which you participate;
- An explanation of the Center's Code of Ethics;
- A discussion of confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality;
- An explanation of the process for filing a complaint (grievance) or an appeal of any decision made by the organization;
- A description of the Center's method for developing treatment plans, including your role in that process;
- Familiarization with the Center's offices, including emergency exits, fire suppression equipment, first aid equipment, and alternative shelter;
- The Center's policies regarding the use of seclusion and restraint, smoking, the use of vapor cigarettes, the possession or use of illicit and licit substances on premises and, weapons brought into the Center;
- Education regarding advance directives;
- Identification of the purpose and process of the assessment and;
- Information regarding transition/discharge criteria and the discharge progress.

Mission Statement & Philosophy

The mission of the Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. is to prevent, treat and cure mental illnesses and related disorders regardless of an individual's ability to pay for such services.

The Center's philosophy is that services should be provided to individuals and families in a way which promotes the rights, dignity, health and safety of the clients through enhancement of their independence (financial and emotional), self-sufficiency, and quality of life; that the likelihood of achieving the goals of treatment is enhanced by having clients and their families actively participate in all phases of treatment; and that the quality of services is improved by the utilization of the collective expertise of staff members representing various disciplines, working toward goals which are attainable and measurable.

It is also the philosophy of the Center that clients should be served in the least restrictive environment possible. Further, it is the Center's philosophy that comprehensive mental health services include not only treatment and therapeutic efforts by the clinical staff, but also preventive efforts through public education and dissemination of information that promotes positive mental health in individuals and families throughout the areas served by the Center.

The Center provides mental health services to Arkansas residents from Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller and Sevier Counties regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, social preferences, cultural orientation, race, color, physical status/disability, spiritual beliefs/religion, ability to pay for services, nation of origin, psychological characteristics, or involvement in the adult or juvenile criminal justice system. Youth Services are also provided in Pike and Nevada Counties. Substance abuse services are provided to residents of all these counties (except Pike) plus Columbia, Calhoun, Union, Dallas, Nevada and Ouachita Counties.

It is the policy of the Center to provide services to clients in a way that protects their rights and respects their dignity. To this end, the Center has adopted a set of rights and responsibilities for clients as well as a grievance procedure designed to safeguard these rights. These rights are intended to ensure that Center clients receive the highest quality of care in an atmosphere that is characterized by professionalism, ethical practice, dignity and respect.

Organizational Code of Ethics

Since Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. employs providers and practitioners from a variety of disciplines, it is the expectation of the organization that every service provider will act and operate in a manner consistent with the Code of Ethics of his/her respective discipline. In the event that a service provider is not legally, ethically or otherwise bound by a specific Code of Ethics, Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. will expect that he/she will provide treatment services in strict accordance with the following guiding principles:

- Hold himself/herself responsible for the delivery of the highest quality care to persons served;
- Adhere to all applicable federal, state and local regulations for the delivery and administration of behavioral health care services;
- Seek guidance from the appropriate Center supervisor before acting in situations not clearly covered by organizational or professional codes of ethics;
- Support the principle that competent job performance requires continuing professional growth, development and education, and, toward that end, avail themselves of all appropriate opportunities for workforce development training;
- Periodically review the ethical standards established for their respective professions and discuss ethical issues, questions and concerns as a matter of routine clinical supervision;

All clients will be briefed on the organization's organizational code of ethics as part of new client orientation.

Client Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

--To have access to competent, professional, and ethical mental health treatment without regard to race, gender, age, religion, or national origin as specified in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

--To have mental health services and related procedures provided in a safe and culturally sensitive manner that is consistent with regard to one's socioeconomic, psychological, and physical status, spiritual outlook, and language, and that takes into account each person's physical, developmental and abuse history, unique characteristics, needs, and abilities.

--To be treated with respect, dignity, and caring as a person and individual without fear of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, psychological abuse (including humiliating, threatening and exploiting actions), harassment, physical punishment, fiduciary abuse, retaliation or indifference from staff.

--To be seen for treatment in as timely a manner as possible and for that treatment to be offered in an efficient and effective manner in the least restrictive setting and through the least restrictive means.

--To have access to crisis intervention/emergency services during times of urgent need and for those services to be provided in a sensitive caring manner through the least restrictive means and in the least restrictive setting possible. It is the policy of the Center that seclusion is not used and that therapeutic restraint is used only when an individual presents a danger to self or others.

--To be fully informed regarding the use of special treatment interventions and restrictions of rights. Special treatment interventions are understood to include any treatment outside of the ordinary treatment regimen for any program, including involuntary emergency medication. Special treatment interventions are to be applied on an individualized basis, and such interventions are to be based on the unique needs of the person served.

--To be involved in the development of an individualized treatment plan for mental health care, including all aspects of the plan. This right includes receiving an explanation of all treatment, techniques, interventions and options used, and having input as to any changes in the treatment plan, and knowledge and input as to the discharge planning.

--To be fully informed regarding providing consent for treatment and the option to refuse treatment, with an explanation as to the possible consequences of such a decision, except when treatment is mandated by a Court of Law. To be fully informed regarding expression of choice regarding service delivery, release of information, concurrent services, composition of the service delivery team.

--To have access to competent, trained, responsible professionals and paraprofessionals for treatment.

--To have privacy and confidentiality of evaluation and treatment records to the fullest extent possible and consistent with all applicable laws. To authorize, restrict or refuse the release of any portion of the client record, except when the release is ordered by a Court of appropriate jurisdiction. To have access to information in the client record, within limits of the law, unless determined not advisable clinically, in which case the information may be released to the client's legally authorized representative. To be provided with information in sufficient time to facilitate decision-making in all aspects of treatment at the Center.

--To be informed as to the cost of services, reimbursement sources, and limitations of services offered.

--To be informed as to client responsibilities in treatment.

--To receive information about the risks, side effects, and benefits of any medication or other treatment techniques used and to be informed of alternative procedures prior to any treatment being initiated in order to provide information necessary for decision-making as well as informed consent in regard to treatment.

--To have access to a grievance procedure if dissatisfied with services rendered or to investigate and resolve alleged infringement of rights, without fear of retaliation.

--To continue one's constitutional rights to the extent permitted by the law.

--Adherence to recognized research guidelines and ethics, to be fully informed, and to give written consent for any research or educational projects affecting one's care or treatment, that includes but is not limited to the use of observation, video and/or audio techniques, and any experimental procedures.

--To have assistance from Center staff in obtaining access or referral to guardians, conservators, self-help groups, legal services, and advocacy groups.

--To have these rights and responsibilities communicated in an understandable fashion given one's capabilities and special needs, not only upon intake, but at any time during the course of treatment.

Responsibilities

--To provide accurate/complete information about one's presenting problems, treatment preferences and needs, social and medical history, and any other matters relating to one's care.

--To actively participate in the development of the treatment plan and in the treatment process.

--To report any changes in personal circumstances and conditions that might affect treatment or the treatment relationship and to discuss with one's treatment provider any dissatisfaction with the care one is getting, transfer to another therapist, or premature release from treatment.

--To keep all appointments as scheduled as much as possible or call to cancel/reschedule 24 hours ahead of the appointment times.

--To take responsibility for one's behavior/actions if treatment is refused or the treatment plan is not followed.

--To abide by any treatment program/plan rules that might apply.

--To treat staff and other clients with the respect, courtesy, and dignity that one would want from others.

--To refrain from the use of mood-altering substances, both licit and illicit, on Center property or prior to coming in for services.

--To refrain from carrying any illegal weapons onto Center property and not demonstrate any threatening, assaultive, or dangerous behavior toward staff or other clients.

--To investigate and make arrangements for the payment of services with one's own finances or through a third party.

If a client is legally incompetent to handle personal affairs, is a minor, or is otherwise incapable of making treatment decisions, the previously listed rights and responsibilities may be exercised by the client's legal guardian or other legally authorized representative to the extent permitted by law.

FREEDOM FROM RESTRAINT OR SECLUSION

--The Center does not use seclusion or restraints.

EXCEPTIONS FOR CLIENT RIGHTS

--The Center must release information about a client if we believe there is a medical emergency and/or his/her life and/or the lives of others may be in danger.

--Federal law and regulations do not protect any information about a crime committed by a client, either at the program or against any person who works for the program, or about any threat to commit such crime.

--Federal law and regulation do not protect any information about suspected child abuse or neglect from being reported under state law to the appropriate state or local authorities.

Release of Client Records

--A client may sign a release form, which specifies in writing that only certain limited information can be disclosed to outside sources. Only those persons or agencies specified by the client may receive information, except as provided for by federal and state law.

--Federal and state law prohibits the re-disclosure of information that the Center releases at the request of the client; however, it is understood that this information may be subject to re-disclosure by the recipient and may no longer be protected by the privacy regulations. Alcohol and substance abuse treatment records are protected by the privacy regulations 42 CFR, Part 2 which prohibits a recipient of records from making any further disclosure without the "specific" written authorization of the person to whom it pertains and as otherwise permitted by such regulations

--The client may revoke or cancel an authorization to release information at any time, if the client is not court-ordered for treatment.

--Alcohol and substance abuse treatment records as well as those pertaining to sexually transmitted disease, including HIV/AIDS-related information will only be released if the client gives his/her specific consent by written authorization. A specific release of information form authorizing the release of these types of records is required. These records may be released without the client's permission to the following: healthcare providers caring for the client; public health officials when required by law; emergency medical personnel or medical staff who are exposed to the client's blood and; by special order.

--A client may authorize the release of Center records or portions of Center records to another agency, organization, physician, clinic or individual who is involved in the treatment effort, for a specific period of time (e.g., 30 days), for the duration of treatment at the Center (if longer than one year, a new authorization is required), or until the authorization is revoked by the client in writing; however, no authorization to release information will be effective beyond one year from the date it is signed.

--A client may also authorize mutual exchange of information between the Center and other agencies for the duration of treatment (if longer than one year, a new authorization is required) or until the mutual exchange of information is revoked; however, no authorization to mutually exchange information will be effective beyond one year from the date it is signed.

--A client may include others in the treatment process. Significant individuals such as parents, spouse, children, extended family, minister, friends, and so on are sometimes involved in a treatment program as collateral resources or co-clients. When others are involved in treatment, the client is asked to sign an Authorization to Release Information Form to allow communication between the professional and the person(s) included in the treatment process. This Authorization to Release Information Form expires one year from the date it is signed. If the treatment process remains ongoing after a year, a new authorization form is required in order to continue the involvement of significant others in the treatment process.

Informed Consent

The Center asks that each client give informed consent to receive any services prior to involvement of any type of treatment. The client or legal representative of the client receives information about all interventions and must give written consent before the client begins his/her participation in any treatment efforts.

Written consent is not required prior to the provision of emergency service but is obtained as soon as possible and appropriate for the situation. (Please refer to the previous sections that detail client rights for additional information.) Clients who wish to file advance directives or psychiatric directives should inform Center staff during the intake process and may revise these directives, in writing, at any time during treatment.

Access to Services

Center facilities are constructed, furnished and maintained in a safe, attractive, accessible and comfortable state that provides for client privacy. The Center is committed to the elimination of architectural, social, cultural, attitudinal, employment and any other barriers that may impact clients and Center staff.

The Center also maintains a medical history on each client which includes information that is needed to access emergency services in the event of a medical crisis. The Center requests that clients provide updated information whenever there is a change in the client's personal physician, allergies, medications, choice of hospital, choice of pharmacy and/or medical diagnoses. Clients may also be asked to complete a new medical history form from time to time as a way to ensure that the Center has the most current information.

Programs and Services

Crisis Services

The Center provides 24-hour crisis intervention for mental health needs in Southwest Arkansas. This system is accessed through a telephone call to the Center location that is nearest to the client's residence during office hours, and with a toll-free telephone number (1-800-652-9166) during nights, weekends and holidays.

Emergency/crisis services include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Case consultation regarding management or treatment of mental illnesses and emotional disorders;
- Face-to-face interview with a mental health professional;
- Referral to specific treatment facilities such as psychiatric hospitals, alcohol detoxification programs, and drug treatment facilities.
- Assisting with documentation, assessment, or evaluation required by another treating facility; and/or
- Court-ordered evaluations subsequent to a petition for involuntary mental health or substance abuse treatment.

Outpatient Services

Outpatient services include individual counseling, family counseling, marital counseling, counseling for substance abuse problems, alcohol safety education services, group therapy, consultation with other healthcare providers or educational/vocational facilities, psychological evaluation, psychiatric evaluation, medication management, and telephone or walk-in crisis intervention.

Center outpatient services are designed to develop and enhance the following: psychological functioning; social skills and opportunities; self-esteem; coping abilities; vocational skills and opportunities; educational opportunities and; community living skills.

Center therapists provide psycho-education and interventions in addition to utilizing evidence-based practices that are aimed at enhancing the client's functional abilities. Treatment is family-centered, whenever possible, in order to help the client cope with the complex dynamics of family interaction. Center staff believe that outpatient services are most effective when those services include the client's family and/or significant others in the treatment effort. Several outpatient therapists are linked to various school campuses throughout the Center's catchment area.

Youth Services

The goal of the Youth Services Program is to reduce juvenile delinquency. To accomplish this goal, the Youth Services Program serves delinquent and high-risk youth who reside in an eight-county area of Southwest Arkansas. One or more full-time case managers serve each county. Most youth served by the program are juvenile court referrals, but referrals may come from other sources.

The Youth Services Program provides counseling, home visits, court services, transportation, school contacts, referral services, law education classes, field trips and follow-up services for youth returning to the community from the State correctional facilities.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services

The goal of the Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Program is to assist our clients in functioning within the living, learning and working environments that they choose, while utilizing the least amount of services and supports possible. In addition the treatment team works to address the client's needs, preferences and goals while helping him or her recognize and use identified strengths.

PSR program staff members strive to communicate an understanding and acceptance of psychiatric disabilities, with an emphasis on improvement of the client's abilities to cope with their psychiatric disorders.

Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) or Community Integration Services (COI)

As part of the Center's psychosocial rehabilitation services, assistance is provided in many areas of the clients' lives to facilitate the development of health community living skills, independent living skills, socialization skills, appropriate use of leisure time and vocational development.

Community Integration Services are designed to provide community-based support and treatment services to individuals who have a diagnosis that is consistent with chronic mental illness. Clients who have other diagnoses may participate when the individual and her/his treating mental health professional agree that he/she would benefit from such services. Community Integration Services are offered at Jefferson House located next to the outpatient clinic in Texarkana. This program is also offered at the Split Rail Residential Care Facility in Prescott and the Horizons of Hope Residential Care Facility in Hope, Arkansas. Many persons residing outside of the residential care facilities also attend these programs.

Child and Adult Case Management Services

Case management services are an integral part of the Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Program. These services are designed to provide the client with locally-based community supports and treatment services, to optimize the client's ability to become as self-sufficient and independent as possible in order to function in the living, learning and working places of the client's choices.

Case management services are provided at each one of the Center's locations. Center case managers also deliver in-home services and may accompany their clients to various locations in the community.

Center case managers conduct outreach services to encourage participation in Center and community programs, and work to coordinate crisis stabilization services. Case management services also offer coordination for developing client support networks, obtaining transportation and enhancing daily living skills.

Therapeutic Foster Care

Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. contracts with the Division of Children and Family Services within the Arkansas Department of Human Services in order provide therapeutic foster care for children who have been removed from the home and have identified mental health needs which would require specialized foster care and continued mental health services. In addition to recruiting and training foster parents, the Center provides intensive outpatient services including case management, individual therapy, collateral services, group therapy and medication management to these children.

Supported Housing

The Center owns and operates an apartment building with four-two bedroom units for supported housing which is offered to clients who are active in the Community Integration program. The Center prides itself in offering possibly the best living situation some of its residents have ever enjoyed. In addition, these clients have the ability to access intensive in-home case management services which assist them in making their continued living situation successful.

Children and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP)

This mission of the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) is to further the development of a community-based system of care for children and adolescents who have been classified as "seriously emotionally disturbed" based on criteria established by Arkansas Act 964. CASSP is based on the principle that services are most effective when they are delivered at the community level with the needs of the child/adolescent and family dictating the type and mix of services. Children and adolescents who are at priority for receiving CASSP services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Children and adolescents under 18 years of age;
- Children and adolescents whose emotional problems are disabling, based upon social functioning criteria;
- Children and adolescents who have a multi-agency need and;
- Children and adolescents who have been diagnosed as having a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of long-term nature.

CASSP offers a comprehensive spectrum of case management, psychoeducational and other behavioral health services organized into a coordinated network to meet the multiple and changing needs of clients and their families.

Substance Abuse Services

The Center provides intensive outpatient and supportive outpatient counseling services throughout the Center's catchment area. The Center also provides residential substance abuse treatment services at the River Ridge Treatment Center located in Texarkana. Individuals who desire services may call the individual sites in order to request an assessment. Aftercare/support services are available upon discharge from residential care. Substance abuse services are provided on a sliding scale basis after an initial fee is assessed.

As part of its contract with the State, the Center provides drug and alcohol safety education classes throughout its catchment area. Clients receiving such services are usually ordered to attend these classes after being charged with a drug or alcohol related offense. These classes are usually held on Saturdays.

Fees

The Center uses a sliding fee scale that is based on the client's ability to pay for services. The Center also accepts payment from third party payers such as Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance and other governmental funding sources. The client's financial liability for services is usually established during the first visit to the Center. Once services start, if a client faces undue financial hardship created by the fees, he or she can work with his/her primary therapist in order to file a request to either reduce or waive an existing balance.

The Center also provides billing to third party payers as a courtesy to our clients. If the client has any changes that affect third party payment status or processes, he/she should contact the Center's business office with this information.

How To Make a Complaint or File a Formal Grievance

It is the Center's belief that most complaints can be resolved without the necessity of pursuing the formal grievance procedure. Clients who feel that their rights have been violated, or who wish to appeal a decision made by Center staff, may register their complaints orally or in writing with the manager of the location in which they are receiving services. Should the manager and client be unsuccessful at resolving the issue, the client is encouraged to call or see the Chief Financial Officer or Clinical Director, depending on the nature of the complaint. Should the complaint not be resolved at this level, the client is informed of his/her right to file a grievance and the procedure for doing so. A member of the Center's support staff will assist a client in completing the grievance form if he or she is unable to write. The client is assured of the Center's "no retaliation" policy, meaning that the staff members are not allowed to retaliate against a client in any way for filing a grievance.

The grievance procedure is posted in each service location. The following procedures apply:

- Client complaints and dissatisfactions are discussed orally at the initiative of the client or therapist/s. Attempts are made to resolve the complaint at the informal level by the local manager, or by the Chief Financial Officer or Clinical Director, depending on the nature of the complaint.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved through this process, the client is informed of his/her right to file a grievance. The grievance should be filed in writing; a form is available at each service location. The written grievance is turned in to the agency grievance officer.
- The grievance officer will meet with the client within three weeks to discuss and possibly resolve the grievance. If the grievance is resolved, the grievance officer summarizes the grievance and its resolution in writing. The client and grievance officer will sign this summary. The original is sent to the Clinical Director, with copies to the client, the Clinic/Program Director, the Executive Director, the Continuing Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance (CQI/QA) Committee and other staff members involved in the client's services. A copy is also included in the client's record.
- If the client and grievance officer cannot resolve the grievance, the grievance officer will accompany the client to a hearing with the local manager or director, within two weeks, and to the Clinical Director within two weeks after that if the matter is still not resolved. If the matter is still not resolved, the grievance officer, Clinical Director and client will meet with the Executive Director within two weeks. In each case, the responsible staff summarizes the results as documented above.
- In the event that the Executive Director cannot resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the client, the client has the option to ask that the Program Committee of the Board of Directors review the grievance for resolution. Finally, Center clients have the right to seek grievance redress through the Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services, or through Advocacy Services in Little Rock.
- Clients who receive services funded by the Arkansas Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (BADAP) also have the right to contact that agency directly should the Center's internal grievance process prove unsatisfactory in addressing the grievance.
- In no circumstances will filing a grievance result in retaliation or barriers to services.

Grievance forms are available from the secretary in the reception area of every outpatient site.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the information in this pamphlet, please feel free to ask any of the Center staff members. Again, we welcome you to the Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc. and hope that our services will be beneficial to you.



Selected programs of the Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center, Inc., are nationally accredited by CARF International located in Tucson, Arizona. The Center is licensed as community mental health center by the Arkansas Department of Human Services and the Division of Behavioral Health Services to provide rehabilitative services to persons with mental illness. In addition, the Division of Behavioral Health services licenses the Center to provide substance abuse services in outpatient and residential settings.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

I attend mental health services at the Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center located in:

The telephone number for the clinic is:

The emergency after hours telephone number at the clinic is:

IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY I WILL CALL 911 OR GO TO THE LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM

My primary therapist is:

My primary therapist will be responsible for coordinating my treatment and explaining my right and responsibilities in addition to any applicable program rules. My primary therapist will meet with me regularly in order to assist me in treatment planning.

The telephone number for my primary therapist is:

If I need medication refills, I will call the clinic and ask for a nurse.

My case manager's name is:

The phone number for poison control is 1-800-222-1222

Keep this information in a safe place in case you need to contact the mental health center or you have an emergency.