



Dispatch Protocols

Emergent, Urgent and Administrative Defined

Policy 1734.01 Crisis Outreach Dispatch Protocols

Volunteers of America (VOA) Referrals for Dispatch

North Sound BH-ASO delegates VOA the authority to determine if a crisis call requires dispatch for mobile crisis outreach response. VOA triage does not determine immediacy of the outreach response or legal status prior to dispatch, but thoroughly assess the nature of the crisis, conducts a safety screen, and maintains referral protocols to voluntary or involuntary services per North Sound BH-ASO Policy 1731.00. Referrals by North Sound BH-ASO's Delegate can require that a DCR conducts the outreach based on the information received by the referent. All VOA dispatches result in a dispatch number.

Mobile Crisis Outreach Dispatch

Mobile Crisis outreach teams will determine if a dispatch referral from VOA requires an Emergent or Urgent response and determines if further fact gathering, safety screening, follow up activity or other community services are appropriate. Once a referral for outreach has been made by VOA, Mobile Crisis Outreach staff are expected to continue information gathering and provide ongoing coordination with the referent or other collateral contacts. Mobile Crisis Outreach staff determine how or where the outreach is conducted based on VOA screening and any additional information gathered.

Law enforcement or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) co-response outreaches that originate through 911, law enforcement or EMS do not require a VOA dispatch number prior to conducting the outreach. Law enforcement or EMS co-response programs shall coordinate case disposition or follow up needs when ongoing crisis services are required or in the best interest of the individual.

Outreach Type Defined

Emergent: Dispatch Response within a 2-hour response time:

- DCR Direct Law Enforcement (LE) Referrals or co-response outreaches – Mobile Crisis Outreach can self-dispatch for emergent requests and will communicate case dispatch and disposition with VOA to support crisis service follow up coordination.

Urgent: Dispatch that exceeds a 2-hour response but occurs within 24 hours

- The following are the *only* cases that are responded by crisis outreach as Urgent:
 - Jails
 - Inpatient Psychiatric Units
 - Medical Floors other than Emergency Departments

- Logistical issues (i.e., the client is not home yet, but has agreed to an outreach when they get home)

Dispatch Delay Reasons

Mobile Crisis Outreach staff have the option to indicate when they cannot comply with dispatch response times.

Category 01: Staffing

- Staff are not able to respond within timelines 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.
- Unstaffed community/home locations in which safety cannot be ensured based on safety screening completed by VOA or Crisis Outreach staff (RCW 71.05.700). DCR/Crisis Outreach staff will also follow Policy 1702.00 Safety Screening.

• Category 02: Complex Case:

- No known location or whereabouts become unknown.
- Administrative cases or any activity that did not originate from a referral for dispatch, but then resulted in an emergent or urgent dispatch.

VOA Administrative Referrals

- Applies only to DCR (H2011 w/HW) activity, not Crisis Intervention Services (H2011). Does not result in a dispatch number.
- Any issue or request not tied to an Emergent/Urgent 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, inquiries about legal process
 - Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Paperwork follow-up
- DCR's who self-dispatch following administrative calls shall communicate with VOA regarding the dispatch and disposition.