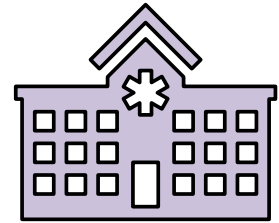


Pathways to assisted outpatient treatment (AOT)

Assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) is a form of involuntary, outpatient civil commitment for people with severe mental illness who have experienced repeated hospitalizations, incarceration, or other significant negative outcomes due to treatment nonadherence. AOT is a structured and comprehensive program that provides intensive coordination to help participants in their journey toward recovery. To help identify individuals who may be a good fit for AOT, there are three common pathways into the program:

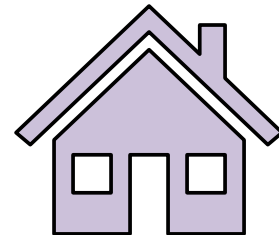
STEP DOWN AOT

A person can be referred to an AOT program when they are transitioning from a more restrictive care setting (e.g., inpatient psychiatric care, residential treatment, etc.) to treatment in the community. Typically, a person is referred to AOT upon discharge from a psychiatric hospitalization to ensure they receive comprehensive treatment and services that support their recovery in the community.



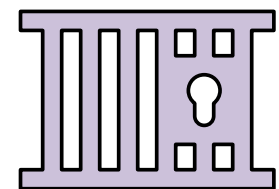
STEP UP AOT

A person can also be referred to AOT directly from the community to prevent rehospitalization, incarceration, or, in some states, psychiatric deterioration. In a step-up scenario, the petition for AOT usually originates from a community provider or family member. This pathway to AOT can help people receive treatment in the community before a more restrictive setting becomes necessary.



STEP OVER AOT

After being arrested, some people who meet criteria for AOT may be referred to civil court with criminal charges being dismissed upon civil commitment to AOT. This can be particularly effective for individuals who have a history of nonadherence to treatment, do not pose a risk to public safety when treated, and are unlikely to be restored to competency.



The pathways to AOT outlined here represent the most commonly used approaches across the country. However, not all pathways are authorized in every state; readers should consult their specific state laws to understand which petitioning routes are permitted.