

CARE Eligibility Criteria

Not every person with a severe mental health disorder may be eligible for court-ordered services under the CARE Act. There are specific criteria that a person must meet to be eligible to participate in CARE Court.

The person must be:

- 18 years or older
- Diagnosed with a Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorder or another Psychotic Disorder which is similar according to the DSM
- Currently experiencing a mental illness severe in degree and persistent in duration
- Currently experiencing a mental illness that may cause behavior that interferes substantially with their activities of daily life
- Currently experiencing a mental illness that may result in their inability to independently function without treatment and support for along or indefinite period of time
- Not currently stabilized in ongoing voluntary treatment
- Unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision and their disorder is deteriorating OR in need of services and support to prevent relapse or deterioration that would likely lead to disability or serious harm to themselves or others
- Likely to benefit from participating in the CARE Process AND CARE is the least restrictive alternative for their stability and recovery

CARE Court is here to help, but it may not be for everyone

The **CARE Act** focuses on a narrow community of vulnerable Californians with the most severe mental health disorders to provide supportive services before people from this community become involved with the criminal legal system, are committed to a state hospital, or end up in conservatorship.

Eligible diagnoses may include:

- Schizophrenia
- Schizoaffective Disorder
- Schizophreniform Disorder
- Brief Psychotic Disorder
- Delusional Disorder
- Schizotypal Personality Disorder
- Catatonia associated with another mental disorder
- Unspecified Catatonia
- Other specified or unspecified Schizophrenia Spectrum and other Psychotic Disorder

Unless a person also has a diagnosis from the list above, the following disorders **DO NOT** meet CARE criteria:

- Psychosis due to Traumatic Brain Injury, Autism, Dementia or another disorder
- Catatonia associated with another medical disorder
- Major Depression or Bipolar Disorder with psychotic features
- Substance use disorders



What is the CARE Act?

CARE

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE,
RECOVERY & EMPOWERMENT



What is CARE?

CARE is a new civil court created by the **C**ommunity **A**ssistance, **R**ecovery, and **E**mpowerment (**CARE**) Act.

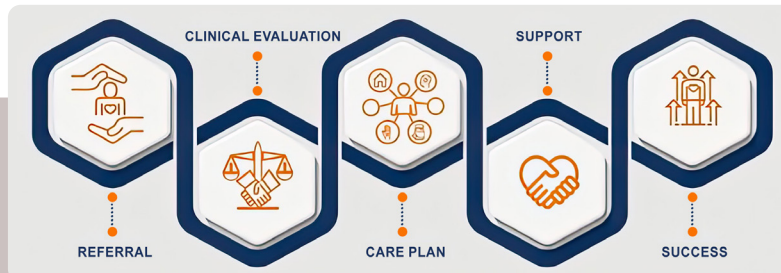
The CARE Act Program will serve people with certain untreated severe mental health disorders. The CARE Act allows certain adults (called "Petitioners") with qualifying relationships to another adult with a severe mental health disorder to file a Petition to refer that person (called a "Respondent" or "Participant") to participate in this new civil court model.

Where is CARE Court?

Although it is a mental health court, the CARE Act Program in Ventura County will not operate within the Probate Department. It will be a part of the Court's Collaborative Justice Programs, which value providing compassionate support and quality, culturally competent services for participants while respecting participants' rights, autonomy and dignity.

What happens in CARE Act program?

Participants in the CARE Act Program will be appointed a free attorney by the court. Along with their appointed attorney and a supporter they choose for themselves, participants in Ventura County's CARE Act Program will work collaboratively with Ventura County Behavioral Health to voluntarily create a CARE Agreement or Plan. Each plan is individualized for a participant's specific needs, preferences and goals to include treatment, housing or services that support the person's health and wellness and will help the person reach recovery and stability. The CARE Act Program involves a series of hearings to develop this treatment plan, review progress, and make necessary adjustments to the plan to better support participants. The judge in the CARE Act Program and all parties involved in the case will work together to support a participant's success.



How do I refer someone to the CARE Act Program?

A case starts when a CARE Petition is filed. The CARE Petition is a presentation of facts and evidence that support how the person being referred to CARE Court meets the eligibility requirements for participating in the CARE Process. The CARE Petition includes the Petition (CARE-100 form) and one of two attachments (either the CARE-101 form or other specific supporting evidence). The Petitioner can file the CARE Petition at:

Hall of Justice - Ventura
Civil Clerk's Office, Room 210
800 South Victoria Ave., Ventura, CA 93009

Juvenile/Probate Courthouse - Oxnard
Clerk's Office, Room 122
4353 East Vineyard Ave, Oxnard, CA 93036

Who can file a CARE Petition?

Petitions must be filed by someone who is familiar with and has a qualifying relationship to the person being referred to participate in CARE.

- Some qualifying relationships include:
- Someone who lives with the person being petitioned
- A spouse or registered domestic partner of the person being petitioned
- A parent, sibling, child or grandparent of the person being petitioned
- Someone who stands in the place of a parent for the person being petitioned
- A person petitioning for themselves

How can the Court Self-Help Center help?

We can assist self-represented litigants or their families with:

- Questions about the CARE Act Program and your rights under the CARE Act
- Forms completion and the CARE Petition process, if one of the qualifying relationships listed above describes you
- Referrals for mental health services, substance use services, and community resources other than CARE

For more resources with information about the CARE Act Program, visit the website at ventura.org/care-act.

