



# AOT LEARNING NETWORK

## April Bulletin

### April AOTLN Events

#### **AOT Implementation Team office hour**

We are excited to invite you to our very first AOT office hour session! Join our team on **Thursday, April 16 from 3 - 4 p.m. ET for an open, informal office hour via Zoom**. No registration is required — feel welcome to drop in at any point during the hour with your AOT-related questions.

This session is open to all roles and all questions, regardless of where you are in the implementation process. AOT champions or those looking for guidance on the first steps to start AOT in their communities are especially encouraged to attend. We look forward to connecting with you!



#### **Calendar Event Download:**

[Google Calendar](#)

[Outlook Calendar \(.ics\)](#)

[Yahoo Calendar](#)

#### **Zoom Join Information:**

[https://go.tac.org/e/976233/yndEHRqjF09aXVPSMFpatxTGM9TQ-1/8yn46/727483493/h/A-ZOBmmBPiIWUIkODTjtZwjn\\_jLefeP5FvsLeIrBhw](https://go.tac.org/e/976233/yndEHRqjF09aXVPSMFpatxTGM9TQ-1/8yn46/727483493/h/A-ZOBmmBPiIWUIkODTjtZwjn_jLefeP5FvsLeIrBhw)

Meeting ID: 837 5128 6603

Passcode: 114591

## AOT program staff web chat



The second quarterly AOT program staff web chat is happening this month on **Thursday, April 23 at 3 p.m. ET**, and will be facilitated by Janet Hays. This informal, engaging discussion is open to all AOT program staff, regardless of role, including, but not limited to, peers, case managers, clinicians, monitors, program leads, and evaluators. Feel welcome to bring questions, topics, or a challenging case for discussion (no protected health information, please!).

Janet Hays is Director of the Orleans AOT Program, and Founder and Director of the non-profit organization [Healing Minds NOLA](#). Janet works with partners across Louisiana and the nation to advance a full continuum of psychiatric care for people with serious mental illness in Louisiana. She champions evidence-based policies and funding priorities that strengthen treatment and support systems. Most recently, she led efforts to expand the implementation of Louisiana's under-utilized AOT law. [Register here today](#).

## Other Events

### Reminder: Advocacy webinar series

TAC's Advocacy webinar series continues this month with **Community Solutions on April 8 at 5 p.m. ET** featuring **John Derryberry, CEO of 43 North Iowa**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with disabilities and mental health needs live more independent, meaningful lives through housing, employment, and community-based services. Missed an earlier session? No problem — registration remains open, and you can join the series at any point using the registration link below. Join the TAC Advocacy Team for this engaging monthly webinar series focused on real-world challenges and solutions for the SMI community! Sessions are held on Wednesdays each month, with one special session on Thursday, May 7. More information and registration are available [at this link](#). View the recording of March's session on YouTube by [clicking here](#).



### Reminder: New Mexico AOT Conference

The New Mexico AOT Conference is scheduled for April 23-24, 2026, at the Santa Ana Star Hotel in Albuquerque. The event brings together leading voices in AOT for two days of learning, collaboration, and inspiration, featuring an exceptional keynote lineup, including Kenneth Rosenberg, M.D., acclaimed author of *Bedlam*; Brian Stettin, nationally recognized AOT advocate; Violette Cloud, J.D., Ph.D.; and Eric Smith, AOT graduate and policy advocate. Designed for professionals, policymakers, and community partners committed to improving behavioral health outcomes, this event offers high-impact sessions at **no cost to attendees**. Come to Albuquerque for a powerful and engaging experience that advances the future of AOT in New Mexico. [Read more and register here](#).

### SAMHSA AOT grant application open!

This is a reminder that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [AOT Program Grant \(SM-26-001\)](#) is open and **accepting applications for funding until Monday, April 20**.

TAC is seeking to partner with jurisdictions applying for this funding. As the nation's leading organization focused exclusively on eliminating barriers to treatment for individuals with severe mental illness, TAC provides implementation-focused training and technical assistance to help communities establish or expand AOT programs aligned with federal grant goals. Eligible counties, cities, courts, mental health systems, and other authorized entities are encouraged to reach out and learn more by reviewing [this linked flyer](#) or contacting [aot@tac.org](mailto:aot@tac.org) or (703) 294-6001.

### Resource of the month

April's highlighted resource is a clear, one-page comparison of AOT and criminal diversion courts (like mental health court), breaking down the key distinctions between the two ([click here to download](#)). The resource serves as a practical educational tool for the public and community partners, and is especially helpful for orienting AOT collaborators who are more familiar with criminal diversion courts.

For more free resources like this one, check out the AOT Resource Library [at this link](#).

**Comparing Criminal Diversion Courts to Assisted Outpatient Treatment**  
 Mental health court is the most common form for criminal courts or districts which may operate as a diversion, post-plea, or probation-based program that provide alternatives to incarceration for criminal defendants with mental illness. The evidence-based treatment (EBT) mental health courts seek to help participants access and stay engaged in community-based treatment.

The key difference between the two is that AOT is a civil court process, while mental health courts operate within the criminal justice system. Unlike criminal courts, AOT does not require a prior criminal charge to qualify for court-ordered treatment. Another significant distinction is that participation in mental health court is always voluntary, as rights deprivation may result by proceeding through the criminal court process or get into the mental health court. In contrast, the decision to initiate an AOT case is made by the judge presiding over the case.

Furthermore, the consequences of treatment non-adherence differ between the two models. In mental health court, failure to follow the treatment plan could lead to the restoration of criminal charges or additional post-reconviction penalties. In AOT, non-adherence to treatment does not lead to punishment but rather prompts increased oversight and engagement efforts from the treatment team. When participants struggle to stay motivated in treatment, the team identifies its support to engage them. If the participant continues to show minimal motivation, participants could be subject to court-ordered non-adherence that may be initiated, and court check-ins may become more frequent – but incarceration or punitive measures are not typically utilized in AOT or diversion-based treatment.

Mental Health Court	Assisted Outpatient Treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal court</li> <li>• Involuntary participation</li> <li>• May involve incarceration or other penalties</li> <li>• Alternatives to traditional prosecution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil court process</li> <li>• Voluntary participation</li> <li>• No jail or fines</li> <li>• Focus on improving treatment adherence</li> </ul>

## March webinar recording

*AOT Evaluation Highlights: What Providers, Communities, and Data Collection Professionals Should Know* [Recording](#)

## AOT in the news

[Mandatory Overtime, Assisted Outpatient Treatment Legislation Advances](#)

[Gallatin Behavioral Health Coalition reports landmark year, secures nearly \\$11 million in funding](#)

[Fresno County flagged for additional state support under CARE Court program](#)

[Santa Clara County Defends Mental Health Approach Amid Newsom Criticism](#)

[SAMHSA Announces More Than \\$69 Million in Funding Opportunities for Serious Mental Illness and Suicide Prevention Grant Programs](#)

[Community Leaders Gather for Vital Mental Health Voices of Alamogordo Forum in Alamogordo Hosted by 2nd Life Media](#)

[Hawaii Lawmakers Push for Better Mental Health Treatment Options](#)

## Growing the AOTLN

We are continually seeking to add members to the Learning Network. We would be grateful if you would forward [this link](#) to everyone involved in providing AOT in your community and encourage them to participate. The greater the range of roles and perspectives represented in the AOT Learning Network, the richer the experience will be for all involved. Thank you!



[TAC.org](#)

[Contact the AOT Implementation team](#)

