

Know Your Rights: Mental Health

This fact sheet is for educational purposes only. Nothing here should be considered legal advice. Please consult a lawyer for more specific information.
Updated as of March 2025

Emergency Support

If concerned that someone will harm themselves/others: go to the nearest hospital, emergency room, or police station

- **Samaritans Statewide Helpline:**
 - Call or text 988
 - Available to anyone in Massachusetts who needs emotional support
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**
 - Call/text 988 for support in English, Spanish, or Videophone/text if deaf/hard of hearing
- **The Trevor Project**
 - Call 1-866-488-7386, text "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200
 - Chat online: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>
 - 24/7 crisis intervention and suicide prevention hotline for LGBTQ youth
- **Mobile Crisis Intervention**
 - Call: 877-382-1609
 - 24 hours/7 days a week/365 days

Types of Support:

- Individual, group, and family, counseling
- Individual/group peer support
- Recovery-oriented centers and groups
- Medication
- Respite (temporary short-term, community-based clinical, and rehabilitative services)
- Hospitalization
- Residential treatment in a mental health facility

Rights While in Outpatient Treatment

- End treatment at any time
- Refuse to be examined, observed, or treated by any staff member so long as you are not endangering yourself
- Confidentiality (does not apply in circumstances where the provider believes you could be a harm to yourself/others)
- See your treatment record and share it with anyone you want, like your lawyer

Rights While in Outpatient Treatment

- Speak to an attorney
- A humane environment
- Reasonable access to the outdoors
- Receive visitors of your own choosing daily and in private at reasonable times,
- Send and receive sealed, unopened, uncensored mail
- Reasonable access to a phone.



Finding Treatment

- **Massachusetts Network of Care**
 - Information about resources in your community for children and adults with mental health and substance use needs
- **Speaking of Hope**
 - Mental health services that are oriented at youth and young adults
 - Impact Center- Gandara (41 Taylor St Springfield; 413-654-1566)
- **MassLegalHelp**
 - Information about paying for mental health services and what services may be available for free

Paying for Treatment

- **Most mental health services/treatment/therapy are provided through health insurance**
- **MassHealth**
 - State- sponsored health insurance program
 - Includes a youth-focused Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
 - To apply: <https://www.mass.gov/topics/masshealth>
- **Department of Mental Health**
 - Provides additional services for children and youth with the most serious mental health needs

Other Resources

- **MA Appleseed Homeless Youth Handbook**
 - <https://www.homelessyouth.org/en/us/massachusetts>
- **Help if you believe your rights were violated while in a treatment facility?**
 - <https://mhlac.org/legal-help/>
- **Mental Health Resources**
 - <https://www.mass.gov/find-a-cbhc>
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**
 - <https://www.samhsa.gov/>
- **Young Adult Access Centers**
 - <https://www.mass.gov/lists/recovery-learning-communities-and-young-adult-access-centers>
- **Massachusetts Behavioral Helpline**
 - https://www.masshelpline.com/?utm_source=google&utm_campaign=mbhp_phase2&utm_medium=english_bhhl&gad_source=1

