



Welcome!

Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCBHS) is a large behavioral health organization, providing a wide variety of mental health and recovery services throughout Southwest Ohio. Every year, we serve more than 20,000 people in the community. We are glad to have the opportunity to serve you!

We believe that helping to instill hope is a powerful part of our support to you. In all of our services, we are guided by the belief that we can help make life better and brighter for people with mental illness, addiction, and related issues.

We look forward to serving you and helping you reach your goals!

Getting Familiar with GCBHS: A Guide for New Clients

This short guidebook is to help orient you to our organization as we partner with you.

As an organization, we've been around in some form or another for more than 100 years. Our job has always been to help people lead healthy and productive lives. It's a simple goal, yet there are many aspects to understand as we add services and increase privacy protections.

This brief booklet explains how we help, what you can expect from us, what we expect from you, and how we respect your privacy. You'll also find other useful information that you can use during your time with us here at GCBHS.

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About GCBHS

In the coming weeks and months, we'll be getting to know you. It's important that we share a little bit about who we are, what we believe, and how we hope to assist you.

GCBHS's MISSION

To ensure people with mental illness, addiction, and related challenges lead healthy and productive lives.

GCBHS's VISION

GCBHS is a national leader in improving the mental and physical health of people throughout our ever-expanding community.

GCBHS's CORE VALUES

- **People:** *We value and respect the people we serve, our employees, and our partners; we work jointly with the people we serve, instilling dignity, responsibility, and self-respect; we invest in our talented employees recognizing they are our greatest asset; we value our partners' strengths, expertise, and competence.*
- **Integrity:** *We are always honest and do what is in the best interest of each person we serve; we honor our fiduciary, ethical and moral obligations and are accountable to our funders, donors, and those we serve.*
- **Quality:** *We strive for the best quality outcomes and employ evidence-based practices to guide our services.*
- **Leadership:** *We envision new ways and lead new partnerships to attain better outcomes; we embrace change.*
- **Hope:** *We serve people while instilling a spirit of hope; we believe all people have dreams and a desire to make positive changes.*
- **Collaboration:** *We connect and mobilize community resources to attain common goals; together we can do more.*
- **Diversity:** *We believe people are unique; we respect and embrace the diverse cultural backgrounds, values, and perspectives of our employees, our partners, and the people we serve.*

Programs and Services

Each day, we connect with people who are striving to be well, both in mind and body. We work with individuals and families, adults and children, and people with conditions both chronic and acute.

When you come to GCBHS, we strive to help *all of you* be well. We've geared our programs and services to help you as a whole person. That means we work to:

- Educate you about mental illness and addiction.
- Teach you strategies to manage symptoms and medication.
- Empower you to develop natural social supports.
- Help you to find and maintain employment.
- Help you become a vibrant part of your community.

You may come to one of our locations, or we may come to you. We go wherever we're needed to help people with mental illness and addiction issues.

We have core five service areas:

1. Addiction Services
2. Counseling Services
3. Mental Health Care Management Services
4. Employment Services
5. Psychiatric & Medical Services

Addiction Services: Our outpatient programs aim to help you recover from substance abuse and addiction and live a fulfilling life. These programs:

- Serve both adults and adolescents.
- Provide treatment, intervention, and education.
- Include group and individual programs.

Counseling Services: Our licensed social workers and counselors can help you with a variety of issues, including trauma, depression, anxiety, mental illness, disabilities, grief and loss, substance abuse, relationship problems, domestic violence and conflicts at home, school, or work. We offer:

- Counseling programs specifically aimed at giving parents and children the resources they need to succeed.
- Broadly focused programs that may include children, teens, or adults.
- Both individual and group programs.

Mental Health Care Management Services: Our care management services aim to improve and restore mental health. We want to help you achieve optimal wellness and reclaim your ability to function in the community. Our care managers:

- Teach clients to effectively manage benefits, housing, mental health symptoms, and basic life skills.
- Refer clients to job training and placement, day programs, support groups, family support and education groups, and specialized services.
- Collaborate with family members, psychiatrists, medical professionals and other service providers to make sure our clients get the best care possible.

Employment Services: We believe employment is a key part of the recovery process and an integral part of wellness. We can help you find employment that builds on your strengths and skills, no matter what barriers you may face. Our employment services:

- Provide support as you work to find the right job and then keep that job.
- Include specialized services for people with mental illness, developmental disabilities, cognitive disabilities, physical disabilities, and substance abuse disorders.
- Feature targeted programming for adults, youth, and people experiencing homelessness.

Psychiatric & Medical Services: From diagnosis and treatment to basic primary care, our entire team of physicians and practitioners truly cares about helping you be well and live a fulfilling life. Our Community Psychiatrists:

- Diagnose various types of mental illness.
- Help with ongoing medication management.
- Educate clients (and their family members) about signs and symptoms of psychiatric illness and relapse prevention.



The GCBHS Relationship: What to Expect

The clients who have the most success at GCBHS understand what they can expect from us—and in turn, what we will expect from them.

What you can expect from us:

- To treat you with respect and dignity.
- To honor our word.
- To be sensitive to your preferences and strengths.
- To work collaboratively with you to create an individual treatment and transition plan.
- To work with you toward the goals you set with us.
- To work collaboratively with you to create a discharge plan as you leave services.
- To maintain appropriate professional boundaries with you.
- To accurately and professionally document the services we provide to you.
- To consult with a clinical supervisor when needed to provide you with the most competent treatment.
- To practice only in the areas of our competence.
- To provide fair and equitable practices free from discrimination.
- To provide services that are free from abuse and neglect.
- To honor your rights and privacy and keep you informed of your rights.
- To welcome the chance to discuss any concerns or problems you have.
- To value your input and feedback.
- To maintain our knowledge and expertise by participating in education and training.
- To keep our facilities and services safe, including regular safety drills, and clear evacuation routes.
- To follow all legal business practices, by the code of ethics of GCBHS and of our profession (We'd be happy to share our full Code of Ethics policy, just ask.)
- To follow all financial policies and procedures.
- To be clear about our marketing or advertising or other data and information.
- To ask only for the fees for which you have agreed to pay.
- To assure you and all clients benefit from services, we may ask clients to leave the premises if they are found to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or acting in an unsafe way.

What we expect from you:

- To actively participate in services, including working with us to create a plan that will guide our services.
- To share information that will help us provide the right care in the right amount, including updated contact information when you move or change phone numbers.
- To follow our safety guidelines, including not bringing weapons, drugs, or alcohol into our sites, and not being under the influence of substances or alcohol when we meet with you. If you have visitors or people with you, making sure they follow these guidelines as well.
- To let us know when you or any visitors or people with you are bringing prescription medicine into our facilities.
- To avoid using tobacco products in our sites or during service provision in the community.
- To let us know of any concerns you have, so we may help resolve them.



Fees and Payments

When you receive services from Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services, you are responsible for payment for those services. However, you may be eligible for assistance, which may pay for part or all of your services.

During your first appointments staff will review this information with you so it is clear what your cost, if any, would be for services.

Building Safety at GCBHS

Our goal is to keep you safe at all GCBHS facilities. We have procedures in place to deal with all types of emergencies, which include:

- **Safety drills:** We conduct regular drills of all our emergency procedures, so you may hear an alarm while you are in one of our facilities. Our staff will help you get where you need to go (another area of the building or outside the building) and they will instruct you on what you need to do to remain calm and safe.
- **Emergency closings:** If GCBHS needs to close our offices either fully or partially because of weather, natural disasters, or other emergencies, we will notify you. We'll provide instructions regarding closure and medications/crisis information via:
 - Recorded telephone voice messages
 - Signs posted outside the Center
 - Information posted on the internet at www.gcbhs.com
 - Direct phone communication by GCBHS staff (when possible)
 - Reported to local news networks
- **Building evacuation:** There is an evacuation chart posted in each facility, showing emergency exits and safe locations. The chart includes the nearest exit, fire extinguishers and first aid kits located in the area.
- **Injuries:** We train our staff to provide first aid as needed in an emergency. Our staff will review your physical health needs and can refer you to community resources if you need.





Health & Wellness for GCBHS Clients

We want to help you be well—and that includes your physical health. There is a strong connection between physical health and mental health. This is why we try to educate our clients on some basic health information.

We have many health and wellness-related services at GCBHS. The GCBHS staff person who works with you can tell you about some of the things we offer and give you information about programs or about managing risk factors for various health conditions. We are very connected in the community and can also make referrals.

Below, you'll find a brief overview of some risk factors and behaviors that can lead to some specific health problems.

Staying Healthy in Extreme Weather

With some medications, you are less likely to notice if you're becoming overheated or are too cold. That's why it's important to be mindful of the weather—particularly the extremes of hot and cold that tend to happen in Cincinnati.

In extreme heat:

- Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Try to avoid drinking liquids that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar. These actually cause you to lose more body fluid.
- Wear as little clothing as possible when you are at home. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (which keeps you cooler) and sunglasses. Put on SPF 15 (or higher) sunscreen.
- Schedule outdoor activities carefully. Try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Stay cool indoors. If at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place.
- Use a buddy system. When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you.

In extreme cold:

- Make sure you have working smoke detectors in your home, especially if you will be using any kind of heater or wood stove. Monitor any water pipes that are along the exterior of your home.
- Weatherproof your home as much as possible with weather-stripping and insulation.
- When the weather is extremely cold, and especially if there are high winds, try to stay indoors. Make any trips outside as brief as possible.
- If you do need to be outside, dress warmly and stay dry. Adults and children should wear:
 - A hat
 - A scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth
 - Sleeves that are snug at the wrist
 - Mittens (they are warmer than gloves)
 - Several layers of loose-fitting clothing
- Avoid exertion in the cold weather, because it puts extra strain on the heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice about shoveling snow or performing other hard work in the cold. Remember your body is already working hard just to stay warm, so don't overdo it.

Diabetes and High Blood Pressure

A higher proportion of people receiving mental health treatment are diagnosed with diabetes and/or high blood pressure. Both diabetes and high blood pressure are very connected to heart disease, which is the leading cause of death among both men and women. Diabetes and high blood pressure can be caused by:

- The side effects of certain medications
- Lifestyle factors, such as lack of exercise and poor nutrition
- Family history

We can help you manage diabetes and high blood pressure. GCBHS has excellent supports in place for helping you with exercise and nutrition. We can also help educate you on other key ways to take care of yourself and prevent conditions like heart disease.

Contagious Diseases

The more information you have about how certain diseases spread, the better you can safeguard your health. Specifically, you should know about:

- **Hepatitis B & C, and HIV:** These diseases most often spread through contact via blood or other bodily fluids of an infected person.
 - This includes sexual contact and activities such as sharing needles or other equipment to inject drugs.
 - Many people with these infections have no symptoms.
 - If you are concerned about your own risk, please talk to the staff person working with you, so you can discuss resources for testing and referral.
- **Tuberculosis or “TB”:** TB germs are passed through the air when someone who is sick with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks, laughs, sings, or sneezes.
 - If you are near someone who is sick with TB, you can breathe TB germs into your lungs.
 - TB germs can live in your body without making you sick. This is called **latent TB infection**, and it means the infection is not active and you can't spread the germs to others.
 - If these germs wake up or become active in your body and multiply, you will get sick with **TB disease**. Active TB germs usually attack the lungs. They can also attack other parts of the body such as the kidneys, brain, or spine.
 - **TB disease** will make you sick. People with **TB disease** may spread the germs to people they spend time with every day.
 - **TB tests** are available through the local health department.



Client Rights

These are your rights as a client of GCBHS.

- To be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy, and privacy.
- To have reasonable protection from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, and inhumane treatment. This includes the right to be free from financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation or neglect.
- To receive services in the least restrictive, most feasible environment.
- To participate in any appropriate and available service that is consistent with an individual service plan (ISP), regardless of the refusal of any other service, unless that service is a necessity for clear treatment reasons and requires your participation.
- To be informed of your own condition.
- To give informed consent or to refuse any service, treatment, or therapy—including medication (absent an emergency).
- To participate in developing, reviewing and revising your own individualized treatment plan and receive a copy for your records.
- To make choices about services you receive and the people who provide those services with consideration of service and staff availability and appropriateness.
- To be free from unnecessary or excessive medication, and to be free from restraint or seclusion.
- To be informed of and to refuse any unusual or hazardous treatment procedures, or any involvement in research projects.
- To be advised of observation by others and to refuse such observation, including techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, video recorders, television, movies, photographs or other audio and visual technology. This right does not prohibit GCBHS from using closed-circuit monitoring to observe common areas (not including bathrooms or sleeping areas).
- To have confidentiality of communications and personal identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of client information under state and federal laws and regulations.
- To have access to your client record, unless access to certain information is restricted for clear treatment reasons. If access is restricted, the treatment plan

should include the reason for the restriction, a goal to remove the restriction, and the treatment being offered to remove the restriction.

- To be informed of the reason for any denial of a service, and to be informed why we are terminating your participation in a service. This should happen a reasonable amount of time in advance of the termination, and includes your right to be provided a referral, unless the service is unavailable or not necessary.
- To receive services without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicap, developmental disability, genetic information, human immunodeficiency virus status, or in any manner prohibited by local, state or federal laws.
- To know the cost of services.
- To be verbally informed of all client rights, and to receive a written copy upon request.
- To exercise your rights without reprisal, except that no right extends so far as to supersede health and safety considerations.
- To file a grievance, and to have oral and written instructions concerning the procedure for filing a grievance, as well as assistance in filing a grievance if requested.
- To consult with an independent treatment specialist (outside of GCBHS) or legal counsel at your own expense.
- To access guardians, conservators, self-help programs and advocacy services.
- Our full list of client rights, including those that apply to specific funders and programs, is listed in our Client Rights Policy.

If you feel that your rights have been violated, please talk to the GCBHS staff people who are working with you right away. You can also contact our **Client Concern Line** at **513-354-5285**. You have the right to discuss your concerns with no fear of reprisal and we will work with you to try to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. Our full Clients Rights policy is posted and available in all locations and available on our website. <https://www.gcbhs.com/policies/client-rights-policy/>



What Confidentiality Means at GCBHS

When you become a client of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services, we promise to protect your right to confidentiality according to the laws of the State of Ohio. Ordinarily, you can be assured that neither the fact that you are in treatment with our agency nor any of the information you share with us will be disclosed to another person or agency without your consent. However, confidentiality is not an "absolute." You should be aware of the limits of confidentiality.

Treatment Team: Access to information in your chart is limited to those employees whose job duties require that access. Your therapist or case manager does participate in regular supervision sessions and in peer case conferences. Your case may be discussed with the treatment team in order that we may provide the best possible care for you.

Risk: If you are assessed as being a danger to yourself or others, we may share your information in order to access appropriate care for you. Threats to harm another person may result in our issuing a warning to that person as well as the proper authorities.

Child or Elder Abuse or Neglect: All mental health professionals are mandated reporters of suspected child or elder abuse or neglect. If we suspect that you are abusing or neglecting a child or elderly person, we are required to report this to the county authorities.

Animal Abuse: All mental health professionals are mandated reporters of suspected animal abuse. If we suspect that you are abusing an animal, we are required to report this to the county authorities.

For Clients on Community Probate: At each of your hearings, Probate Court will require your case manager and/or other agency staff to testify about your progress in treatment. They will also be required to give the agency's recommendations about ending or continuing your Probate status.

For Court-Ordered Clients Due to Criminal Charges: The Court or Probation/Parole Department which referred you here asks us to inform them if you have called us for an appointment and if you are participating in or have completed treatment. If you have failed to make or keep an initial appointment, the legal system will be informed. Once you become a client of our agency, we will ask you to sign a limited Release of Information so we can let the legal system know that you are cooperating in your treatment. If more detailed information is requested, you will be asked to sign a more comprehensive release.

Court Orders for Disclosure: Rarely, courts may order that your records be disclosed to the Court.

Crimes Committed on Agency Premises: Any information about a crime committed by a client either at the program or against any person who works for the program will be reported to the proper authorities.



Notice of Privacy Practices

Purpose of this Notice

GCBHS respects the privacy of personal information and understands the importance of keeping this information confidential and secure. **This Notice describes how we protect the confidentiality of the personal information we receive, how we may use and disclose it and how you can access this information. Please review it carefully.**

General Information

Information regarding your health care, including payment for health care, is protected by two federal laws: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), 42 U.S.C. § 1320d *et seq.*, 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 & 164, and the Confidentiality Law, 42 U.S.C. § 290dd-2, 42 C.F.R. Part 2.

HIPAA Protections afforded all GCBHS Clients

Under HIPAA, you have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. GCBHS is not required to agree to any restriction you request, but if it does agree then it is bound by that agreement and may not use or disclose any information, which you have restricted except as necessary in a medical emergency.

GCBHS is only required to agree to your request if you request a restriction on disclosures to your health plan for payment or health care operations purposes, and you pay for the services you receive from GCBHS yourself (out-of-pocket). You have the right to request that we communicate with you by an alternative means or at an alternative location. GCBHS will accommodate such requests that are reasonable and will not request an explanation from you. Under HIPAA, you also have the right to inspect and copy your own health information maintained by GCBHS except to the extent that the information contains psychotherapy notes or information compiled for use in a civil, criminal, or administrative proceeding or in other limited circumstances. Under HIPAA, you also have the right, with some exceptions, to amend health care information maintained in GCBHS's records, and to request and receive an accounting of disclosures of your health -related information made by GCBHS during the six years prior to your request. You may obtain an electronic copy of your record upon request. You also have the right to receive a paper copy of this notice. We will let you know

promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information. GCBHS is required to obtain your written consent prior to disclosing information about you for marketing purposes, and GCBHS must obtain your written consent before disclosing any of your treatment records.

Permitted Uses and Disclosures:

A covered entity is permitted, but not required, to use and disclose protected health information, without an individual's authorization, for the following purposes or situations: when required by law (such as reporting suspected abuse/neglect); for public health activities (such as reporting vital statistics to the public health authority); for health oversight activities (such as audits); when relating to decedents (such as disclosing information to a coroner); for research purposes; to avert threat to health or safety; and for specific government functions.

GCBHS's Duties

GCBHS is required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information and to provide you with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your health information. GCBHS reserves the right to change the terms of this notice and to make new notice provisions effective for all protected health information it maintains. GCBHS is required by law to abide by the terms of this Notice. The most recent copy of this notice will be posted in the lobby of each site and will be available on our website at <http://www.gcbhs.com>.

Specific Client Protections for Alcohol and Drug Services

(Most of these are also afforded under HIPAA with specific differences)

Under these laws (*Confidentiality Law 42 C.F.R., Part 2*), pertaining to Alcohol and Drug Services, it is specified that GCBHS may not say to a person outside GCBHS that you attend the program, nor may GCBHS disclose any information identifying you as an alcohol or drug client, or disclose any other protected information except as permitted by federal law.

GCBHS must obtain your written consent before it can disclose information about you for payment purposes. For example, GCBHS must obtain your written consent before it can disclose information to your health insurer in order to be paid for services. Generally, you must also sign a written consent before GCBHS can share information for treatment purposes or for health care operations.

However, federal law specifies that GCBHS may disclose information **without** your written permission:

Pursuant to an agreement with a qualified service organization/business associate;

1. For research, audit, or evaluations;
2. To report a crime committed on GCBHS's premises or against GCBHS staff;
3. To medical personnel in a medical emergency;
4. To appropriate authorities to report suspected child abuse or neglect;
5. As allowed by a specific type of court order

For example, GCBHS can disclose information without your consent to obtain legal or financial services, or to another medical facility to provide health care to you, as long as there is a business associate agreement in place. Before GCBHS can use or disclose any information about your health in a manner that is not described above, it must first obtain your specific written consent allowing it to make the disclosure. You may revoke any such written consent verbally or in writing. *Note: Special revocation restrictions apply to certain releases to the criminal justice system.* Violation of the Alcohol and Drug Client Confidentiality Law by a program is a crime.

Complaints and Reporting Violations (all GCBHS Clients)

You have the right to ask GCBHS and the United States Department of Health and Human Services for assistance if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. If you believe that any information that we have about you has been used or disclosed inappropriately you can contact Michael Lyons, Privacy Officer, 1501 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45206, (513) 354-5232 or to:

Region V, Office of Civil Rights,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
233 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 240
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Fax: (312) 886-1807
Phone: (312) 886-2359
TDD: (312) 353-5693

Complaints must be in writing and no retaliatory action will be made against you for contacting the agents listed above.



GCBHS Contact Information and Locations

Main and Administrative Office 1501 Madison Road Cincinnati, OH 45206 (513) 354-5200	Milford Office 512 High Street Milford, OH 45150 (513) 947-7000 for general information (513) 345-8555 for services
Amelia Office 43 E. Main Street Amelia, OH 45102 (513) 947-7000	Batavia Office 1074 and 1088 Wasserman Way Batavia, OH 45103 (513) 735-8100
Price Hill Office 3730 Glenway Avenue Cincinnati, OH 45205 (513) 381-6300 for general information (513) 345-8555 for services	Gest St Office at Shelterhouse 411 Gest St Cincinnati, OH 45203 513-354-7411 for SUD Services Line 513-814-3886 for PATH Services Line
Lebanon Office 975 Kingsview Dr Lebanon, OH 45036 (513) 228-7800	Wilmington Office 953 S. South St Wilmington, OH 45177 (937) 383-4441
GCBHS Website: www.gcbhs.com	GCBHS Client Concern Line (513) 354-5285

Additional Resources

National Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line: 741741

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988

Hamilton County Crisis Hotline: 513-281-CARE

Clermont County Crisis Hotline: 513-528-SAVE

Warren & Clinton County Crisis Hotline: 877-685-NEED

Psychiatric Emergency Services at UC Hospital: 513-584-8577

Poison Control: 800-222-1222

Hamilton County
Mental Health & Recovery Services Board
2350 Auburn Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45219
513-946-8635

Clermont County
Mental Health & Recovery Board
2337 Clermont Center Dr.
Batavia, OH 45103
513-732-5400

Warren & Clinton County
Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
201 Reading Rd
Mason, OH 45040
513-695-1695

Client Advocacy Coordinator
Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services
30 E. Broad Street, 8th Fl.
Columbus, OH 43266-0414
877-275-6364
888-636-4889 TTY
614-466-7228

Disability Rights Ohio
200 S. Civic Center Dr. Suite 300
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-7264
800-282-9181
Fax: 614-644-1888

Ohio Counselor & Social Work Board
50 W. Broad St. #1075
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-0912

State of Ohio Medical Board
30 E Broad St
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-3934

Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals
Board
Vern Riffe Center
77 S High St. 16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
614-387-1110