



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services System

**Home & Community  
Based Services -  
Adult Mental Health  
(HCBS-AMH)**



**Participant  
Handbook**



# Table of Contents

I.	About our Program .....	2
I.	Your Recovery.....	2
II.	Your Choices .....	3
III.	Your Responsibilities:.....	6
IV.	Services we Offer .....	7
V.	Discharge from the HCBS-AMH Program .....	9
VI.	Suspension from the HCBS-AMH Program .....	9
VII.	Transfer to a Different Recovery Manager or HCBS-AMH Provider .....	10
VIII.	Your Rights While in the HCBS-AMH Program .....	10
IX.	Emergency Care .....	13
X.	Emergency Planning .....	13
XI.	HHSC Contact Information.....	14

## **I. About the Program**

Home and Community Based Services-Adult Mental Health (HCBS-AMH) is a program to help you live in the community you choose. This program helps with long term recovery from mental illness. There is no time limit on services. You can use them for as long as you need them.

Together, you and/or your Legally Authorized Representative (LAR, the person who helps with legal matters) will choose a Recovery Manager and Provider Agency. This will be the team that will help you get services you need to make good choices about everyday life. This will help you get your life back on track.

Your team will help you create a recovery plan that you decide is best for you. This recovery plan will help you focus on your life goals to help you recover in your community and move on with your life. Your recovery plan may be created while you are in the hospital to help plan for your life in your community.

## **II. Your Recovery**

The formal definition of Recovery is “a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”

Recovery is a word used to describe steps to improve day-to-day living with a mental illness or addiction. You can choose any other word but the main idea is to find out what works for you to get what you want out of life. For many of us that have

lived with a mental illness or an addiction, it has been a long road. The HCBS-AMH program will help you feel more in control of your recovery and help you work toward getting your life back. This might include things like, getting a job, moving to your own apartment, making new friends, or whatever else you would like to do.

The approach the program uses to help you meet your recovery goals may feel different from how you are used to doing things. Many of you have not been asked questions like, “What do *you* want to work on?” or “What’s really important to *you*?” It may even feel overwhelming at first, and you might have a lot of feelings that come up. Take it at your own pace.

### **III. Your Choices**

If you sign-up for this program, you will have many choices to make.

#### ➤ Choose Professionals to Help

- You have a choice among Recovery Managers available in your community. Your Recovery Manager will help you with your goals. They will also help you choose the services that are right for you. They will keep track of all services you will receive in the program. They will work with other groups to get you the services you need as part of your recovery plan.
- Your provider agency will provide the services in the program that you need. You have a choice

among provider agencies available in your community.

➤ Choose a Safe Place to Live

- HCBS-AMH wants you have the same rights and responsibilities as anyone else in the community. You can speak with your Recovery Manager about choosing the best place to live. Your Recovery Manager will also help you choose a location that meets the requirements to participate in the program.
  - You can live in:
    - Your own home/apartment;
    - Your family or friend's home;
    - A group home; or
    - Assisted Living

➤ Choose a Recovery Support Team

- Your Recovery Support Team is made up of people who are important to you.
- It may be easy to pick important people to support you in this part of your life. Or, it can be hard to think of people right off the top of your head. Your Recovery Manager can help you take a look at who is important to you. Think about who you might invite to help you with your recovery plan.

- Remember, you can invite people you trust who will support you! You have the right to invite anyone you would like to. Your meeting can include professionals like doctors or therapists as well as others such as friends or family members. There is a Recovery Support Team worksheet in the back of this guide to help you with that.
- Your Recovery Support Team, including you, meets to help you with your recovery plan. You can meet with them on a regular basis. Or just meet with them when you need to update your plan.
- Think about your priorities and goals before the meeting.
- Ask for the kind of support that is best for you.
- SPEAK UP and share your ideas and needs with your team!
- Think about your own responsibilities as you work toward your goals.
- Bring up anything you think is important to you and what you want out of your life.
- Discuss ways to reach your goals. Think about your goals for taking care of your mental health, personal goals, and your job goals. Remember to balance your life with goals for education, having a social life, and the kind of place you would like to live too.

➤ Your Individual Recovery Plan

- Your Recovery Manager will put your ideas in writing. This will be a large part of your recovery plan—formally called the Individual Recovery Plan.
- This Individual Recovery Plan will include steps to reach your goals.
- You should review the written plan with your Recovery Manager. Then, share it with your LAR (person in your life that helps you make important decisions) to make sure you understand it. Don't be shy. Ask questions if you don't understand any part of your plan.
- You should sign the plan and ask for a copy. Keep it in a safe place with all of your other important papers.
- Follow your plan closely. Do what you promised you would do for yourself and take steps to take charge of your life!

#### **IV. Your Responsibilities:**

By agreeing to enroll in the program you agree to some responsibilities:

- Participate in the program.
- Meet with your Recovery Manager and other HCBS-AMH service providers.
- Participate in creating and completing your Individual Recovery Plan.
- Work on your life goals that are a part of your Individual Recovery Plan. This will help you get and stay on your own two feet.

- Speak with your Recovery Manager if you have any problems with services.
- Take your medication exactly as your doctor told you to. This is for your safety and for the safety of others too. Tell your doctor and/or Recovery Manager if you think you need to change your medications.
- Live in a setting that lets you participate in the HCBS-AMH program. Notify your recovery manager before you plan to move somewhere to make sure you can remain in the program.
- Care for yourself and get extra help if you need it. Remember you can always talk to your Recovery Manager, Recovery Support Team, friends or family.
- Allow HCBS-AMH staff and Providers access to your Health Information.
- Understand if you go to a nursing home, hospital, or prison for more than 6 months you may be discharged from the HCBS-AMH program.
- If discharged, understand that you will have to re-enroll in the program.
- Understand that if you do not want to participate in HCBS-AMH services, you may be discharged or suspended from the program.
- If you are discharged from this program and want to try again, you will have to start all over from the beginning.

## V. Services We Offer

Our program offers these services:

- Residential Services – This may include help with activities of daily living like bathing, dressing, doing chores, walking or moving around if you need it. We'll

help you plan and cook meals. We'll even help find ways to get you where you need to go. We'll also help you get involved with things you like to do.

- Rehabilitation Services – These services help you in your recovery by teaching you skills so you can be successful in your community.
- Employment Services – We'll help you find a job of your choice in your community. We want to support you so you can be successful in that job.
- Small Home Improvements/Minor Home Modifications We'll help with physical changes you need at home to be safe.
- Home-delivered Meals – Healthy meals delivered to your home.
- Transition assistance – Help with buying needed items for your new home (dishes, sheets, furniture) or help with money deposits like rent or electricity for your new place.
- Adaptive Aids - Any special supplies you need to help you be safe, healthy, and live on your own.
- Transportation Services – Help getting you where you need to go (program services, things to do, and support you need for your recovery).
- Community Psychiatric Supports and Treatment – Meetings with a therapist to help you reach your goals.
- Peer Support – Meetings with someone who is also in recovery and understands first-hand what you might be going through. These meetings will help you with

stress, solve problems, and stay hopeful so you can reach your recovery goals.

- Respite Care (short term) - Help and support for your family (if you live with them and they provide care for you).
- Substance Use Disorder Services – Meetings (alone or with others) to help you deal with drug addiction.
- Nursing – A nurse will help you with questions about medicines you have to take for a long time. They will also help with long term health problems you may have.
- Recovery Management– Your Recovery Manager will help you plan your recovery. This includes helping you get services in this program and finding other tools and services in the community. They will also help you solve problems and make good choices.

## **VI. Discharge from the HCBS-AMH Program**

Life happens. There are reasons you may choose to leave this program. Or, you may be discharged from this program. Your Recovery Manager will work with you if this happens to make sure you have the services you need before your last day of this program.

## **VII. Suspension from the HCBS-AMH Program**

Suspension means your services are put on hold for a period of time. There are several reasons you may have your services put on hold or choose to stop your services for a period of

time. Suspension of services can last up to 180 days. In the event of a suspension from HCBS-AMH, your Recovery Manager will work closely with you in this process.

### **VIII. Transfer to a Different Recovery Manager or HCBS-AMH Provider**

There are many reasons you may want to choose a different Recovery Manager or provider agency. The HCBS-AMH program has procedures put in place and the Recovery Manager will help you through this process.

### **IX. Your Rights While in the HCBS-AMH Program**

One of the important parts of your own recovery is knowing your rights. It's sort of like knowing the 'rules of the road' to make you feel more confident in speaking up for yourself and asking for what you need. It's very important for you to know the information in the "Handbook of Consumer Rights."

You have the rights that any other person living in the community enjoys. Some of the rights about your mental health are:

- The right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- The right to privacy and confidentiality (keeping **all** of your information private).
- The right to get your medical record.
- The right to develop and have a copy of your Individual Recovery Plan (you take part in making

sure it meets your needs and helps you identify and meet your goals).

- The right to being fully informed about medications, treatments and medical procedures (the how and why things are done).
- The right to file a grievance (make a complaint) if you feel your rights have been violated by a provider of your treatment (write about how you disagree with the way things are being done in your case).

You can make a complaint if:

- You think your rights have not been respected.
- You feel you are not getting the services you need.
- Your program benefits have been cut, reduced, suspended or if you have stopped receiving benefits.
- And, if you have Medicaid, you can also ask for a “Medicaid Fair Hearing.”

You have to ask for a Medicaid Fair Hearing within 90 days. You should still continue to get program services and benefits if you make a complaint or while you are waiting for a “Medicaid Fair Hearing.”

**You can write a complaint letter and send it to:**

Texas Department of State Health Services  
Office of Consumer Services and Rights Protection  
Mail Code 2019

P.O. Box 12668  
Austin, TX 78711-2668

**You can call to make a complaint at:**

Toll Free Number: 1-800-252-8154  
Relay Texas, Voice: 1-800-735-2988  
Relate Texas, TTY: 1-800-735-2989

➤ What If nothing is done about my complaint?

Complaints can take a long time to process. However, if nothing has been done about your complaint, you can contact the Health and Human Services Office of the Ombudsman. Please know that this complaint is separate from your original complaint.

To make a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, write another complaint letter and send it to:

Health and Human Services Commission  
Office of the Ombudsman  
Mail Code: H-700  
P.O. Box 85200  
Austin, TX 78708

You can also call them to make a complaint at:

Phone: 877-787-8999  
Fax: 512-706-7130 (not toll free)  
E-mail: [contact@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:contact@hhsc.state.tx.us)

- Remember, complaints do not have to include your name so you feel protected. We do our best to handle all complaints as fast as possible to make sure you are taken care of.

## **X. Emergency Care**

A mental health or substance abuse emergency is when you feel like hurting yourself or someone else, or if you believe your life or health may be in danger. If you, a family member, or someone you know is having a mental health or substance abuse emergency you should do at least one of these things:

- **Call your mental health or substance abuse service provider listed on your crisis plan;**
- **Call the Crisis Hotline at 1-800-316-9241;**
- **Go to the nearest hospital emergency room**

You can always call 911 for any kind of emergency.

## **XI. Emergency Planning**

It's important to plan ahead for those times when you might not be able to make decisions for yourself.

That is why it is a good idea to have something called an *Advance Directive or Declaration for Mental Health Treatment*. These are legal papers that lay out what you want if certain things happen like:

- What kind of medications you do or do not want to take.
- What kind of treatments work best for you.
- Who you want to speak for you legally and make decisions for you if you can't make them on your own.

**More information about advance directives can be found at**  
[www.nrc-pad.org/content/view/187/67/](http://www.nrc-pad.org/content/view/187/67/)

**More information about the Declaration for Mental Health Treatment can be found at**  
[http://www.dads.state.tx.us/news\\_info/publications/handbooks/advancedirectives.html](http://www.dads.state.tx.us/news_info/publications/handbooks/advancedirectives.html)

A mental health crisis can happen without warning. It can even happen when you have followed everything on your Individual Recovery Plan.

Your recovery team will help you plan for something like this. This plan will help you be aware of warning signs, strategies and resources during a crisis.

## **XII. HHSC Contact Information**

### ➤ Mailing Address

Health and Human Service Commission

Attn: HCBS-AMH Program  
P.O. Box 149347, Mail Code 2053  
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

For more information on the program, please see the HCBS-AMH website:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa/hcbs-amh/>