

## **VAN BUREN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**Title:** Customer Services

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**Approved By:** Executive Team

### **DIRECTIVE:**

Van Buren Community Mental Health (VBCMh) recognizes the importance of a Customer Services System that operates to enhance the relationship between customers and VBCMh. Customer Services conveys an atmosphere that is welcoming, helpful and informative.

### **PROCEDURES:**

1. Customer Services Functions:
  - a. Welcome and orient customers to services and benefits available and VBCMh services.
  - b. Provide information about how to access behavioral health, primary health and other community services.
  - c. Provide information about how to access the various rights processes.
  - d. Help customers with problems and inquiries regarding benefits.
  - e. Assist customers with and oversee local complaint and grievance processes.
  - f. Track and report patterns of problem areas for VBCMh.
  - g. Provide information and education to staff on Customer Services and how every employee is part of the VBCMh Customer Services System.
  - h. Participate in PIHP committees, task forces and meetings as indicated.
  - i. Work in conjunction with the VBCMh Recipient Rights office to ensure customer rights, policies and procedures are followed.
  - j. Ensures all required information is up-to-date and provided electronically on agency website ([www.vbcmh.com](http://www.vbcmh.com)) under publications and in paper format. If paper documents are requested, they will be provided to the customer within 5 business days. Customers shall be given the required documents in paper format annually unless the customer has clearly communicated that accessing the items through the website is acceptable.
  - k. Ensures all written materials provided to service applicants and customers will be written in plain language so that they may be understandable to those persons.
  - l. Ensures all written materials for potential and current customers must include taglines in the prevalent non-English languages in the state, as well as large print, explaining the availability of written translation or oral interpretation to understand the information provided and the toll-free telephone number of the agency's customer service representative.
2. Customer Service Standards:
  - a. There shall be a designated unit called Customer Service.
  - b. There shall be at SWMBH a minimum of one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) performing the customer services functions whether within customer service unit or elsewhere at SWMBH. As this function is delegated, VBCMh shall have additional FTE (or fractions thereof) as appropriate to sufficiently meet the needs of people in the service area.

- c. There shall be a designated toll-free customer service telephone line with access to alternate telephonic communication methods (such as Relays, TTY, emailing, etc.). The customer service numbers shall be displayed in agency brochures and public information material.
- d. Telephone calls to customer service units shall be answered by a live voice during business hours. Telephone menus are not acceptable. A variety of alternatives may be employed to triage high volumes of calls as long as there is response to each call within one business day.
- e. The hours of customer service unit operations and the process for accessing information from customer service outside of these hours shall be publicized in the customer handbook and on SWMBH's website. It is expected that the customer services/unit or function will operate a minimum of eight hours daily, Monday through Friday, except for holidays.
- f. SWMBH/VBCMh will ensure the customer handbook shall contain the state-required topics and follow the model member handbook templates. SWMBH/VBCMh will use the state developed notice forms (See MDHHS, Appeal and Grievance Resolution Processes Technical Requirement).
- g. The Medicaid coverage name and the state's description of each service shall be printed in the customer handbook. The state's developed definitions for managed care terminology will be used within the handbook.
- h. SWMBH/VBCMh will ensure that the handbook shall contain the date of publication and version number.
- i. SWMBH/VBCMh will give customers notice of any change that the State defines as significant in the information specified in 42 CFR 438.10(g)(2) at least 30 days before the intended effective date. Significant is defined as any change that affects a beneficiary's Medicaid benefits, including but not limited to: Contractor contract information, authorization for services, covered benefits, and copays.
  - i. SWMBH/VBCMh will obtain state approval in writing before publishing original and revised editions of the customer handbook.
  - ii. SWMBH/VBCMh will provide supplemental materials to the handbook (inserts/stickers), as needed, to ensure compliance with contract requirements.
- j. SWMBH/VBCMh are required to distribute the most recent edition of the SWMBH handbook within a reasonable time after receiving notice of the customer's enrollment in services and annually thereafter or sooner if substantial revisions have been made. The handbook must also be posted SWMBH and VBCMh websites. The handbook serves a similar function as the summary of benefits and coverage described in 45 CFR 147.200(a). This handbook may be provided by:
  - i. mailing a printed copy to the customer's mailing address
  - ii. emailed after obtaining the customer's agreement to receive information in email,
  - iii. if SWMBH/VBCMh posts the information on the website and advises the customer in paper or electronic form the information is available on the internet and includes the applicable internet web address, provided that persons with disabilities who cannot access the information online are provided auxiliary aids and services upon request at no cost, or
  - iv. the information is provided by any other method that can reasonably be expected to result in the customer receiving the information.
- k. Information about how to contact the Medicaid Health Plans or Medicaid fee-for-service programs in the SWMBH service area, including plan or program name, locations, and telephone numbers, shall be provided in the handbook.

- l. SWMBH/VBCMh shall ensure that current listings are maintained of all providers, practitioners, organizations, and any group affiliation with whom SWMBH has contracts, street address(es), telephone number(s), website URL (if appropriate), the services they provide, cultural and linguistic capabilities (if they have completed cultural competency training), any non-English languages they speak (including American Sign Language), any specialty for which they are known, whether the provider's office/facility has accommodations for people with physical disabilities, and whether they are accepting new customers. This list must include independent PCP facilitators. SWMBH/VBCMh must make this available in paper form upon request and electronic form such as SWMBH, VBCMh, or network provider's website as applicable. Customers shall be given this list annually unless the customer has expressly informed SWMBH/VBCMh that accessing the listing through an available website or customer service line is acceptable.
- m. The provider directory must be made available in paper form upon request and electronic form. The provider directory must be made available in a prominent, readily accessible location on the SWMBH/VBCMh website in a machine-readable format.
- n. Electronic provider directories must be updated no later than 30 days after SWMBH receives update provider information. Paper provider directories must be updated at least:
  - i. Monthly, if there is no mobile-enabled electronic directory;
  - ii. Quarterly, if there is a mobile-enabled electronic provider directory available.
- o. Member information may not be provided electronically by SWMBH/VBCMh unless all of the following are met:
  - i. The format is readily accessible;
  - ii. The information is placed in a location on SWMBH's website that is prominent and readily accessible;
  - iii. The information is provided in an electronic form which can be electronically retained and printed;
  - iv. The information is consistent with the content and language requirements of 42 CFR 438.10;
  - v. The member is informed that the information is available in paper form without charge upon request and provided upon request in 5 business days.
- p. Customer Service unit shall have access to information about SWMBH/VBCMh including SWMBH/VBCMh annual reports, current organizational chart, SWMBH/VBCMh board member list, meeting schedule and minutes. Customer Service's will provide this information in a timely manner to individuals upon their requests.
- q. Upon request, the customer service unit shall assist beneficiaries with filing grievances and appeals, accessing local dispute resolution processes, and coordinating as appropriate with Fair Hearing Officers and local Office of Recipient Rights.
- r. The Customer Services Representative shall be trained to welcome people to Community Mental Health services and will possess current working knowledge or know how to obtain detailed information in the following areas:
  - i. The populations served (serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, intellectual or developmental disability, and substance use disorder) and eligibility criteria for various benefits plans.
  - ii. Service array (including substance use disorder treatment), medical necessity requirements, and eligibility for and referral to specialty services, including Indian Healthcare Providers (IHCP).
  - iii. Person-centered planning.
  - iv. Self-determination.
  - v. Recovery & Resiliency.

- vi. Peer Specialists.
- vii. Grievance and Appeals, Fair Hearings, local Dispute Resolution processes, and Recipient Rights.
- viii. Limited English Proficiency and cultural competency.
- ix. Information and referral about Medicaid-covered services within SWMBH as well as outside to Medicaid Health Plans, Fee-for-Services practitioners, and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.
- x. The organization of the Public Behavioral Health System.
- xi. Customer services functions and beneficiary rights and protections in accordance with federal regulations.
- xii. Community resources (e.g., advocacy organizations, housing options, schools, public health agencies).
- xiii. Public Health Code (for substance use disorder treatment recipients if not delegated to SWMBH), Mental Health Code, and Medicaid Provider Manual.
- xiv. Know which services are available directly in ASL and services that use an interpreter.
- xx. Understand the internal process to address HCBS concerns and complaints.

### 3. Delegation

- a. SWMBH delegates a portion of the responsibility for Customer Service roles/functions to VBCMh programs who meet pre-delegation assessment standards. Provider entities do not have delegate managed care administration functions.
  - i. Pre-delegation assessment / evaluation will be conducted with agencies by SWMBH. Evaluation will determine what CS functions an VBCMh program will be able to perform.
  - ii. All agencies with CS delegated functions / responsibilities will adhere to SWMBH policies that govern such delegated CS functions.
  - iii. Performance of CS delegated functions will be monitored per SWMBH guidelines through a pre-delegation assessment and annual reviews.
  - iv. If a VBCMh program is unable to fulfill CS functions as outlined in Delegation Agreements, a Plan of Correction will be provided to and reviewed by SWMBH for completeness by the VBCMh program.
  - v. Further corrective action and/or continued monitoring may be required of any delegate.