

## Hospitals

When people with SMI don't participate in their treatment plan, they are at higher risk of suicide and self-harm. This can lead to increased visits to the emergency room or the need to be hospitalized for their mental health. Healthcare professionals can help these people by petitioning for AOT.

## Emergency rooms

Emergency rooms (ERs) have seen a rise in admissions for patients with mental health concerns. It can be difficult for people with SMI to understand their illness, making it hard for them to stick to their treatment plan. This can make their mental health worse and cause them to go to the ER more often.

ER staff can support these patients by filing a petition for AOT. This can be done using the same form used for involuntary hospitalization (PCM 201 "Petition for Mental Health Treatment"). The ER will then work with the community mental health agency and other providers to coordinate care.

## Inpatient psychiatric facilities

When people with SMI don't follow their treatment plan, they may need to be hospitalized for mental health more often. This can lead to people relying on expensive hospital care, especially for those on Medicare who do not connect with community mental health services until their benefits are exhausted. Therefore, inpatient psychiatric facilities may be the opportunity for AOT to be initiated.

Inpatient psychiatric facilities also arrange deferral conferences where the person learns about their proposed treatment plan in the community. This may include a period of hospitalization before AOT.

## What are the benefits of an AOT?

For many people with SMI, their symptoms can make it hard for them to get the help they need and stick to their treatment plan.

Studies show that AOT can reduce many of the negative outcomes associated with untreated SMI, such as frequent hospital stays and arrests. It can also lessen suicidal and aggressive behaviors while also decreasing substance use. Most importantly, it allows people with SMI to take an active role in their treatment, overcoming challenges and reaching their full potential.

## What kinds of services are included in an AOT order?

AOT orders can include a wide range of services. These services will be tailored to each person's situation and decided by the court and mental health providers involved. AOT services may include:

- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
- Case management
- Day or partial-day programs
- Educational or vocational training
- Medication
- Individual and/or group outpatient therapy
- Substance use treatment and testing
- Placement in supervised living or group homes



To learn more about AOT, please call **855-99-MCCMH (855-996-2264)** or visit [mccmh.net/AOT/](https://mccmh.net/AOT/)

Call our Crisis Hotline for 24/7 support: **586-307-9100**



**MACOMB COUNTY**  
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

Macomb County Community Mental Health programs and services are supported and funded, in part, by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). MCCMH is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and operates under the direction of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners and the Macomb County Community Mental Health Board.

MCCMH centers are barrier-free, and offer TTY access, American Sign Language communication, and other language translations.



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**Assisted  
Outpatient  
Treatment**

## Supporting people with serious mental illness

### What is AOT?

Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) is a court order for mental health treatment for people with a serious mental illness (SMI). An adult may benefit from AOT when they:

- May harm themselves or others
- Have difficulty meeting their basic needs like food, clothing, or shelter
- Do not recognize their need for mental health care and refuse voluntary treatment

AOT was created to improve mental health outcomes by holding the person responsible for following their treatment plan. This supplements the efforts of families, caregivers, and advocates with the support of the probate court.

If someone is on an AOT order, they will receive mental health treatment from a community mental health provider (such as MCCMH). This care is customized to meet their specific needs, helping them manage mental health, overcome challenges, and lead productive lives.

### There are two kinds of AOT orders:

- **AOT Only:** The person will receive outpatient treatment for their SMI.
- **AOT Combined Order:** The person will be hospitalized before starting outpatient treatment.

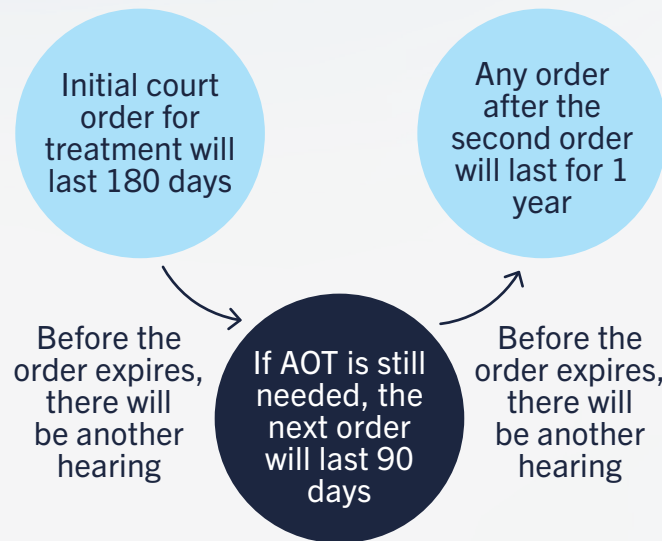
With AOT, the probate court holds treatment providers accountable for delivering effective care. The court can monitor the person's progress to see if treatment is helping them reduce harmful behaviors and improve their well-being.

### How does AOT work?

AOT allows concerned parties (such as families and treatment providers) to intervene before a crisis occurs. This can potentially avoid hospital stays, police involvement, and further decline of a person's mental health.

Anyone can petition the probate court to request an AOT for someone who qualifies for treatment. Community mental health providers, hospital staff, and police officers can also submit a petition. The petition should be filed with the probate court in the county where the person with SMI lives.

**AOT orders are temporary.** The goal is to help the person follow their treatment plan so they can live more independently.



### The AOT system of care

Since AOT is used when someone refuses to participate in treatment, there must be clear guidelines in place so it's used responsibly. This makes sure the person receives the appropriate treatment and has their rights protected by involving them in the decision-making process.

The AOT system of care brings together different people and organizations to help the person with SMI get the treatment they need. This system of care provides the best possible community services to support the person's transition to voluntary treatment.

These systems of care include:

- Probate Courts
- Hospitals
- Law Enforcement
- Community Mental Health Providers
- Families, Caregivers, and Advocates
- Person Receiving Care

Everyone involved in the system of care has an important role to play when implementing the AOT order.

### Probate courts

The probate court orders AOT. This makes sure that both the community mental health provider and the person receiving treatment are held accountable.

AOT allows the court to help people with SMI who haven't followed treatment in the past. This can improve their lives and break the cycle of repeated hospital stays and jail time.

**AOT is not a criminal matter.** A person on an AOT cannot be jailed for not following treatment.

### Law enforcement

Police officers are often called to help people struggling with their mental health. When people with SMI don't participate in their treatment plan, they might do things that can get them in trouble with the law.

Unlike hospitalization, AOT can be used before a mental health crisis, keeping the person, police officers, and community safe. Law enforcement can petition for AOT using the same form as hospitalization (PCM 201 "Petition for Mental Health Treatment").

The probate court can issue Orders for Examination/Transport (PCM 209a), which allow police officers to take someone to an ER or crisis center for a mental health evaluation. This ensures the person gets the care they need.

### Community mental health providers

Each county's community mental health agency is responsible for providing the services ordered by the court for a person on an AOT. They will work with the person to create a personalized treatment plan, monitor their progress, and manage any needed medications.

AOT allows mental health providers to prevent harm and keep the person's condition from getting worse, which leads to better long-term outcomes.



### Families, caregivers, and advocates

Nearly 8.5 million adults in the U.S. take care of someone with an SMI. Many of them understand the pain and frustration that comes with watching a loved one struggle to follow their treatment plan. AOT allows families, caregivers, and advocates to work with the probate court to get help for the person with SMI.

### Person receiving care

The person on an AOT order may feel confused, overwhelmed, or even angry. It might seem like a punishment at first, but AOT was created to give people the tools and support they need to manage their mental health and live independently.

**AOT orders are temporary.** They are reviewed regularly to see if they are still needed.

When someone is on an AOT, they need to work with their treatment team to create a treatment plan, follow it, and actively participate in their care.

