

What is a Behavioral Health Administrative Service Organization (BH-ASO)?

The Health Care Authority (HCA) is transforming health care by focusing on the whole person and ensuring care is coordinated and delivered where and when a person needs it. By January 2020, all regions of the state will transition to an integrated system for physical health, mental health, and substance use disorder services in the Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) program.

In this integrated managed care program, most services for Apple Health clients are provided through managed care organizations. However, some services in the community, such as services for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, must be available to all individuals, regardless of their insurance status or income level.

For this reason, HCA will contract with a Behavioral Health Administrative Service Organization (BH-ASO) to provide these services within [a region](#).

What services will the BH-ASO provide to anyone in the region, regardless of insurance status?

Certain services must be available to anyone regardless of their insurance status or income level. The following services may be provided by the BH-ASO to anyone in the region who is experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis:

- A 24/7/365 regional crisis hotline for mental health and substance use disorder crises
- Mental health crisis services, including the dispatch of mobile crisis outreach teams, staffed by mental health professionals and certified peer counselors
- Short-term substance use disorder crisis services for people intoxicated or incapacitated in public
- Application of mental health and substance use disorder involuntary commitment statutes, available 24/7/365 to conduct Involuntary Treatment Act assessments and file detention petition

What services will the BH-ASO provide to people who are low income, uninsured, and not eligible for Apple Health?

The BH-ASO may provide certain mental health services and substance use disorder services to people who are not enrolled in or eligible for Apple Health. For some services, like services funded through the federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) block grant, individuals may need to meet other priority population requirements to be considered eligible.

The BH-ASO may provide the following services to individuals who are not eligible for Apple Health:

- Mental health evaluation and treatment services for individuals who are involuntarily detained or agree to a voluntary commitment
- Residential substance use disorder treatment services for individuals involuntarily detained as described in state law
- Outpatient mental health or substance use disorder treatment services, in accordance with a Less Restrictive Alternative court order
- Within available resources, the BH-ASO may provide non-crisis behavioral health services, such as outpatient substance use disorder and/or mental health services, or residential substance use disorder and/or mental health services to low income individuals who are not eligible for Apple Health and meet other eligibility criteria

What other administrative functions will the BH-ASO manage in the region?

Within the region, the BH-ASO may:

- Provide a behavioral health ombudsman to assist individuals with grievances and appeals
- Manage the block grant based on locally approved block grant plans
- Manage Criminal Justice Treatment Account (CJTA) funds and Juvenile Drug Court funds

Learn more about the plan to integrate physical and behavioral health on the Healthier Washington website: www.hca.wa.gov/hw.