

## The Court's Role

The goal is for eligible individuals to voluntarily participate in the AOT Program. However, in cases where a referred individual will not do so, they will be summoned to a private civil hearing in Contra Costa Superior Court.

In this situation, BHS files a petition with the court, and a judge holds a hearing that includes the referred individual and their legal representation, provided by the Public Defender's office. After the hearing, the judge may order the referred individual to participate in AOT.

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# Assisted Outpatient Treatment

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Program  
Overview

## In Crisis?

If you are experiencing a  
life-threatening emergency,  
call **911** immediately.

*To speak with a trained crisis counselor  
about a mental health concern, call*

**1-888-678-7277**  
*day or night*



For more information about the AOT Program,  
visit [cchealth.org/mentalhealth/lauras-law.php](http://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/lauras-law.php)

Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) is for people with severe and persistent mental illness, who need treatment to prevent them from getting worse, may pose a risk to themselves or others, and who usually decline care or struggle to stay or enroll in treatment.

For these individuals, Contra Costa County has adopted Laura's Law, which allows counties to use the civil court system to supervise care.

The court process is only used after every effort has been made to encourage individuals who need treatment to voluntarily participate.

The AOT program is a partnership between Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services (BHS), the Superior Court, the Public Defender's Office and Mental Health Systems, a nonprofit service provider.

## What AOT does

Eligible individuals benefit from a 24-hour team response that can include treatment, medication, access to primary health care, substance abuse counseling, counseling regarding benefits and other resources, access to supportive housing services, vocational rehabilitation, and peer and family member support.

Participants are either referred to the program by the court or join voluntarily. Those who do not meet all AOT eligibility requirements are connected with appropriate behavioral health services.

## Who is eligible for AOT

An adult with mental illness may qualify for the AOT program if their mental health is getting worse, they are unlikely to be safe in the community without supervision, and they have a recent history of hospitalization or violence related to their mental health.

The program is intended for those who have previously declined or not engaged in offered treatment.

For more information about who qualifies for AOT and who can request an AOT screening, visit [cchealth.org/mentalhealth/lauras-law.php](http://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/lauras-law.php)

## How AOT works

A Care Team responds to qualified requests for AOT screening and supports those involved, encourages participation in appropriate mental health care, provides links to services and engages the person in the least restrictive care needed.

Eligible individuals receive Assertive Community Treatment, a nationally recognized, evidence-based practice. The ACT team is led by a licensed mental health clinician and works with clients to implement individualized treatment plans.

When a person who needs AOT will not participate, BHS petitions a Contra Costa Superior Court judge for a private civil hearing. After the hearing, the judge may require them to participate.