



Dispatch Protocols

Emergent, Urgent and Administrative Defined

Policy 1734.01 Dispatch Protocols

Volunteers of America (VOA) Dispatch

VOA Triage and Dispatch protocols determines the immediacy of response (Emergent or Urgent) required by Mobile Crisis Outreach teams. VOA does not determine legal status prior to a face-to-face evaluation, but referrals by VOA may require that a designated crisis responder (DCR) conducts the outreach based on the type of outreach request received (i.e., Emergency Departments).

Emergent

Face-to-face contact is expected prior to closing the case through a disposition to VOA.

Traditional dispatch with a 2-hour North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (North Sound BH-ASO) mandated response time:

- VOA Triage staff may not inform requestors that Mobile Crisis Outreach teams have up to 2 hours to respond
- VOA Triage staff informs requestor(s) that the Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will call them with an ETA
- It is not acceptable to change the status of an emergent dispatch to non-emergent because of circumstantial barriers not noted in Category 1 or 2 below.
- Dispatch Results in a dispatch number
- Direct Law Enforcement Referrals – Mobile Crisis Outreach teams can self-dispatch and will coordinate dispatch and disposition with VOA

Documentation Note – The outreach teams have the option to mark boxes (described below) on the forms they submit to North Sound BH-ASO when they cannot comply with the 2-hour window.

- Category 01: Staffing – staff is not able to respond within 2 hours due to coordination with law enforcement (LE), emergency medical services (EMS) or another resource required to ensure safety of the staff and the client/respondent during the outreach
- Category 02: Complex Case – cases that started out as administrative and then resulted in an emergent dispatch

Urgent

- Dispatch that exceeds a 2-hour response but occurs within 24 hours
- VOA Triage staff does not inform the requestors that Mobile Crisis Outreach teams have longer than 2 hours to respond

- VOA Triage staff informs tell requestors that the Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will call them with an estimated time of arrival
- Face-to-face contact is expected prior to closing of case through a disposition to VOA
- Dispatch results in a dispatch number
- The following are the *only* cases that are dispatched as Urgent:
 - Jails
 - Inpatient Psyche Units
 - Medical Floors
 - Logistical issues (i.e. the client is not home yet, but has agreed to an outreach when they get home)
- This is not a “NED” (a non-emergent detention proceeding)

Administrative

- Applies only to DCR (H2011 w/HW) activity, not Crisis Intervention Services (H2011)
- Any issue or request not tied to a dispatch that is informational in nature and does not result in a face to face intervention. The following are examples:
 - Inquiries about Less Restrictive Orders (LROs)
 - Consultations with jails
 - Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Paperwork follow-up
- Does not result in a dispatch number

Self-Dispatch

- Direct referrals (i.e., Law Enforcement) received by Mobile Crisis Outreach that result in a self-dispatch does not require a VOA dispatch number prior to conducting the outreach.
- Self-dispatched outreach dispositions shall be reported to VOA upon completion of the first contact. This ensures that VOA is aware of any outreach activity if additional requests from the community occur.

Provider Documentation

It is critically important for auditing purposes that you clearly write whether an outreach request is voluntary or involuntary **and** the type of dispatch. This should be in your presenting note.

Examples:

- Dispatched “DCR Doe” for emergent outreach
- Dispatched “Mobile Crisis Outreach Doe” for urgent outreach
- Gave “DCR Doe” Administrative case