
Document Type: ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy & Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Process Guideline	Adopted:	1/1/2019
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> System Description	Last Reviewed:	7/5/2024
			Retired:	

Revisions: 11/07/2019; 3/25/2022

Document Scope: (applies to Policy & Procedure only)

- The requirements herein apply only to the GCBH BH-ASO Central Office and its functions.
 - The requirements herein apply, verbatim, to GCBH BH-ASO and its network providers².
 - The requirements herein apply both to GCBH BH-ASO and its network providers². Additionally, network providers must have internal documents outlining their processes for implementing the requirements, insofar as they relate to actions for which network providers are responsible.
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PURPOSE: To establish Greater Columbia Behavioral Health, LLC BH-ASO's (GCBH BH-ASO) standards for customer service.

DEFINITIONS

- I. **Behavioral Health Services:** Mental health and/or substance use disorder treatment services provided by a Behavioral Health Agency (BHA) licensed by the State of Washington Department of Health (DOH) to provide these services.
- II. **Individual:** A person who is seeking behavioral health services from a (GCBH BH-ASO) network provider, funded by GCBH BH-ASO. For a child under the age of thirteen, or for a child thirteen or older whose parents or legal guardians are involved in the treatment plan, the definition of individual includes parents or legal guardians.
- III. **Families:** Parents, legal guardians of individuals and all family members interested in behavioral health services.
- IV. **GCBH BH-ASO:** For the purposes of this policy, GCBH BH-ASO refers to the central office in Kennewick, Washington.
- V. **Staff:** All employees of GCBH BH-ASO, and specifically the Customer Service Staff.
- VI. **Stakeholders:** A person or organization that has a legitimate interest in GCBH BH-ASO, what GCBH BH-ASO does and the behavioral health system. This includes vendors, employees, and members of the community, the Executive Committee and other governing boards.

POLICY

- A. GCBH BH-ASO strives to offer excellent customer service and is committed to consistent, friendly, proactive and responsive interaction with individuals, families and stakeholders. Staff members provide friendly, efficient and accurate service to all individuals, families and stakeholders.

PROCEDURE

1. Customer Service:
 - 1.1. Provides a distinct toll free number for customer service inquiries, separate from the toll-free crisis line, in addition to a local telephone number within the local calling range.

- 1.2. Answers telephone calls from individuals, family members and stakeholders from at least 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, holidays excluded; and
- 1.3. Respectfully responds to individuals, family members and stakeholders in a manner that resolves their inquiry politely, promptly and with helpful attention, including the ability to respond to those with limited English proficiency or hearing loss. Interpreter services shall be made available for interactions between individuals and staff (GCBH BH-ASO or provider) as needed.
- 1.4. Customer Service staff training shall also include information about:
 - 1.4.1. How to respond promptly to family members
 - 1.4.2. Information about the supporting links for other service systems such as Medicaid services administered by the AH-IMC MCO, First Responders, criminal justice system, Tribal governments, IHCPs, and social services.
 - 1.4.3. How to distinguish between a third party insurance issue, appeal or grievance and how to triage these to the appropriate party.
2. GCBH BH-ASO provides its Customer Service staff with access to qualified clinicians who are available without placing the Individual on hold. The clinician can assess the crisis and warm transfer the call to a DCR, call 911, refer the Individual for services or to his or her provider, or resolve the crisis.
3. GCBH BH-ASO shall train customer service representatives on GFS/FBG policies and procedures.
4. Logs are kept that include at a minimum, the initial call, type of call date of attempted resolution, time to answer the call with a live voice, and abandoned calls. This log is provided to the Health Care Authority for review upon request.
5. GCBH BH-ASO shall review the logs quarterly to ensure that the average speed of customer service calls being answered with a live voice during open hours is 30 seconds, and that customer services calls have an abandonment rate of less than 5%.
 - 5.1. If GCBH BH-ASO does not meet these standards, the GCBH BH-ASO Quality Manager shall write up a plan for what needs to be improved to make sure that the measurables will improve for the next review period. This activity is under the auspices of the GCBH BH-ASO Quality Management Oversight Committee (QMOC).
6. Multiple GCBH BH-ASO staff are trained to answer and respond to customer service calls in case a backup staff is needed. GCBH BH-ASO customer service staff are trained to answer the phones. All Customer Service staff are able to access information regarding eligibility requirements and benefits, GFS/FBG services, refer for behavioral health services, and resolve Grievances and triage Appeals.
7. GCBH BH-ASO develops and maintains customer service policies and procedures that address the following:
 - 7.1. Information on Contracted Services including where and how to access them;
 - 7.2. Authorization requirements; and
 - 7.3. Requirements for responding promptly to family members and supporting links to other service systems such as Medicaid services administered by the AH-IMC

MCO, First Responders, criminal justice system, Tribal governments, IHCPs, and social services.

APPROVAL



Karen Richardson or Sindi Saunders, Co-Directors

7/5/2024
Date