

CARE Act Program

What is the CARE Act Program?

The Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act Program creates a new pathway to deliver mental health and substance use services to individuals who are not engaged in treatment and are diagnosed with schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders.

Families, clinicians, first responders, and others may begin the process by filing a petition with the civil court to connect people (ages 18+) to court-ordered voluntary treatment if they meet criteria and would benefit from the program.



COUNTY of VENTURA

How does it work?

There are five basic steps to establishing a CARE Agreement or Plan:



1. A **referral** is initiated by filing a petition with the Superior Court. Petitions must include required documentation to establish clinical history.



2. The Superior Court makes an **initial determination** as to whether the petition appears to meet criteria for the CARE Act Program.



3. The Ventura County Behavioral Health Department (VCBH) will investigate and report back with a recommendation regarding the establishment of a CARE Act case. At the same time, VCBH will reach out to the petitioned individual and work to **engage** them with treatment and may avoid the need for a CARE Act case.



4. If the Superior Court determines that a case should be established, a **CARE Agreement or Plan will be developed** with VCBH, in partnership with the petitioned individual and their counsel. The CARE Agreement or Plan will be submitted to the Superior Court for review.



5. Once a CARE Agreement or Plan is accepted by the Superior Court, VCBH and its network of community-based providers will actively engage the individual for whom a CARE Agreement or Plan is being established to **connect to services**, including behavioral health treatment, stabilization medication, a housing plan, and other supports as needed.

What if my loved one does not qualify for the CARE Act Program?

For those who may not qualify for the CARE Act program and are seeking Behavioral Health services or referrals, call the Ventura County Behavioral Health Access and Crisis Line at **1-866-998-2243** for an assessment.

Questions about the CARE Act Program?

For more information, visit the Ventura County CARE Act Program webpage at ventura.org/care-act.

If you are interested in filing on behalf of yourself or a loved one and need assistance, contact the Courts at **(805) 289-8525**.

