

WHAT IS ASSIST?

Assist is a program that provides Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), sometimes referred to as "Laura's Law." Assist provides mental health services for adults who are suffering from serious mental illness, yet reluctant to accept the treatment they clearly need.

First and foremost, Assist employs a client-centered approach to outreach and engagement, in the hope of gaining their voluntary acceptance of mental health services. However, there is the potential for court-ordered treatment if needed.

The goals of the Assist program are:

- To promote wellness and recovery in the least restrictive environment
- To reduce the cycle of hospitalizations and incarcerations that can be associated with a reluctance to accept mental health treatment

Community-based Support

Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment
- Case management
- Therapy
- Medication support

Most visits are "field-based," meeting people at home or in the community, not requiring transportation to an office. On average, participants remain in the program for 6-18 months with a goal of transitioning to voluntary outpatient treatment for continued care.

The ASSIST Program

It's a really good group of people who really do care. You'll prosper here. It's definitely genuine. It's a lot of heart. A lot of people put in a lot of work, a lot of effort into this program.

— Assist Client

Assist is a valuable resource for individuals who are experiencing extreme difficulties managing their mental health issues. Under the oversight of the court, the Assist team is able to offer persistent and consistent support. In my experience, this support increases the likelihood that Assist clients will accept and utilize critical mental health services, thereby improving the overall quality of their lives.

— Judge Ronda McKaig
Presiding Judge for Assist Court



VENTURA COUNTY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

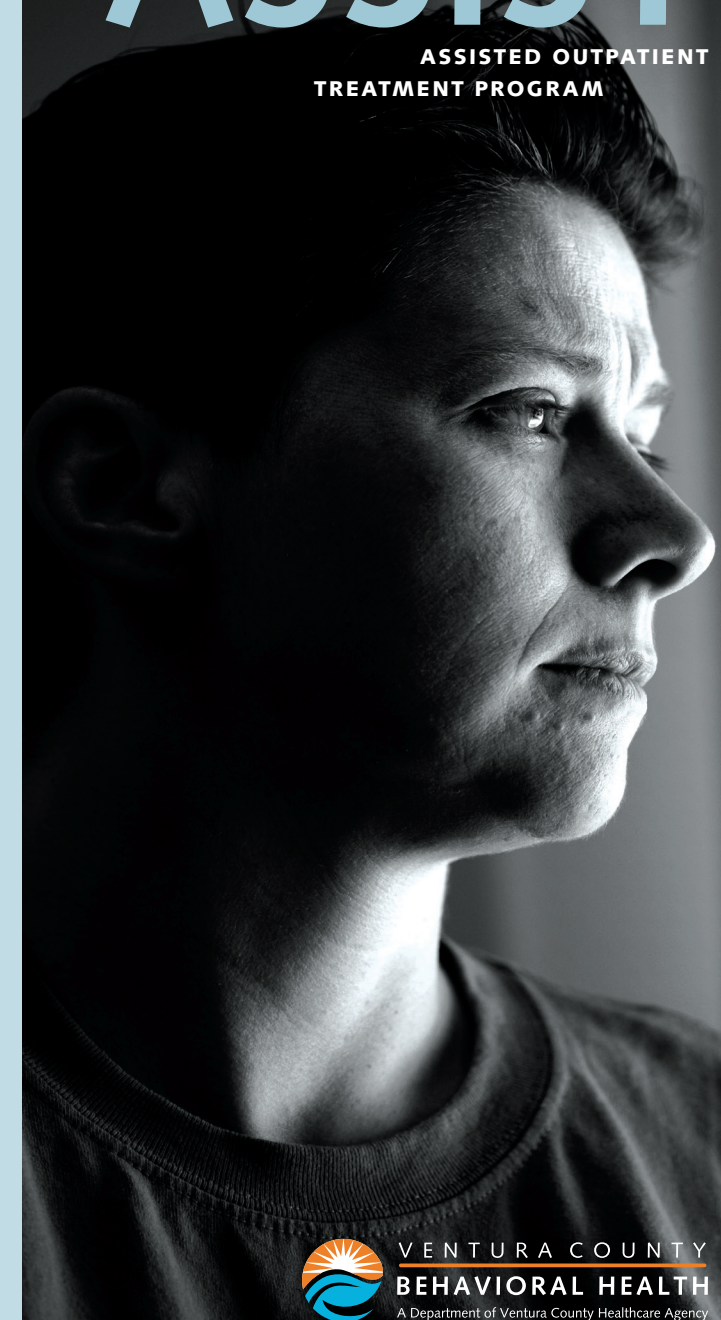
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VENTURA COUNTY

ASSIST

ASSISTED OUTPATIENT
TREATMENT PROGRAM



VENTURA COUNTY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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Do you know someone who needs Assisted Outpatient Treatment?

Participants must meet the following criteria:

- ✓ 18 years of age or older
- ✓ Suffering from a serious mental illness
- ✓ Unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision
- ✓ Non-compliant treatment history in which at least one of the following is true:
 - a) **Two** psychiatric hospitalizations within the past **36 months**
 - b) Received mental health services in a correctional facility
 - c) **One** incident of violent behavior within the past **48 months**, including threats of violence against others or self due to symptoms of mental illness
- ✓ Voluntary treatment and services offered and denied
- ✓ The person's condition is substantially deteriorating
- ✓ Participation in the Assist program would be the least restrictive environment
- ✓ AOT treatment would prevent a relapse or deterioration as defined in W&IC 5150
- ✓ The person will likely benefit from AOT

Who can make referrals?

Referrals may be made by:

- Parents
- Spouses
- Siblings
- Children who are 18 years or older
- Adults who live with the individual
- The director of an agency or facility providing residential mental health treatment to the individual
- The director of a hospital in which the individual is hospitalized
- A licensed outpatient mental health treatment provider treating the individual
- A peace officer, parole officer, or probation officer assigned to supervise the individual

How to make a referral

Contact Ventura County Behavioral Health's Assist Program and ask for an "Assist Screening"

- Regular business hours:
(805) 981-4233
- After hours and weekend crisis number:
(866) 998-2243

Now, with the Assist program, she started to understand her situation, she's starting to understand what's going on with her... The program has been helping a lot, they've been teaching her. They help her get involved with friends.

— Assist Parent

