

Assisted Outpatient  
Treatment  
(AOT)  
Pilot Program

PARTICIPANT  
HANDBOOK

*Providing the Highest Level  
of Services in the Least  
Restrictive Means Possible...*



**D·B·H·D·D**

Georgia Department  
of Behavioral Health &  
Developmental Disabilities

Dear Program Participant,

The Thomas/Colquitt County Probate Court has found by clear and convincing evidence that you are in need of behavioral health treatment and supports to keep yourself and others safe. As a result, you have been court ordered to receive these services and referred to Georgia Pines CSB. You will be enrolled and encouraged to participate in the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program with that provider.

The purpose of the AOT Program is to assist you in identifying the tools you will need to help manage your behavioral health so you can live successfully in the community of your choice without court intervention. Your service provider will ensure that you have access to these behavioral health services by assigning you to an AOT team. This team will include a licensed clinician, a case manager and a peer mentor who will help you identify and reach your goals. You will also be connected to any psychiatric and nursing needs that are necessary. If you have other service needs, your AOT team will attempt to help you secure those services, monitor your progress in the AOT Program, and provide regular updates to the court.

You and your treatment team will work together to develop your Individualized Recovery Plan (IRP) which will identify your goals and resources needed to reach them. By taking an active role in your treatment and following your IRP, you can help reduce the amount of time you must remain in the AOT Program. Ultimately, however, it is the Probate Court that 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 a member of the treatment team.

Respectfully,

Judge \_\_\_\_\_

# Your AOT Team Members & Contact Information:

**Provider:** This is where most of your treatment services will be accessed. You can call to confirm appointments or ask general questions.

**Georgia Pines Community Service Board Call Center:** (229) 225-5208  
Main Office: 252 Woodlands Blvd, Thomasville, GA 31792  
Moultrie Office: 25 2nd Ave SW, Moultrie, GA 31768  
AOT Program: (229) 225-5208 Extension 331  
Georgia Pines Outpatient Fax: (229) 227-5447

**Clinical Team Lead:** Will work with you to identify your goals and add them to your recovery plan. They will also provide therapy and monitor and report your progress to the court. If you have an appointment with this staff call directly to change or cancel.

Name: Michael Bailey, LMSW (AOT Team Lead)  
Phone: (229) 977-2352 Email: [m Bailey@georgiapines.net](mailto:m Bailey@georgiapines.net)

**Peer Specialist:** This person will assist you in developing any life skills you may need and walk with you as a fellow person in recovery. If you have an appointment with this staff call directly to change or cancel.

Name: Todd M Lynch, CPS-MH/WH (AOT Peer Specialist)  
Phone: (229) 289-7668 Email: [tlynch@georgiapines.net](mailto:tlynch@georgiapines.net)

**Case Manager:** Will assist you in identifying resources in the community and connect you to them. Call them for questions about access to resources. If you have an appointment with this staff call directly to change or cancel.

Name: Cathy Mote, CAD-C-T (AOT Case Manager)  
Phone: (229) 977-8982 Email: [cmote@georgiapines.net](mailto:cmote@georgiapines.net)

**Your Legal Representative:** Will answer any legal questions you may have.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions about court schedules or hearings or cannot attend a court appointment, you can call Clinician, Case Manager or Peer Mentor. If your questions are about legal processes, contact your legal representative.

**Other Important Contacts You Identify:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Program Components

### Members of the AOT Team

→ **You!** ←

- |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| → Probate Court Judge     | → Other Identified Service Providers |
| → Psychiatrist            | → Your Legal Representative          |
| → AOT Team Lead Clinician | → Your Chosen Representatives        |
| → AOT Case Manager        | ◆ Family                             |
| → AOT Peer Mentor         | ◆ Friends                            |

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## Program Requirements

### *Your Responsibilities*

While in the AOT Program, you will be asked to be a fully engaged partner and the director of your Individualized Recovery Plan (IRP).

You will also be encouraged to:

1. Fully engage in guiding and developing your goals with the treatment team.
2. Participate in all scheduled court appearances;
3. Take all medications you are prescribed and discuss with the team any issues or concerns with side effects.
4. Attend and engage in all appointments with service providers;
5. Participate in psychological testing and therapy, if court ordered or clinically recommended;
6. Keep your AOT Team advised of any changes in your living arrangements or contact information;
7. Obey all local, state and federal laws;
8. Participate in each court session by providing the judge with updates on how you feel you are doing in AOT.

### *Treatment Engagement*

As you successfully progress through the AOT Program, the level of monitoring by the court and your treatment team may be reduced and may eventually be lifted altogether. However, should you choose to not engage in your treatment, the Court may take any of the following actions:

1. Extend the length of time that you are enrolled in AOT
2. Increase the frequency of your court appearances
3. Order your treatment plan to be reviewed to determine if your goals or needs have changed
4. Order that you be picked up and evaluated for possible hospitalization

### **Treatment Provider Responsibilities**

The AOT Team will assist you in developing an Individualized Recovery Plan (IRP) that identifies goals that are important to you in your life and helps you reach them.

Your AOT team will:

1. Work with you to help you navigate the services and supports that will lead to successful outcomes.
2. Listen to you and make changes to your treatment plan when you feel something is not working for you.
3. Be available to you when you need them and walk beside you throughout the AOT process.

*\*Although your AOT Team will provide most of your treatment and support, you may receive additional services from the provider, if needed. They may include Psychiatric, Nursing, Supported Employment, Addictive Disease, etc. These combined services make up your treatment team.*

### **Court Responsibilities**

The Court is responsible for ensuring that your legal rights are respected and carried out according to Georgia law.

1. The judge will listen to your concerns and encourage you to remain engaged and participate in your treatment.
2. Your legal representative will ensure that you are fully represented and heard in legal proceedings.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1) How long will I be in the AOT Program?

*Your original AOT commitment may be up to 1 year. The time is set by the Probate Court at the recommendation of your treatment team. You may request a hearing with the court, at any time, if you feel there is evidence that you no longer require assistance from the AOT Team by contacting your treatment team or legal representative. The judge will listen to your concerns during any court 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 consistently engaging fully in your treatment, the court will determine when your commitment expires based on recommendations from your treatment team. If the court determines you are not ready for voluntary status at the end of the first year, it can extend the order up to another 12 months.*

### 3) Does I have a say in what services are included in my IRP/Treatment Plan?

*Yes, the psychiatrist and the AOT Treatment Team, in partnership with the participant, will determine the services and supports needed to reach the participant's identified recovery goals. The Individual Recovery Plan (IRP)/treatment plan will include a Case Manager and a Peer Mentor who will make sure the plan addresses the participant's needs to ensure they have access to the services and supports identified in the plan.*

### 4) What if I do not want to take the medications that have been prescribed?

*Your psychiatrist has prescribed the medication they feel is best to address your symptoms. If you are unable to tolerate the side effects and want to request a change in medications, discuss this with your psychiatrist or treatment team. If you stop taking a medication suddenly or take it improperly it can have significant and unexpected consequences for your physical and/or mental health. The judge may require that you take medications as prescribed, including injections if a prescriber determines they are necessary.*

### 5) Am I allowed to speak to the Judge?

*Yes, the Judge will give you the opportunity to speak at court appearances.*

### 6) Is there any cost to participate in the AOT Program?

*No. In fact, AOT Staff can assist you in navigating the process for applying and securing any benefits (Medicare/Medicaid, SNAP/EBT, Housing) or entitlements (SSI/SSDI) you may be entitled to.*

### 7) What can I do if I feel the AOT Team or My Attorney is not working in my best interest?

*Georgia Pines CSB Provides a Patient Advocate that can assist you with addressing any issues or concerns you may have. Georgia Pines Chief Advocate: Carlotte Smith-Pascall (229) 225-5208; [cpaschal@georgiapines.net](mailto:cpaschal@georgiapines.net)*

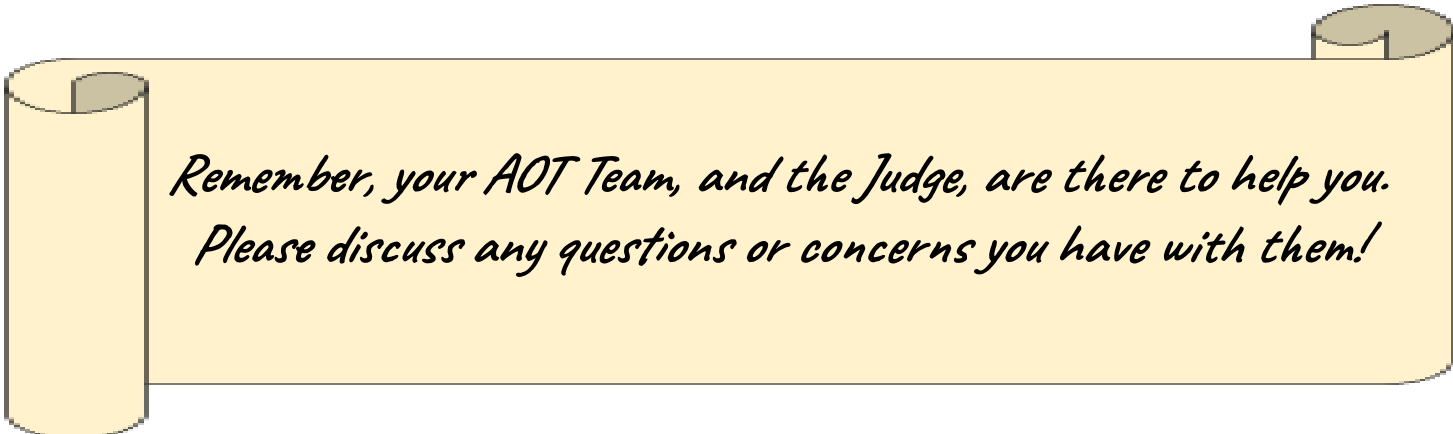
You may also contact:

**DBHDD Regional Field Office:** <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/regional-field-offices>

**Region 4 (Thomas/Colquitt) Co Field Office:** 137 Hawthorne Drive, Thomasville, GA, 31792 |  
Phone: (229) 225-5099 | Deputy Assistant Commissioner: Jennifer Dunn,  
Phone: (229) 977-1697 | Regional Coordinator: Jimmy Bennett Phone: (229) 228-3808

**DBHDD Constituent Services:** [DBHDDConstituentServices@dbhdd.ga.gov](mailto:DBHDDConstituentServices@dbhdd.ga.gov) or  
(404) 657-5964

**Georgia Advocacy Office:** <https://thegao.org> or (800) 537-2329



*Remember, your AOT Team, and the Judge, are there to help you.  
Please discuss any questions or concerns you have with them!*

