

The County of San Bernardino  
Department of Behavioral Health

Client Substance Use Policy

Effective  
Approved

08/16/11  
08/16/11

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Allan Rawland, Director

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Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to provide a substance free environment for clients by implementing and maintaining a client substance use program as appropriate to DBH programs employing substance use screening.

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Purpose

To work toward and eliminate client substance abuse and the attendant risk of harm to clients.

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Definitions

**Alcohol** is any consumable distilled or fermented beverage containing alcohol, such as beer or liquid cold medication, which, when ingested, can present a subsequent risk of harm.

**Illicit Drugs** are drugs controlled or regulated by the State or Federal government or those identified as not legal to carry or use.

**Outpatient Treatment Terms and Conditions** are written provisions for DBH programs which are required to employ substance use screening other than for pre-medication laboratory tests indicating:

- Client shall not use illicit or program-prohibited substances at any time during outpatient status
- Use of such substances may be cause for a referral to a higher level of care, sanctions, revocation or termination of treatment services
- Signed agreement to submit to substance use testing

**Prescribed Drugs** are any controlled drug or medication prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition. Use of prescribed drugs is not in direct violation of this policy when used as prescribed.

**Reasonable Suspicion** is a belief based on specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, and/or body odors of the client from which reasonable alcohol or drug use inferences may be drawn.

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## Client Substance Use Policy, Continued

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### Definitions (continued)

#### **Substance Abuse** is:

- Use of alcohol, as defined above, during treatment
- Any use of illicit drugs, as defined above
- Positive substance use screen results not explained by over-the-counter or prescription medications approved by the program or for other medical causes

**Substance Use Screening** is the process of randomly collecting samples (urine, breath, saliva) from clients. Specimen collection occurs randomly and may be submitted for analysis at an authorized laboratory to determine the presence or absence of alcohol and the presence or absence of illicit drugs.

**Unauthorized Substance Use** is medication prohibited for client use for the following reasons:

- Client's substance use history
- Other medical or psychiatric concerns
- Client has not discussed the use of the medication with the program's designated physician, which should particularly occur following an emergency situation

**Zero Tolerance** for the purposes of this policy may be a program-specific term which promotes a substance free environment. Substance abuse will not be tolerated for the following reasons:

- Such abuse or use is contrary to wellness, recovery and resilience
- May lead to substance dependency
- May delay treatment modalities or render them ineffectual, particularly when dependency is evident or presents a risk
- Potential to interfere with treatment medications
- Potential, particularly in residential settings, to increase the risk of use by other clients
- May be against various funded program policies or practices
- Will likely lead to reoffense for forensic clients

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### Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to programs requiring substance use screening, as indicated:

#### Forensic Programs:

In addition to requirements stated in this policy definition, Forensic programs should include:

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## Client Substance Use Policy, Continued

**Guidelines**  
(continued)

- In the terms and conditions of outpatient treatment, provisions indicating the individual shall not use illicit or program prohibited substances at any time during outpatient status
- The use of illicit or program prohibited substances may be cause for a referral to a higher level of care, revocation, sanctions, or loss of services

All Applicable Programs:

- Participating clients will agree to submit to substance use screening
- Staff will have written procedures delineating what observed symptoms are reasonable cause for substance use screening
- Programs will have written procedures for:
  - Collecting substance use screening samples
  - Testing samples
  - Assuring specimen integrity
- Chart documentation/treatment notes accurately document screenings
- Staff must know what skilled substance abuse treatment services are available for clients in need and how to refer clients to them
- Substance abuse treatment options for programs not offering Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) will include self-help treatment programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), for which attendance will be monitored
- Retain screening result documents as directed for each program
- Participating programs must coordinate the collection of samples and if required by the program, submission of substance use screening samples with certified toxicology laboratory contract requirements

**Responsibility**

The following roles and responsibilities are assigned as part of this policy:

Role	Responsibility
Clinicians and Counselors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend trainings regarding the substance use policy and procedures of the program to which they are assigned</li> <li>• Attend trainings to learn to identify client symptoms indicating the client may be over the legal limit of alcohol and/or are using illicit drugs</li> <li>• Seek corroboration from the supervisor when the client is exhibiting conduct constituting reasonable suspicion of substance abuse</li> <li>• Request client substance use screening as appropriate to their assigned programs and in accordance with the <a href="#">Client Substance Use Screening Procedure</a> when reasonable suspicion exists</li> </ul>

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## Client Substance Use Policy, Continued

Responsibility  
(continued)

Role	Responsibility
Clinicians and Counselors (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer clients who have positive screening results for appropriate treatment</li> <li>• Document positive screening results as appropriate to the written program procedures to which they are assigned</li> <li>• Ensure clients adhere to any substance abuse or recovery service programs from which they are receiving services</li> <li>• <a href="#">Annual Infectious Disease/Bloodborne Pathogens Policy and Procedure training as required</a></li> </ul>
Clinic Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clinical staff are trained in this substance use policy, the <a href="#">Client Substance Use Screening Procedure</a> and any substance use policies or procedures from their assigned programs</li> <li>• Ensure staff are trained to identify clients who may be abusing substances</li> <li>• Corroborate staff observations constituting reasonable suspicion of client substance abuse</li> <li>• Ensure substance use screenings are confirmed at certified laboratories or as required by individual programs</li> <li>• Confirm substance abuse treatment is appropriate for the client and in accordance with written program requirements</li> </ul>
Program Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there is a clearly articulated written policy against clients using prohibited substances for programs requiring substance use screenings other than for pre-medication laboratory testing</li> <li>• Ensure procedures are written for substance use screening appropriate to assigned programs</li> <li>• Resolve disputes arising from drug screenings</li> <li>• Collaborate with the Clinic Supervisor and/or clinical staff whether or not treatment sanctions, revocation or other actions will occur for clients who refuse substance use screening or treatment for substance abuse</li> <li>• Ensure the substance use screening procedure written for the client's respective program has been followed</li> </ul>

**Substance Analysis**

The basic substances tested for DBH programs vary, as do the concentration levels for which testing is done. Specific program information should be accessed for details.

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## Client Substance Use Policy, Continued

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### References

County of San Bernardino Probation Department Drug Screening Procedure  
Department of Behavioral Health Alcohol and Drug Services/Perinatal &  
Addiction Treatment Services Substance Abuse Screening Procedures  
Community Corrections Bureau Procedure #97-05-121J Juvenile Community  
Corrections Aftercare Procedures  
CONREP Policy and Procedure Manual  
MedTox Diagnostics, Inc. Sure-Screen instructions

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### Related Policy or Procedure

DBH Standard Practice Manual

- CLP0834-1: [Client Substance Use Screening Procedure](#)
  - SFT7030: [Infectious Disease/Bloodborne Pathogens Policy](#)
  - SFT7030-1: [Infectious Disease/Bloodborne Pathogens Procedure](#)
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