



## **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ACCREDITATION INFORMATION SHEET**

For an Agency Interested in Obtaining Certification  
by the Ohio Department of Mental Health as a  
Community Mental Health Agency

### **What is the Accreditation Rule Requirement?**

Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5122-25-02 (A)(D) requires an agency seeking certification for one or more of the following services to attain *appropriate behavioral health accreditation* prior to submitting an application for certification:

1. Behavioral health counseling and therapy service
2. Mental health assessment service
3. Pharmacologic management service
4. Partial hospitalization service
5. Crisis intervention mental health service
6. Community psychiatric supportive treatment (CPST) service

An agency may, but is not required to, obtain accreditation for the following services and apply for deemed status:

1. Intensive home based treatment (IHBT) service and/or
2. Assertive community treatment (ACT) service

This accreditation requirement is not applicable to inpatient psychiatric hospitals. Inpatient hospitals should contact the Office of Licensure and Certification at 614-466-7940.

### **Which Accrediting Bodies are Recognized by the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH)?**

An agency may choose between The Joint Commission (TJC), The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), and/or The Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services (COA).

### **Will ODMH Help an Agency Decide which Accrediting Body it Should Select?**

No. An agency must determine for itself which accrediting body is most appropriate. ODMH is only able to provide basic information as well as contact information for each accrediting body, which is located at the end of this document. Each accrediting body also has a website which provides information for prospective agencies.

## **How Does ODMH Define *Appropriate Behavioral Health Accreditation*?**

ODMH issues a behavioral health accreditation crosswalk that lists the accrediting body programs/services for which an agency seeking ODMH certification must pursue accreditation. ODMH is not flexible on these programs/services even when an accrediting body offers choices. Furthermore, CARF, COA and TJC cannot waive this requirement on behalf of ODMH. An agency may request a variance to “substitute” a different accrediting body program/service when it believes the program/service standards better meets the agency program description and rule intent. An agency is advised to do so prior to its accrediting body survey to ensure compliance.

In addition, the accreditation survey must be conducted on mental health services provided in the State of Ohio by a corporation registered to do business in Ohio.

## **TJC & CARF Offer Several Accreditation Options. Which Do ODMH Accept?**

CARF – An agency must be surveyed under the *Behavioral Health Standards Manual*. An agency needing a blended survey option should have the other standards manual blended into behavioral health standards, e.g. Employment and Community Services standards blended into a behavioral health survey. If an agency feels it is more appropriate to undergo a survey blending the behavioral health standards into another manual, it is advised to first contact ODMH to discuss.

TJC – An agency must be surveyed under the *Standards for Behavioral Health Care or Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care*. A hospital, ambulatory care, etc. program survey that includes a survey of an agency’s behavioral health services, but does not include a specific behavioral health care survey conducted by a behavioral health care surveyor applying the behavioral health standards, is not acceptable.

## **Is This Rule Applicable to an Agency Seeking ODMH Certification for the First Time?**

Yes, an agency seeking certification must obtain appropriate behavioral health accreditation prior to applying for certification. There is no state law that requires an agency to be ODMH certified in order to provide mental health services.

## **Will ODMH Accept a Preliminary or Provisional Accreditation for an Agency Seeking ODMH Certification for the First Time?**

In order for ODMH to accept an agency’s accreditation as evidence of compliance with OAC 5122-25-02 (A), the agency must undergo an on-site survey. The survey must include a review of clinical records, i.e. mental health services directly provided by the agency seeking accreditation and ODMH certification. At this time, ODMH does not accept CARF Preliminary Accreditation, COA Provisional Accreditation, or TJC Early Survey Option/Preliminary Accreditation, as these do not include a review of clinical records and/or the full complement of accreditation standards unless arrangements are made otherwise. An agency undergoing any accreditation survey other than a full (regular) initial behavioral health survey should contact ODMH to ensure the survey process meets our requirements.

### **Does Accreditation Replace the Certification Process?**

No. An accredited agency must apply for certification by the Department for each mental health service in which it is seeking certification, and for each site at which it provides certified mental health services. However, the application requirements for an appropriately accredited agency seeking certification and requesting deemed status are significantly reduced.

### **What does Deemed Status Mean?**

Deemed status essentially means “evidence of compliance.” OAC 5122-25-03 (A) states “The department shall accept, as evidence of compliance with Chapters 5122-26 to 5122-29 of the Administrative Code, the agency’s appropriate behavioral health accreditation by any of the following accrediting bodies: “The Joint Commission”; “The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities”; and/or “The Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services”.

Therefore, when the Department grants deemed status to an agency, it is accepting the agency’s appropriate behavioral health accreditation as evidence of compliance with the ODMH certification standards which are not exempt from deemed status.

### **Which ODMH Certification Standards are Exempt from Deemed Status?**

The following certification standards are exempt from deemed status:

1. Incident Notification and Risk Management (reporting major unusual incidents and seclusion/restraint data to ODMH)
2. Uniform Cost Reporting

Please see OAC 5122-25-03 (A)(1) to review the rule in its entirety.

### **Is an Agency which Obtained Appropriate Behavioral Health Accreditation and ODMH Certification Exempt from the Medicaid Requirements?**

No. Each agency with a Medicaid contract must also ensure that it maintains compliance with the Medicaid Rules.

Please contact your local community mental health, alcohol, drug addiction and mental health, mental health and recovery services board for more information.

### **How Does the ODMH Certification Process Work?**

Please contact the Office of Licensure and Certification at 614-466-7940. This office will provide assistance with any certification questions.

### **Where are the ODMH OAC rules Located?**

<http://mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/protect-and-monitor/licensure-and-certification/rules/rules-in-effect.shtml>

The “Certification Standards for Community Mental Health Agencies” are Chapters 5122-24 through 5122-29.

### **Is there a Subscription ODMH Listserv for Rule Announcements, including Training?**

<http://mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/protect-and-monitor/licensure-and-certification/rules/listserv-residential-psychiatric-adult-Foster-Home-facility-rules.shtml>

### **Whom Should I Contact at ODMH for Additional Information?**

Janel M. Pequignot, Chief  
Standards Development and Administrative Rules  
Ohio Department of Mental Health  
30 East Broad Street 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus OH 43215  
614-466-9065  
[Janel.Pequignot@mh.ohio.gov](mailto:Janel.Pequignot@mh.ohio.gov)

### **Who Should I Contact at each Accrediting Body for Additional Information?**

Nancy Bradley, M.S., LISAC  
Resource Specialist, Behavioral Health  
CARF International  
888-281-6531 ext. 7145  
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