

# **Pollard County Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program**



## **Participant Guide**

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 Pollard County Department of Mental Health and ordered to participate in the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program. The current term of your commitment expires January 30, 2021.

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. Sprout Recovery 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. The Pollard County Department of Mental Health 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 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 your treatment team.

If you have any questions about the AOT Program, please do not hesitate to ask your case manager or the AOT Monitor. Their contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Judge Smith

**Important contact information:**

**Sprout Recovery Services front desk: (555) 367-6000**

**Your Case manager is:** Janet Simmons ([simmonsj@sproutservices.org](mailto:simmonsj@sproutservices.org); 555-347-1245)

**AOT Monitor:** Chris Derby ([chris.derby@polcodmh.gov](mailto:chris.derby@polcodmh.gov); 555-345-5544)

## Meet the AOT/Treatment Team!

- You
- Your family or support system
- **Sprout Recovery Services Treatment Team:**
  - Your Case Manager: Janet Simmons ([simmonsja@sproutservices.org](mailto:simmonsja@sproutservices.org); 555-347-1245)
  - Psychiatrist: Michael Bullock, MD
- Judge Smith
- Yvonne Trello, Pollard County Department of Mental Health Clinical Director
- AOT Program Monitor: Chris Derby (contact info: [chris.derby@polcodmh.gov](mailto:chris.derby@polcodmh.gov); 555-345-5544)

## Program Requirements

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

- Participate in developing your treatment plan with the treatment 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 advised 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
  - Are arrested

## Treatment Adherence

As you continue to meet the requirements of 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 not adhere to 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

## Client Rights

Although you are required to participate in treatment by court order, you still retain the rights of all people served by Pollard County Department of Mental Health, including:

1. The right to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy;
2. The right to reasonable protection from physical, sexual or emotional abuse and inhumane treatment, financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation and neglect;
3. The right to receive services in the least restrictive, feasible environment;
4. The right to participate in any appropriate and available service that is consistent with an individual service plan (treatment plan), regardless of the refusal of any other service, unless that service is a necessity for clear treatment reasons and requires the person's participation;
5. The right to give informed consent or refusal or expression of choice regarding service delivery, release of information, concurrent services, and/or composition of the service delivery team, including medication absent an emergency;
6. The right to participate in the development, review and revision of one's own individualized treatment plan and receive a copy of it;
7. The right to freedom from unnecessary or excessive medication, and to be free from restraint or seclusion unless there is immediate risk of physical harm to self or others;
8. The right to be informed and the right to refuse any unusual or hazardous treatment procedures;
9. The right to be advised and the right to refuse observation by others and by techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, video recorders, television, movies, photographs or other audio and visual technology. This right does not prohibit an agency from using closed-circuit monitoring to observe seclusion rooms or common areas, which does not include bathrooms or sleeping areas;
10. The right to confidentiality of communications and personal identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of client information under state and federal laws and regulations;
11. The right to have access to one's own client record unless access to certain information is restricted for clear treatment reasons. If access is restricted, the treatment plan shall include the reason for the restriction, a goal to remove the restriction, and the treatment being offered to remove the restriction;
12. The right to be informed a reasonable amount of time in advance of the reason for terminating participation in a service, and to be provided a referral, unless the service is unavailable or not necessary;

13. The right to be informed of the reason for denial of a service;
14. The right not to be discriminated against for receiving services on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, genetic information, human immunodeficiency virus status, or any other characteristic prohibited by local, state or federal laws;
15. The right to know the cost of services;
16. The right to be verbally informed of all client rights, and to receive a written copy upon request;
17. The right to exercise one's own rights without reprisal, except that no right extends so far as to supersede health and safety considerations;
18. The right to file a grievance;
19. The right to have oral and written instructions concerning the procedure for filing a grievance, and to assistance in filing a grievance if requested;
20. The right to be informed of one's own condition;
21. The right to consult with an independent treatment specialist or legal counsel at one's own expense;
22. The right to access self-help and advocacy support services;
23. The right to informed consent or refusal to participate in research projects with an expectation of adherence to research guidelines and ethics when persons served are involved.

**Any questions or concerns about your rights can be directed to the Pollard County Department of Mental Health Client Rights Advocate:**

Michelle Spencer

Email: [michelle.spencer@polcodmh.gov](mailto:michelle.spencer@polcodmh.gov)

Phone: 555-345-1877

## Frequently Asked Questions

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

AOT is generally a minimum of 180 days. Your original commitment may be extended up to 180 days or more by the Court at the recommendation of your treatment team. You may request a hearing with the court if it has been more than 90 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, not taking your medication may result in any of the appropriate consequences listed above.

**5. Am I allowed to speak to the Judge?**

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

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

No. Sprout Recovery Services 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 Team is there to help you. Please discuss any questions or concerns you have with them!**