

# SC Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services



## Substance Use Program Standards

June 2024

The South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services (SCDPPPS) recognizes the importance of substance use programs in the role of substance use education, treatment, and prevention. The purposes of substance use programs are to:

- Increase education on substance use,
- Teach new skills that assist individuals with changing their behavior,
- Increase positive coping skills,
- Hold individuals accountable,
- Collect data to assist with evaluation of programs and recidivism, and
- Report compliance and noncompliance to the SCDPPPS, courts, and other referral sources.

Substance use program types are:

- Substance use peer support
  - Peer support services are those that provide peer support and advocacy for participants in recovery
  - Requires individuals to be licensed as peer support specialists or possess certification or degrees in a related field
- Substance use education
  - Substance use education is an eight-week minimum program that does not provide treatment or counseling
- Substance use counseling
  - Substance use counseling is needs-based and provides education and psychotherapy
  - Does not conduct drug testing, and therefore, not required to be compliant with South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) Regulation 61-93
- Outpatient services
  - Outpatient services consist of less than nine hours of service per week
  - Uses evidence-based recovery and motivational enhancement therapies and strategies
  - Outpatient services programs must be designated as such by DHEC
- Intensive outpatient services
  - Outpatient services consist of nine or more hours of service a week
  - Capable of meeting the complex needs of people with addiction and co-occurring conditions
  - Delivers treatment services during the day, before or after work or school, in the evening, or on weekends
  - Intensive outpatient services programs must be designated as such by DHEC
- Residential recovery/sober living home
  - Provides an environment that is free of substances and substance use with a programming component
    - Offers group or individual substance use counseling session
  - Monitors dwellings for substances and substance use
  - Abides by the SCDPPPS Housing Standards
    - Depending on the level of programming, the SCDPPPS Substance Use Program Standards
- Medically monitored high-intensity inpatient services

- Medically monitored high-intensity inpatient services consist of 24-hour nursing care with a physician's availability for significant problems
- Capable of meeting the needs of patients who require medication and have a recent history of withdrawal management at a less intensive level of care, marked by past and current inability to complete withdrawal management
- Delivers residential services that are described as co-occurring capable, co-occurring enhanced, and complexity capable services, which are staffed by designated addiction treatment, mental health, and general medical personnel who provide a range of services in a 24-hour treatment setting
- Inpatient facilities must be designated as such by DHEC

To ensure SCDPPPS staff are making referrals to quality substance use programs, SCDPPPS established standards for service providers offering substance use programs to individuals under SCDPPPS' supervision. The purpose of creating and ensuring adherence to these standards is to:

- Promote consistency of service statewide,
- Provide a process to evaluate services, and
- Establish a minimum level of responsibility, service, and accountability expected from providers.

SCDPPPS will review providers at least every two years to ensure compliance with the standards.

*Approved providers* have met SCDPPPS standards and are authorized to provide services to individuals under SCDPPPS supervision. To be authorized as an *approved* substance use program, a service provider is required to meet all of the following standards:

### **Program Structure**

- Uses a program structure that:
  - Is at least eight weeks in length for substance use education or is needs based in length for substance use counseling, outpatient, and intensive outpatient treatment
  - Has sessions that are at least 60 minutes in length
    - Does not include breaks, check-in, and discussions on fee payments as part of the 60-minute session
    - Does not devote more than 15 minutes per month to viewing videos
  - Holds groups
    - That are limited to not less than two and not more than 20 participants
      - Attempts to limit group size to 8-15 participants, the preferred group size
      - Web-based groups are limited to not less than two and not more than 12 participants
    - Attempts to use a staggered entry approach (SEA), the preferred approach
    - Does not use individual intervention unless:
      - An individual is unable to participate in a group setting because they are too disruptive
      - No qualified group program is available
      - An individual's safety would be compromised

- An individual has an intellectual or mental health disability that prevents successful group participation
  - Has an enforced written attendance policy that:
    - Allows no more than a 20% absence rate and absences within length-based programs must be made up
    - Terminates clients with excessive absences without documented extenuating circumstances
    - Notifies SCDPPPS staff of instances of extenuating circumstances
  - Focuses on group accountability
    - Encourages participants to disclose an accurate and detailed description of their substance use
    - Encourages participants to hold each other accountable for their substance use and associated actions
    - Acknowledges and challenges inappropriate comments and jokes
    - Incorporates discussion, activities, and exercises that encourage positive coping skills, education, and relapse prevention
- Uses an adult-based cognitive behavioral treatment curriculum that includes skill-building through behavioral practice and acknowledges substance use as a disorder
- Complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Abides by the regulations outlined by the DHEC
- Requires participants who attend web-based sessions to:
  - Have access to a reliable internet service
  - Possess a device (e.g., phone, computer) with a camera capability and that the camera remains directed toward themselves during the entire session
  - Participate in sessions in a quiet space that is absent of any children, household members, or other potential onlookers
  - Test their connectivity before the first scheduled web-based session

### **Program Components**

- Uses an intake process that is based on the American Society of Addiction Medicine's criteria and addresses mental health and return to use
- Has an established process to notify SCDPPPS why the person was refused admission into the program and what is an alternative
- Has a written fee payment policy that includes a process to address indigent individuals
- Has a written policy addressing failure to pay
- Has a written transfer policy
  - Any individual in good standing in a South Carolina program who seeks to transfer as a matter of preference to another South Carolina program may do so but the new provider and class credit must assess the participant is not guaranteed
    - Participants are considered to be in good standing if:
      - All homework assignments have been completed
      - Group fees are current
      - The client is compliant with the group attendance policy
      - The client is compliant with program rules and regulations
  - Participants who want to transfer to a different program must sign a release of information so that the two programs may contact each other

to establish the status of the participant in the new program and share any other relevant information about the participant

- Has a written client grievance policy and procedure
  - Before filing any complaint against a substance use program, the participant should attempt to resolve the complaint informally by talking with the class facilitator/counselor
  - If unable to agree with the facilitator/counselor, the participant shall contact the program director who shall attempt to resolve the complaint
  - If the complaint remains unresolved, a formal written complaint may be made to:

SCDPPPS

293 Greystone Boulevard

Columbia, SC 29210

or [Service.Providers@ppp.sc.gov](mailto:Service.Providers@ppp.sc.gov)

Attention: Program Planning and Development

### **Communication**

- Distributes written or electronic copies of the rules and guidelines upon completion of intake
- Has an established process to communicate program progress with SCDPPPS' referral source
  - Contacts the referring SCDPPPS staff within three business days of discovery of any new violation on behalf of the participant such as any new offense or violation of a drug test
  - Informs client and SCDPPPS if there is an anticipation of disruption or termination of the client's services
  - Includes a client's treatment plan and participation/progress in treatment monthly progress report (applies to substance use counseling, outpatient services, intensive outpatient services, and medically monitored high-intensity inpatient series)
  - Provides weekly attendance records
- Has an established process that allows SCDPPPS staff to attend groups
- Contacts the referring SCDPPPS staff before any client's unsuccessful discharge

### **Provider**

- Has general liability insurance
- Has space independent of the SCDPPPS county office where services are provided
- Stores files in a secure location and follows a retention schedule

### **Paid Staff and Volunteers**

- Conducts criminal background checks on program staff
- Remains free from conflicts of interest with the substance use program by not:
  - Receiving gifts, compensation, or other consideration of value from any participant or from any other party that might give the appearance of being designed to influence the assessment of a participant
  - Being employed by another entity in a manner that is deemed to be a conflict of interest by these substance use program standards
  - Being employed by another entity where disclosure by the substance use program participant of their action might create confidentiality breaches

- Recruiting potential clients who are or have been in the substance use for one's own private counseling or therapy practice
- Maintains compliance with education requirements
  - Requires group facilitators to meet the following minimum qualifications:
    - Holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a human services-related field or license/credential in addictions counseling and two years of work in a field where substance use is present OR
    - Holds a master's degree in counseling or related field.
  - Requires program supervisors to hold a master's degree in a related field and two years of work in a field where substance use is present
  - Has at least one staff member who is fully licensed or credentialed at an Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) or Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) level and all non-licensed supervisors/facilitators shall have direct access to the staff member's expertise when a need arises
- Maintains compliance with professional development requirements
  - Requires group facilitators to complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of continuing education annually that includes at least three different topics
  - Obtains continuing education credits in the following areas:
    - Ethics
    - Substance use assessment and intervention
    - Cultural competence
    - Group leadership skills
    - Suicide prevention, assessment, and screening
  - Obtains continuing education credits in the following approved methods:
    - Seminars and workshops
    - Webinars
    - Online training programs
    - Relevant academic coursework

At least every two years, SCDPPPS will review a provider to ensure compliance with standards. However, SCDPPPS will conduct a review before two years if a complaint is received or upon the request of the provider. If a provider is not compliant with all standards, a provider will not be approved to provide substance-use programming and services will be terminated immediately. A denied program can submit a new application for review six months after the denial date.

**For questions regarding the approval process, please contact  
Service.Providers@ppp.sc.gov.**

## SCDPPPS Substance Use Program Checklist

*A service provider is required to meet all standards to be approved to render services.*

Required Standards			
Category	Standard	Standard Met	
<b>Program Structure</b>	Meets minimum program duration requirements	Yes	No
	Meets minimum session length for program type	Yes	No
	Observes class size limitation	Yes	No
	Has a written attendance policy	Yes	No
	Focuses on group accountability during group sessions	Yes	No
	Uses an adult-based cognitive behavioral treatment	Yes	No
	Complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act	Yes	No
	Abides by the regulations outlined by the S.C. Department of Health and Environment Control	Yes	No
	Complies with web-based standards (if applicable)	Yes	No
	<b>Program Components</b>	Uses an intake process that is based on the American Society of Addiction Medicine's criteria and addresses mental health and return to use	Yes
Has a process to notify SCDPPPS why the person was rejected and what is an alternative		Yes	No
Has a written fee payment policy		Yes	No
Has a written policy addressing failure to pay		Yes	No
Has a written transfer policy		Yes	No
Has a written or electronic client grievance policy and procedure		Yes	No
<b>Communication</b>	Distributes written copies of the rules and guidelines	Yes	No
	Communicates a client's program progress with SCDPPPS staff	Yes	No
	Allows SCDPPPS staff to attend groups	Yes	No
	Contacts the referring SCDPPPS staff before any client's unsuccessful discharge	Yes	No
<b>Provider</b>	Has general liability insurance	Yes	No
	Has a space independent of the SCDPPPS county office where services are provided	Yes	No
	Holds files in a secure location	Yes	No
<b>Staff</b>	Conducts criminal background checks	Yes	No
	Complies with conflicts of interest standards	Yes	No
	Complies with education requirements	Yes	No
	Complies with professional development requirements	Yes	No

Comments


***Check applicable designation***

Approved: _____	Not Approved: _____
If Applicable, Corrective Action Plan: _____	Corrective Action Plan Completion Date: _____
SCDPPPS' Staff Signature: _____	Date: _____