

Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)  
Space Coast Region  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program

**Brevard County Behavioral Health  
Transportation Plan**

*In accordance with*

***Florida Mental Health Act***  
(Baker Act)  
Florida Statute 394.462 (4)  
**2017-2022**

**SPACE COAST REGION SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH  
BREVARD COUNTY BAKER ACT  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with Florida Statute Chapter 394, Part I, Florida Mental Health Act, or the “Baker Act”, Brevard County developed a Transportation Plan (TP) to organize a centralized system for acute care services. The Plan was developed by members of the Brevard County Fire Rescue Department with input from the Brevard County-funded transportation provider, local emergency departments and local Police Chief’s.

The intent of requesting this plan was congruent with FS 394.462(4) (b) and to ensure that all system participants understand the following process:

1. An arrangement centralizing and improving the provision of services within a district, which may include an exception to the requirement for transportation to the nearest appropriate receiving facility.
2. An arrangement by which a facility may provide, in addition to required psychiatric services, an environment and services which are uniquely tailored to the needs of an identified group of persons with special needs, such as persons with hearing impairments or visual impairments, or elderly persons with physical frailties; or minors.
3. A specialized transportation system that provides an efficient and humane method of transporting patients to receiving facilities, among receiving facilities and to treatment facilities.
4. A system designed for consistency in service delivery and coordination to clearly align the roles and responsibilities between service providers.

## **HISTORY/PURPOSE**

October 6, 2015 the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners entered an agreement with the Brevard County-funded transport provider, Coastal Health Systems of Brevard, Inc. (CHSB). This contract was entered and has continued to be renewed each year since the initial contract in 1988. This contract was requested by the Brevard County Fire and Rescue Department in order to transport mental health patients from hospitals and appropriate medical facilities in Brevard County to hospitals and mental health facilities in and out of Brevard County. Coastal Health Systems of Brevard, Inc. is the only licensed transport service within Brevard County that can handle these types of transport services.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The following objectives are expected to be met by establishing a TP in Brevard County:

- Implement a coordinated system of transportation and access to psychiatric services for children and adults under a Baker Act order and substance abuse services for adults under a Marchman Act order in Brevard County.
- Provide specialized services to children.
- Provide a dignified, humane, and streamlined method of transportation to and among acute care facilities, and for individuals in need of acute psychiatric care from nursing homes, assisted living facilities or other residential settings.

- Assist law enforcement and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider in the efficient transport of individuals in need of services to the most appropriate facility when transporting from the pre-hospital setting.
- Assist the Brevard County-funded transportation provider or a non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility.
- Enhance the ability to fully utilize the capacity of acute care services in the county and reduce the unnecessary delay of transfers between facilities.
- Ensure continuity and coordination of care among providers.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the Brevard County Behavioral Health TP requires that law enforcement agencies in Brevard County or the Brevard County-funded transportation provider transport individuals in need of mental health services under the Baker Act to the receiving facility directed by this TP rather than the “nearest receiving facility.” This plan does not address patients who are seeking mental health or substance abuse services on a voluntary basis. However, if a transport is required, the same shall apply as it pertains to the use of the Brevard County-funded transportation provider.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

### **The TP focuses on the following populations:**

#### **Children and Adolescents Who Are Under the Age of 18**

The TP addresses the needs of children and adolescents. Law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider will transport individuals under the age of 18 to **Circles of Care**: located at 400 East Sheridan Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901 (the designated children’s receiving facility). In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider can call the facility at **321-722-5200**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical/mental concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

The transportation for individuals under the age of 18 suffering from substance abuse or mental health issues may also be transported by a law enforcement agency or the Brevard County-funded transportation provider to the most appropriate designated receiving facility.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

#### **Adults Who Are Age 18-64**

The TP addresses the needs of adults that are age 18 - 64. Law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider will transport individuals that are age 18-64 to **Circles of Care**: located at 880 Airport Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901, **Circles of Care**: located at 400 East Sheridan Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901, or **Wuesthoff Medical**

**Center-Rockledge:** located at 110 Longwood Ave, Rockledge, FL 32955. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider can call the facility Circles of Care (Airport Rd.) at 321-914-0640, Circles of Care (Sheridan Rd.) at 321-722-5222 or Wuesthoff-Rockledge at 321-637-3000, Ext. 0 prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, date of birth, social security number, apparent medical/mental concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

## **Individuals Who Are Age 65 and Older**

The TP addresses the needs of individuals who are age 65 and older. Law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider will transport individuals that are age 65 and older to **Circles of Care:** located at 880 Airport Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901, **Circles of Care:** located at 400 East Sheridan Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901, or **Wuesthoff Medical Center-Rockledge:** located at 110 Longwood Ave, Rockledge, FL 32955. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider can call the facility Circles of Care (Airport Rd.) at 321-914-0640, Circles of Care (Sheridan Rd.) at 321-722-5222 or Wuesthoff-Rockledge at 321-637-3000, Ext. 0, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, date of birth, social security number, apparent medical/mental concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication. The Brevard County-funded transportation provider may instead elect to transmit a radio report when transporting to Wuesthoff Medical Center-Rockledge.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

## **Adults Who Are Currently Incarcerated**

The TP addresses the needs of adults who are currently incarcerated. Law enforcement will coordinate the transport of adults currently incarcerated in need of Baker Act services to **Circles of Care:** located at 880 Airport Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901. In order to expedite the screening and admission process law enforcement can call the facility at 321-914-0640 prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, name, age, date of birth, social security number, apparent mental health concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication. If a patient on the unit is under a jail hold and needs mental health attention, Brevard County Jail will coordinate with the Brevard County Sheriff's Department or the Brevard County-funded transportation provider for transportation, based on the most appropriate receiving facility.

Transport for mentally ill clients may also include transportation between the County Detention Center and a designated receiving or treatment facility. However, authorized transportation under this paragraph does not include transportation of an inmate undergoing a psychological evaluation for competency or insanity defense purposes pursuant to Fla. R. Crim. Proc. 3.210-3.219 nor does it include transportation of individuals placed under arrest for any criminal act.

CHSB has the right to refuse a transport request from the Detention Center when the client is under a “hold order” (Client must be returned to the Detention Center).

### **Customer Choice:**

When possible, an individual who presents at either Baker Act Receiving Facility, to law enforcement, or an emergency care center should have a choice, or the family should have a choice, of which provider the individual receives services from in Brevard County. The individual’s preferred health insurance provider also guides this decision. If deemed to be in a need of inpatient services, the individual is transported to the receiving facility where his/her insurance benefits cover the cost of inpatient care, if requested by the individual or their family, when at all possible. Clinical and public safety circumstances are always assessed in the process.

### **BAKER ACT TRANSPORTATION:**

Law enforcement agencies in Brevard County and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider remain the responsible parties to transport those individuals in need of mental health services under the Baker Act to the appropriate receiving facilities.

When an individual has a medical issue that needs to be addressed or an intoxication level that is medically compromising, Brevard County Fire Rescue will transport the individual being detained under a Baker Act order, from the scene, to the nearest emergency care center for medical stabilization. When the individual has been stabilized, the emergency care center may call the Brevard County-funded transportation provider to transport to the appropriate destination.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

The County’s 911 transport provider (Brevard County Fire Rescue) will only transport from a pre-hospital setting if the individual is experiencing an acute medical illness or injury that requires evaluation by an emergency department physician. If the individual is not suffering from an acute medical illness or injury, the law enforcement agency or the Brevard County-funded transportation provider will be responsible for transporting the individual to the appropriate medical facility.

When any law enforcement officer has arrested a person for a felony and it appears that the person meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination or placement under this part, such person shall first be processed in the same manner as any other criminal suspect. The law enforcement agency shall thereafter immediately notify the appropriate receiving facility, which shall be responsible for promptly arranging for the examination and treatment of the person.

When any law enforcement officer has custody of a person based on either noncriminal or minor criminal behavioral that meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination under this part, the law enforcement officer shall transport the person to the appropriate receiving facility for examination.

Once an individual is in a facility, there are occasions when that individual needs to be discharged from one facility and transferred to another facility. Transportation between facilities is coordinated by the transferring facility. The Brevard County-funded transportation provider or a local non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs

between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility shall be the only authorized agents responsible for providing these services regardless of the county the patient is being transferred to as long as the patient originates from Brevard County. Law enforcement is not responsible to transport individuals from one facility to another unless the individual has criminal charges. In that case, law enforcement shall be notified prior to transfer and will provide the transportation.

Upon completion of treatment for individuals who are designated “on hold” as a result of being booked prior to treatment, the receiving facility is required to contact the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office to arrange for transportation to the Brevard County Jail. If an individual being detained by a Baker Act is combative or uncooperative, that individual may be placed in physical restraints in accordance with Baker Act guidelines or a physician’s orders.

### **MARCHMAN ACT TRANSPORTATION:**

The TP also addresses and clarifies Marchman Act transportation by law enforcement and the Brevard County-funded transportation provider to the appropriate designated receiving facility.

If an individual has a medical issue that needs to be addressed or an intoxication level that is medically compromising, law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, or the Brevard County-funded transportation provider is required to transport the individual being detained under a Marchman Act order to the nearest hospital for medical stabilization. When the individual has been stabilized, the hospital will call the Brevard County-funded transportation provider or law enforcement agency instituting the Marchman Act to transport the individual to the appropriate designated receiving facility.

If the individual being detained by a Marchman Act order is combative or uncooperative, law enforcement transports the individual directly to the Brevard County Jail.

- *A non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility may be requested by the hospital facility.*

### **MEDICAL STABILIZATION:**

The Brevard County Baker Act Transportation Plan (TP) Advisory Committee maintains and revises the medical exclusionary guidelines that are used to assist in determining the most appropriate inpatient setting for psychiatric patients requiring hospitalization. These guidelines are used among all the community partners to ensure that individuals who are assessed to need medical care are treated in a hospital. Once the individual is medically stabilized, the medical facility determines the appropriate Baker Act receiving Facility. Transportation from one facility to another is coordinated by the transferring facility. The Brevard County-funded transportation provider or a local non-emergency licensed agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility shall be the only authorized agents within Brevard County and will provide this service. Law enforcement is not responsible to transport from one facility to another.

If a jail-hold patient is currently under a Baker Act and at the receiving facility and is in need of medical attention, the facility will coordinate with law enforcement for transportation to the hospital of the Sheriff’s Office choice.

## **BAKER ACT TRANSPORTATION PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

The purpose of the Brevard County Baker Act Transportation Plan (TP) Advisory Committee is to discuss the operation of the TP. The committee meets regularly to review grievances and assurance of patient rights as related to the TP.

The Baker Act TP Advisory Committee is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives of the following agencies:

- Brevard County Fire/EMS
- Coastal Health Systems of Brevard, Inc.
- Circles of Care
- Law Enforcement
- Health First, Inc.
- Wuesthoff Medical Center
- Parish Medical Center

## **BAKER ACT RECEIVING FACILITIES:**

- **Circles of Care:** located at 880 Airport Rd., Melbourne, FL 32901 is a receiving facility licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA).
- **Circles of Care:** located at 400 East Sheridan Rd. Melbourne, FL 32901 is a receiving facility licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA).
- **Wuesthoff Medical Center-Rockledge:** located at 110 Longwood Ave, Rockledge, FL 32955 is a receiving facility licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA).

## **MEDICAL TREATMENT**

If there is an obvious major medical condition presented to law enforcement, individuals will be transported by EMS directly to the nearest emergency room in Brevard County to be treated and assessed for further disposition.

Palm Bay Community Hospital  
1425 Malabar Rd. NE, Palm Bay, FL 32907

Holmes Regional Medical Center  
1350 Hickory St., Melbourne, FL 32901

Wuesthoff Medical Center-Melbourne  
250 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne, FL 32935

Viera Hospital  
8745 N. Wickham Rd., Viera, FL 32940

Wuesthoff Medical Center-Rockledge  
110 Longwood Ave., Rockledge, FL 32955

Cape Canaveral Hospital

701 W. Cocoa Beach Causeway, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

Parrish Medical Center

951 N. Washington Ave., Titusville, FL 32796

**SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

In an effort to resolve complaints, grievances, and disputes that might arise during implementation of the plan, Jennifer Ross (CBHC Director of Crisis Services) and Max Gorski (Riverside Director) or his/her designee(s) will review admission data and any outstanding issues. Complaints and grievances would be reviewed by the Brevard County Baker Act Transportation Plan (TP) Advisory Committee in collaboration with state/county/local officials, and resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant whenever possible. The Advisory Committee implements necessary actions in response to its ongoing reviews and any public or Department of Children and Families reviews. The Advisory Committee will review this document on annual basis. Any updates will be approved by the County Commissioners and updated with the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program Office.

The Space Coast Region Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program Office (the Department) is responsible for providing oversight to the Baker Act System in Brevard County. The Department monitors this TP annually. The Department has the authority to resolve issues concerning the Baker Act. The Department also receives client grievances or complaints directly from clients. The Department is available to mediate interagency problems as well as coordinate other services needed for clients beyond acute care services. The Department also has a working relationship with the Agency for Health Care Administration.

**INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION**

The previously mentioned community partners have shown a commitment to improve the access of Brevard County residents to the acute care services system. The success of this plan has been possible with the long-term commitment of all community partners. There is continuous oversight by the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health SPACE COAST Region office to ensure that all services outlined here by the Public Baker Act Receiving Facilities meet the standards as outlined by Florida Statute. The benefit of a coordinated system of care is less fragmentation of services and a more efficient and cost-effective methods of providing care. The provisions outlined in this plan have decreased unnecessary transports of individuals by law enforcement or the Brevard County-funded or approved transportation provider to an incorrect facility, reduces the number of transfers between facilities, and reduces the need for area hospitals to treat those individuals who need to be in a more appropriate setting.

For questions or concerns related to this plan, please contact the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health SPACE COAST Region office attention: Ingrid Figueroa, email address is [Ingrid.Figueroa@myflflorida.com](mailto:Ingrid.Figueroa@myflflorida.com) and phone number is 407-317-7010

## DEFINITIONS

- Baker Act: The Florida Mental Health Act. Florida Statute 394.
- Marchman Act: The Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Other Drug Services Act. Florida Statute 397.
- Receiving Facility: Any public or private facility designated by the Department of Children and Families to receive and hold involuntary patients under emergency conditions or for psychiatric evaluation and to provide short-term treatment [s. 394.455(26) F.S.]
- Private Receiving Facility: Any hospital or facility operated by a for-profit or not-for-profit corporation or association that provides mental health services and is not a public facility.
- Public Receiving Facility: Any facility that has contracted with the Department of Children and Families to provide mental health services to all persons, regardless of their ability to pay, and is receiving state funds for such purpose.
- Non-Emergency Transport Provider: A non-emergency ambulatory transport agency capable of meeting the client's transport needs between the discharging hospital and a mental health receiving facility. The following transport agencies shall only be used to transport clients that have been discharged from a hospital facility and do not require medical assistance or monitoring throughout transport between facilities.