



## **ACCESS Evaluation & Resource Center Behavioral Health Handbook**

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## Welcome

Welcome to ACCESS! We are excited you have chosen to become part of our ACCESS family. At ACCESS, we maintain a commitment in providing the best possible quality of care to every client. We strive for extraordinary results and offer state-of-the-art, innovative services for the clients we serve. We are committed to delivering a warm, friendly atmosphere and a person-centered service delivery model. Thank you for the opportunity to live out our mission with you and your family.

## Our Mission

To expand individual potential through innovative instruction.

## Our Services

The ACCESS Evaluation and Resource Center provides a variety of outpatient behavioral health services to individuals seeking help for their emotional health and wellbeing. Services vary in type and level of intensity, depending on an individual's need. Services include:

- Comprehensive Diagnostic Interview
- Person-Centered Treatment Planning
- Individual and Group Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Psychiatric Evaluation and Medication Management
- Crisis Intervention
- Qualified Behavioral Health Provider Services (Case Management)
- Psychological Evaluation
- Psychoeducation

## Eligibility

Clients referred for behavioral health services will receive a comprehensive diagnostic assessment by a Licensed Mental Health Professional. This assessment will include an interview with the client, interview with the parent/guardian when applicable, and clinical observation of behaviors. If therapy services are indicated, the Licensed Mental Health Professional will complete an individualized treatment plan with client and/or caregiver input. All services provided must be medically necessary. In addition, a prior authorization may be required for some services. If a prior authorization is required, ACCESS will obtain that authorization before those services may be provided. If additional services are recommended during the comprehensive diagnostic assessment, the Licensed Mental Health Professional will refer the client and their legal guardian to the admissions department for further assistance.

Clients that are ages birth to 18 may meet criteria established for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) if they are currently or at any time during the past year have had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within the DSM and this disorder has resulted in functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits the client's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities.

Clients that are ages 18 and over may meet criteria established for Serious Mental Illness (SMI) if they are currently or at any time during the past year have had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within the DSM and this disorder has resulted in functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits the client's role or functioning in one or more major life areas.

### **Appointments**

The ACCESS Evaluation and Resource Center is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Being on time and not missing scheduled appointments is absolutely critical to successful treatment. Clients or their legal guardians should contact the office as soon as they realize they will be late to an appointment or have become ill and are unable to attend. With notice, the therapist will wait for up to 15 minutes for the client to arrive. If the client is more than 15 minutes late, they will have to wait until the next scheduled appointment to be seen. If the client is more than five minutes late without notification, they will have to wait until the next scheduled appointment to be seen. Five late arrivals in a six-month timeframe may result in a discharge from services. Appointment cancellations must be made at least 24-hours in advance. Clients will be charged a \$25.00 cancellation fee for every unplanned absence. Four unexcused absences in a six-month timeframe may result in a discharge from services.

### **Emergencies and Crisis Events**

Behavioral health emergencies and Crisis Events can occur when people are unable to manage a problem using their own resources. At times, these situations may involve a person who indicates either verbally and/or behaviorally that he/she is unable to ensure the personal safety of self or of others; this may include incidents of suicidal or homicidal threat or gesture, psychotic behavior, emotional trauma, or other acting out behavior. If a behavioral health related emergency occurs after hours, clients may call the ACCESS 24-hour emergency number at 1-888-822-0252. If there is imminent risk of harm to self or others, clients should immediately call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Since "on-call" therapists are not the client's regular therapist, problems which are not behavioral health emergencies should be discussed with their regular therapist during their scheduled appointment time.

## **Funding/Fees**

ACCESS receives reimbursement for services from Medicaid, TEFRA, Private Insurance, and Private Pay. Fees are payable at the time services are rendered. When co-payments are applicable, they are payable at the time of services. Third party payments such as Medicaid, TEFRA, and Private Insurance may be denied based on the policies or rules of their governing agencies. Clients will be billed for services not reimbursed by private insurance.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

In case of inclement weather, clients should listen to local broadcasting for closings, late arrival or early dismissal. The broadcasting will be listed as ACCESS. ACCESS will also post this information at [AccessGroupInc.org](http://AccessGroupInc.org) and on the ACCESS Facebook page. When ACCESS is closed due to weather, all offices will be closed and outpatient services will be cancelled.

## **Check-In Process**

Clients will be required to check in with the front office for assessment and therapy sessions. The mental health therapist will meet their client in the lobby and will accompany them to the treatment area. For minor children, parents are allowed to leave during their child's therapy only if they are accessible by phone and can return on time.

## **Behavior Management**

ACCESS is committed to providing a safe climate that is conducive to learning. For the success of our programs, we must strive for acceptable and appropriate client behavior. We provide social skills and behavior training to help clients understand their obligations to others and the role of rules in social settings. When necessary, a safety or behavior plan may be developed in order to assist in maintaining a safe environment. In addition, ACCESS has chosen to utilize Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) which is an internationally recognized program designed to teach best practices for managing difficult situations and disruptive behaviors. Staff learn how to identify at-risk individuals and use nonverbal and verbal techniques to defuse hostile or belligerent behavior. In the event that a client is judged to be a risk of hurting themselves or others and attempts to de-escalate have been unsuccessful, CPI therapeutic holds may be utilized as a last resort.

## **Court Services**

Unless specifically contracted to do so, in writing prior to the first scheduled appointment, ACCESS's behavioral health staff will not make custody recommendations regarding clients, even if therapy services have been provided to all parties involved in the divorce. In the event, an ACCESS behavioral health staff member is requested to produce his or her records, give a deposition or attend court to provide testimony, there will be a legal retainer fee of \$2,000 charged per day, per staff person, payable in advance. This includes, but is not limited to, any type of court trials (including divorce or custody cases), depositions, mediations, etc. This fee will be charged to the client or their guardian even if another attorney, without client or guardian authorization, subpoenas any behavioral health staff member regarding records or testimony. This fee must be paid prior to the staff member's appearance in court.

## **Confidentiality**

ACCESS is dedicated to maintaining privacy of client health information as protected by law, including the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In efforts to do so, ACCESS strictly prohibits clients, parents, and/or guardians from audio or video recording of any behavioral health therapy or testing session without all parties' expressed written consent.

## **Clinician Supervision/Interns**

ACCESS behavioral health clinicians are subject to supervision as required by regulatory and accrediting agencies. This supervision will include a review of client private health information and discussion of client specific case information.

Additionally, ACCESS may utilize interns as a part of the treatment process. Documentation completed by unlicensed graduate interns will be reviewed by the clinical supervisor assigned to that intern. As part of the intern's graduate training program, anonymous case information may be discussed in class at the intern's university.

## **Discharge Planning**

Discharge planning is completed in partnership with the client, parent/guardian, and mental health therapist beginning at the time of the comprehensive diagnostic assessment. This plan is updated throughout treatment and establishes the direction and anticipated length of treatment. The criteria for discharge will vary according to each client's specific circumstances and needs. In general, clients may be discharged when they have successfully accomplished all treatment goals, when they have reached maximum benefit from the treatment provided, when their condition worsens requiring a higher level or more intense level of care, or if they are not able or unwilling to follow

treatment goals or program guidelines. Clients have the right to discontinue services at any time. When discharge from services is determined by either party, clients will be provided an opportunity to meet with treatment staff to receive discharge instructions and follow-up recommendations.

## Client Rights

The following list details ACCESS' client rights. These client rights are written comprehensively for all ACCESS programming, therefore, not all may be applicable in all programming situations.

- ACCESS will not discriminate because of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or handicapping condition.
- Clients will be free from physical or psychological abuse or neglect, retaliation, coercion, humiliation, and financial exploitation.
- ACCESS will not use corporal punishment or physical or chemical restraint, medication, seclusion, or isolation as punishment for clients at any time. Corporal punishment is defined as the application of painful stimuli to the body in an attempt to terminate behavior or as a penalty for behavior.
- Clients will have the right to privacy and freedom of religion.
- ACCESS will not implement rules which contain provisions that result in unfair, arbitrary, or unreasonable treatment of clients.
- Any treatment recommended and/or provided will be based solely on clinical need.
- Treatment will be provided in an atmosphere which enhances the dignity, self-respect and individuality of each person.
- Clinical information shall remain entirely confidential. A signed release of information will be obtained from the individual or his/her legal guardian before any exchange of information, written or verbal, may occur. The only time ACCESS does not require a written authorization is when information is shared with a client's referring Primary Care Physician and/or payor source.
- Clients and their guardians have the right to receive due process, including access or referral to:
  - Legal entities for appropriate and adequate representation;
  - Self-help support services; and
  - Advocacy support services.
- Clients and their guardians have the right to provide informed consent, refusal, or expression of choice regarding:
  - Choice of provider;
  - Service delivery;
  - Release of information;
  - Concurrent services;
  - Composition of the service delivery team;
  - Daily activities;
  - Physical environment;
  - With whom to interact; and
  - Involvement in research projects.
- ACCESS will adhere to research and ethics guidelines when clients are involved

(45 CFR § 46.101 et. seq.).

- Clients and their guardians will have the freedom to actively and meaningfully make decisions affecting their lives and the ability to access pertinent information in a timely manner to facilitate such decision making.
- Clients and their guardians will have the freedom to access their own records, including information regarding how their funds are accessed and utilized and what services were billed for on his/her behalf. Additionally, all clients and legal guardians will be informed of how to access service records, and ACCESS will ensure that appropriate equipment is available for them to obtain such access. Clients and their guardians will not be prohibited from having access to their own service records, unless a specific state law indicates otherwise.
- Clients and their guardians will have the right to contest and appeal ACCESS' decisions which affect their treatment and/or well-being.
- When age-appropriate, clients will have the opportunity to seek employment and work in competitive, integrated settings. Clients will not be required to work without compensation; however, individuals who choose not to participate in job-training activities may not be appropriate for some of ACCESS' programs.
- Clients will have the freedom to control their own financial resources.
- Clients will have the right to communicate with family, friends, legal representatives, and others. They will have the freedom to associate and communicate publicly or privately with any person or group of people they choose at any time, except during school, treatment, or work hours when it would interfere with learning or job responsibilities.
- Clients will have the freedom to have visitors of their choosing except during school, treatment, or work hours when it would interfere with learning or job responsibilities.
- Clients will have the freedom to receive, purchase, possess, and use individual personal property except during school, treatment, or work hours so as not to interfere with learning or work responsibilities.
- Clients and their guardians have the right to request and receive an investigation and resolution of alleged infringement of rights. ACCESS will maintain the documentation related to all investigations of alleged rights violations and the actions taken to intervene in such situations. ACCESS will ensure that clients and guardians have been notified of their right to appeal according to DDS Policy #1076 or other applicable State Statutes or requirements, if applicable.

## **Grievance and Appeal Procedures**

It is ACCESS' desire and policy to give equal and sincere attention to any and all questions, concerns, conflicts, complaints, or other issues brought to our attention regarding our clients or their services. While we will make every effort to resolve all concerns quickly and fairly, in the event that an issue cannot be resolved, clients and their guardians have the right to use the following procedures in order to file a grievance or to appeal if a decision regarding their grievance is not acceptable.

### **Client Rights and Responsibilities**

- To follow these procedures in order to resolve issues in an efficient

and timely manner.

- To be willing to communicate openly in order to resolve the issue.
- To have all information necessary to follow these procedures provided to them.
- To have these procedures explained in a manner that is understandable to the client or their legal guardian. This may include, but is not limited to, a thorough and clear explanation of each step and its requirements, or the use of an interpreter or other assistive methods as needed in order to ensure a complete understanding of this important process.
- To seek an outside advocate or legal advice at any time during this process.

### **Our Rights and Responsibilities**

- To follow these procedures in order to resolve issues in an efficient and timely manner.
- To be willing to communicate openly in order to resolve the issue.
- To provide to our clients any forms or information necessary to complete this process.
- To explain this process in a manner that is understandable to the client and their legal guardian. This may include, but is not limited to, a thorough and clear explanation of each step and its requirements or the use of an interpreter or other assistive methods as needed in order to ensure a complete understanding of this important process.
- To welcome any advocates or other representatives that the client may use during this process.

***Filing a grievance will not result in any action taken against a client, their guardian, family members, or representatives, nor will it cause treatment to be reduced, withheld, or terminated.***

We encourage families to first meet with the involved staff to attempt to resolve any concerns or complaints that arise. If staff have been unable to resolve an issue or problem involving any part of the client's care to their satisfaction, they have the right to file a formal grievance. The *Grievance Form* may be obtained from the back of this booklet, from the information binder in the lobby on either ACCESS campus, or by request of any employee in our organization.

The company organizational chart is located in the binder in the lobby on either ACCESS campus. This chart may be consulted for an outline of the staff members and their respective supervisors.

How to file a written grievance:

- The initial grievance should be submitted in writing to the appropriate Program Director, using the *Grievance Form*. If a client or their legal guardian is unable or unwilling to complete this form, a staff member or the



Program Director, will complete the form on their behalf. Clients are encouraged to keep a copy of their written grievance for their records. The Program Director will investigate the grievance as quickly as possible and you will be provided with a written response within ten working days of the Director's receipt of your grievance. If the Program Director is part of the concern, you have the right to submit the written grievance directly to ACCESS' Client Grievance Officer.

- At any point during the grievance process, you may choose to involve the Client Grievance Officer to discuss the grievance and provide a neutral platform for seeking a resolution.
- If you are not satisfied with the response and/or decision, you have the right to appeal to the Client Grievance Officer. This should be done in writing by using a new *Grievance Form* so that any additional or new information may be included. Refer to the organizational chart for the name of ACCESS' Client Grievance Officer. Forms may be turned into to the front desk or may be mailed directly to the Client Grievance Officer at 10618 Breckenridge Drive, Little Rock, AR 72211.
- Once received, the Client Grievance Officer will respond to your appeal in writing within ten working days, and a resolution will be determined. The Client Grievance Officer will include others in this process, including, but not limited to, the Executive Director. You will receive written confirmation of the resolution with 10 additional working days.
- If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you may request a review of the appeal determination by ACCESS' Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review and respond in writing within 60 calendar days.
- If the client and legal guardian is not satisfied with the decision made by the Board of Directors, or at any time during this process, they may consult an attorney for legal advice or one of the following agencies for information regarding further appeals and advocacy services:
  - Arkansas Department of Human Services: 501-682-8292
  - Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance: 501-682-8551
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates: 1-866-284-8111
  - Arkansas Legal Services: 501-376-3423 or 1-800-952-9293 (Toll-free hotline)
- During this process, we will use the following methods to resolve the issue:
  - Assistance in finding advocacy services if requested;
  - Fact gathering by members of the administration or designated staff members in order to ensure the accuracy of all information;
  - Meetings scheduled with appropriate staff members, including the Program Director, Client Grievance Officer, Executive Director, ACCESS Board members, family members, outside advocates, and/or legal representation in order to gather information and discuss solutions;
  - Policy review, in order to ensure that proper procedures have been and are followed and/or that our current policies are adequate; and/or
  - Other methods as deemed appropriate to ensure timely and thorough resolutions.
- Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussion of mutual problems can we

develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important and is the foundation of a trusting relationship.

Clients and their legal guardians may request copies of the behavioral health agency regulations and/or the outpatient behavioral health services regulations in writing at any time. We will provide these copies within 15 days of receipt of the written request.

GRIEVANCE FORM FOR STUDENTS, CLIENTS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS, AND VISITORS

*This form may be used by students, clients, parents/legal guardians, or visitors to file a formal grievance.*

Name of Person with Grievance: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student/client's Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Complaint first reported to: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reported via:  Phone  In person  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions taken by this person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Grievance (explain in detail-including names of staff involved and location):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current actions taken and/or what you want to happen to resolve this issue:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have a grievance, this form should be completed and given to the appropriate Director for review. You may continue on the back or on another sheet of paper if more room is needed. A resolution to your written grievance will be provided within 10 days. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you have the right to appeal the decision. Refer to the organizational charts and grievance procedures posted in the lobby at each campus, the Parent Handbook, and the Student/Client Orientation Handbook for steps to follow and names, addresses, and phone numbers of whom to contact.

Signature of Person with Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For company use only:**

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). Response required in writing within ten working days and written documentation of resolution to individual within 20 working days.

Resolved as of \_\_\_\_\_ (date). Form and all related documents should be filed in Grievance Log Book.

Actions taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_