



# Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) Youth Treatment Policy

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**Policy**

It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) to ensure San Bernardino County and contracted provider Substance Use Disorder (SUD) clinics provide Youth Treatment services in accordance with applicable State and Federal statutes and regulations.

**Purpose**

To provide guidance to DBH and contracted provider staff for adequately managing and referring youth (Ages 12-17) that present to SUD treatment services while under the influence of alcohol and/or illicit drugs.

**Definitions**

**Emergency Conditions** - A medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of severity (including severe pain) that a prudent layperson, who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine, could reasonably expect the absence of immediate medical attention to result in the following:

- Placing the health of the individual in serious jeopardy.
- Serious impairment to bodily functions
- Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part

**Qualified Staff** – a licensed or certified clinician trained in the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria.

**Relapse prevention** – A behavioral self-control program that teaches individuals with substance use disorder how to anticipate and cope with the potential for relapse. Relapse prevention can be used as a stand-alone substance use treatment program or as an aftercare (recovery services) program to sustain gains achieved during initial substance use treatment.

**Safety Care Plan** – An agency can provide a safety care plan for a youth who is displaying symptoms of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. The plan can include measures for crisis intervention, relapse prevention, arrangements for transportation and notification of emergency contacts.

**Urgent Conditions** - A condition perceived by a client as serious, but not life threatening. A condition that disrupts normal activities of daily living and requires assessment by a health care provider and if necessary, treatment within twenty-four to seventy-two (24-72) hours.

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# Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) Youth Treatment Policy, Continued

**Guidelines**

When a youth presents at any DBH or contracted provider Substance Use Disorder (SUD) clinic displaying symptoms of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the agency shall determine if the youth is in immediate physical danger due to the alcohol and/or drugs used:

If ...	Then ...
the Youth arrives at treatment services under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs	Treatment staff which may include alcohol and/or drug (AOD) counselor, nursing or medical staff shall assess to ensure the youth is not in immediate physical danger.
the Youth appears to be in physical danger	follow appropriate Urgent and Emergency Conditions Procedure (MDS2031).
the Youth is not in physical danger	qualified staff shall assess the youth using the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) assessment tool to determine appropriate clinical action.
there is not a qualified staff member on duty to conduct the Youth Assessment	the agency's supervisory staff shall be notified immediately and the agency shall contact the Screening Assessment and Referral Center (SARC) at (800) 968-2636 to facilitate a formal assessment, via phone if necessary.
it is determined after assessing the youth that they require a higher level of care	the agency shall contact the Screening Assessment and Referral Center (SARC) at (800) 968-2636. SARC shall facilitate a referral to the appropriate level of care and the optimal facility to meet the youth's needs.
after assessing it is determined that the youth does not require a higher level of care	the youth will remain in current level of care. The youth's assigned counselor can facilitate an individual counseling session with the youth either immediately or set a future session to address the youth's relapse, as clinically appropriate.

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# Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) Youth Treatment Policy, Continued

Guidelines,  
continued

If ...	Then ...
the youth refuses the assessment	the agency's supervisory staff shall be notified immediately and the Youth shall be given the SARC phone number (800) 968-2636 and community resources for future use, if desired.
it is determined the youth needs a safety care plan	<p>the agency will address needs for the Youth. The safety care plan can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis intervention</li> <li>• Relapse prevention strategies</li> <li>• Alternative transportation</li> <li>• Notification of emergency contacts (while following confidentiality requirements)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note:</i> if the youth appears to be intoxicated and plans to drive, staff should make all reasonable efforts to prevent driving while intoxicated and facilitate alternative transportation. If the youth insists on driving while intoxicated, law enforcement should be contacted.</p>

Related Policy  
or Procedure

[DBH Standard Practice Manual and Departmental Forms:](#)

- Urgent and Emergency Conditions Procedure (MDS2031)

Reference(s)

- State of California Youth Treatment Guidelines (2002), Section VIII, Subsection D, Chapter 2
- California Department of Health Care services Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Best Practices Guide (2020)
- Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Substance Use Disorders