

ASSISTED OUTPATIENT TREATMENT (AOT)

Assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) is involuntary, civil court-ordered outpatient care designed for people with serious mental illness who have difficulty adhering to a treatment plan on their own.



AOT Court Process

- Court orders an adult with a serious mental illness who meets statutory criteria into an AOT program.
- AOT program develops an individual treatment plan for the person.
- Program services can include medication management, case management, peer support services, various types of counseling, recovery services, referrals to medical providers, and community connections.
- AOT program and AOT Judge monitor the participant's adherence to the program and treatment plan.
- AOT outcomes can include completion of the program by graduation, extension of the program by court order or if inpatient criteria is met, admission to an inpatient facility.



Statutory Criteria

Tex. Health & Safety Code § 574.0345(a) provides the criteria for an order of “temporary” AOT (duration of up to 90 days).

For this type of order, the judge must find that appropriate mental health services are available to the proposed patient and the judge or jury must find by clear and convincing evidence that

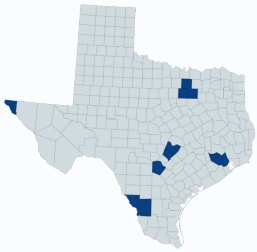
- The person has a **severe and persistent mental illness**;
- If the person **does not receive treatment for their mental illness**, they will consequently suffer deterioration of the ability to function independently, to the extent that they will be unable to live safely in the community;
- The person **requires outpatient mental health treatment to prevent a relapse** that would be likely to result in serious harm to the person or another; and
- The person is **unable to participate in outpatient mental health treatment effectively and voluntarily**, as demonstrated by **EITHER**:
 - Any of the person's actions over the previous two-year period; OR
 - **Specific characteristics** of the **person's clinical condition** that **significantly impair their ability to make a rational and informed decision** about whether to submit to voluntary outpatient treatment.

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Pathways to AOT

- **STEP DOWN: upon discharge from hospitalization**
 - Modification from court ordered inpatient treatment to court ordered AOT outpatient court ordered treatment
- **STEP UP: directly from the community**
 - Law enforcement
 - Family member/friends
- **STEP OVER: diversion or deflection from criminal legal system**
 - Pre-arrest diversion
 - Post-arrest diversion
 - Dismiss criminal case and transfer to AOT outpatient court ordered treatment
 - Charges remain pending and AOT outpatient court ordered treatment



Texas AOT Programs

- Bexar County
- Dallas County
- Denton County
- El Paso County
- Harris County
- Hays County
- Tarrant County
- Travis County
- Webb County

Program Outcomes

- **85%-90% decrease** in psychiatric hospitalizations (Bexar)
- Average **psychiatric hospital stay dropped** from **14 days to less than 1 day** (Harris)
- **214% increase in housing stability** (Harris)
- **31% increase in medication adherence** (Harris)
- **88% decrease in arrests** among those with prior arrest history (Denton)
- **33% decrease** in time spent in correctional facilities (Harris)
- **80% decrease in domestic violence incidents** (Harris)

Resources

- JCMH Texas AOT Collaborative
- Texas AOT Practitioner's Guide
- Dismissal Upon Civil Commitment with AOT
- Typical Roles and Responsibilities for AOT Collaborators
- Implementing AOT: Essential Elements, Building Blocks and Tips for Maximizing results

