



Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities  
2 Peachtree St., NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 657-2252

## Behavioral Health Community Crisis Services

### ACCESS TO SERVICES

Call the Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL) at (800) 715-4225 for both routine and crisis services 24/7.

### HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE?

Contact the Office of Constituent Services at [dbhddconstituent-services@dbhdd.ga.gov](mailto:dbhddconstituent-services@dbhdd.ga.gov) or (404) 657-5964

### MORE INFORMATION

Visit the DBHDD website at <http://dbhdd.ga.gov> for more information about our agency, including rules and regulations, policies and careers.

The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) seeks to provide easy access to high-quality care for the people we serve. At the core of this mission is the foundational right of every person to live in the most integrated setting possible. We believe that people are served better in their own communities, in the least restrictive setting possible. For people with mental health challenges and substance abuse disorders, community-based treatment allows them to lean on a natural support system where their friends and family play a part in their recovery.

As DBHDD continues to expand community-based capacity, a critical piece of the infrastructure is the development of a public safety net that provides high-quality, community-based services that can be accessed in a consistent and predictable way across Georgia. This safety net will be delivered through our statewide network of community service boards (CSB) and will provide a wide range of services designed to treat people in their communities and keep them out of emergency departments and state hospitals.

Historically, many individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis were treated in an emergency department and then transferred to a state psychiatric hospital. The public safety net responds to these crisis situations by providing de-escalation, stabilization, inpatient treatment, and linkage and referral to outpatient services. In this way, our CSBs serve as a community-based alternative that offers immediate support to individuals who would otherwise require hospitalization. These crisis services divert individuals from unnecessary hospitalizations while engaging them in appropriate treatment that addresses the underlying conditions that cause crises.

The public safety net provides an array of community resources to ensure access to services at any time an individual is in need.

The **Georgia Collaborative Administrative Services Organization**, a partnership of DBHDD and Beacon Health Options, engages Behavioral Health Link to operate the **Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL)**, which provides 24/7 access to both routine and crisis services.

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The GCAL call center is staffed by clinicians who work collaboratively with 911, local law enforcement, and emergency departments. The **GCAL number is (800) 715-4225**.

**22 crisis stabilization units (CSU)** provide community-based crisis assessment and stabilization, psychiatric observation, and short-term treatment with linkage and referral to after-care services for individuals experiencing acute mental health or addictive disease crises. Between July and November 2014, Georgia's CSUs served an average of 1,899 people per month.

**5 behavioral health crisis centers (BHCC)** offer 24/7 walk-in crisis assessment, stabilization, short-term treatment and after-care referrals. BHCCs function as enhanced crisis stabilization units with the addition of temporary observation capacity. Between July and November 2014, Georgia's BHCCs served an average of 1,012 people per month.

**Mobile crisis services** offer around-the-clock community crisis response, de-escalation and stabilization delivered by a team of peers and behavioral health professionals who provide referrals for after-care services. Mobile crisis is accessible to individuals in all 159 counties in Georgia.

**4 crisis respite apartments** serve individuals experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis by offering a safe environment for care and recovery. These apartments provide short-term, residential support and after-care linkage to behavioral health services and housing referrals. The average length of stay in a crisis respite apartment is 20 days. Between July and November 2014, Georgia's crisis respite apartments served an average of 77 people per month.

**22 assertive community treatment (ACT)** teams provide a consumer-centered, recovery-oriented, and highly-intensive service for individuals with a severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI), and who have not responded successfully to other forms of outpatient behavioral health treatment. ACT is administered by a team of behavioral health professionals and typically provides services in an out-of-office setting, which is often the consumer's home.

**8 community support teams (CST)** enhance our capacity to provide intensive community-based, behavioral health services by offering increased support for individuals with SPMI who live in rural areas of Georgia.

*The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) serves individuals with mental health challenges, addictive diseases, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our mission is to provide easy access to high-quality care for the people we serve. We offer a wide range of services to fulfill our mission and support our goal of helping people achieve recovery and independence.*