

**BAY-ARENAC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AUTHORITY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

<b>Chapter: 04</b>	<b>Care and Treatment</b>		
<b>Section: 25</b>	<b>ABA Services for Children with Autism</b>		
<b>Topic: 01</b>	<b>Autism Benefit</b>		
<b>Page: 1 of 10</b>	<b>Supersedes Date:</b> <b>Pol:</b> <b>Proc: 6-26-18, 4-16-15</b>	<b>Approval Date:</b> <b>Pol: 4/16/15</b> <b>Proc: 6-12-2023</b>	<hr/> <i>Board Chairperson Signature</i> <hr/> <i>Chief Executive Officer Signature</i>
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**Policy**

It is the policy of Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health Authority (BABHA) to provide services to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in compliance with the requirements set forth in the 1915i State Plan Home and Community Based Services for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and the Michigan Medicaid Manual.

**Purpose**

This policy and procedure is established to ensure that BABHA staff and its Provider Network comply with the requirements of the 1915i State Plan Home and Community Based Services for Applied Behavioral Analysis as set forth in the Michigan Medicaid Provider Manual and the Michigan Department of Community Health Medicaid Specialty Supports Services Contract.

**Education Applies to:**

- All BABHA Staff
- Selected BABHA Staff, as follows: All Clinical Staff and Clinical Supervisors
- All Contracted Providers:  Policy Only  Policy and Procedure
- Selected Contracted Providers, as follows: Centria Healthcare, Bay Human Services Inc., Saginaw Psychological Services
  - Policy Only  Policy and Procedure
- Other:

**Procedure:**

- A. Eligibility: ABA services are for youth aged birth through 21, who have Medicaid or MI Child insurance and who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) along with the developmental capacity to clinically participate in the interventions made available. Medical necessity and recommendation for ABA services is determined by a physician or other qualified licensed practitioner working within their scope of practice. Medical Necessity to be eligible for ABA includes:

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- a. Currently demonstrates substantial functional impairment in Social Communication & Social Interaction. Lack of-
    - i. Social-emotional Reciprocity,
    - ii. Nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction,
    - iii. Developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships.
  - b. Currently demonstrates substantial restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by the following: Two of the following four areas must be present:
    - i. Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects, or speech,
    - ii. Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal nonverbal behavior,
    - iii. Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
    - iv. Hyper- or hypo activity to sensory input or unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment
  - c. Youth is medically able to benefit from ABA.
- A. BABHA shall ensure that diagnosis and assessment related to the youth’s functional abilities in the areas of social interaction and patterns of behavior are used for evaluation and re-evaluation of the youth/family. The following evaluative instruments and timelines ~~will~~ may be used.
- ~~1.~~ Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2)-an instrument for diagnosing and assessing autism. Completed at the initial evaluation process to determine eligibility and annually thereafter.
  - 1. ~~2.~~ Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R)-a developmental family interview/review. Completed during the initial evaluation process.
  - 2. ~~1.~~ Developmental Disabilities Children’s Global Assessment Scale (DD-CGAS)- a clinician rated scale that is used at the initial evaluation process and annually thereafter to rate the severity of symptoms compared to typically developing same age peers.
  - 3.

**Commented [AJ1]:** ADOS and ADI-R are no longer required but an equivalent tool can be used.

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3.4. The Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP), Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS) or the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (ABLLS-R) is completed every six months.

**B. ABA Individual Plan of Service:**

1. Pre-planning will be conducted with the family prior to the Person-Centered Planning meeting. During the process, the family will be provided with information on the array of services available, their right to choose among ABA providers, as well as information on how to report abuse and neglect/recipient rights.
2. The IPOS will be developed using a Person/Family Centered process. The formal review of the IPOS shall occur no less than annually with the youth and family.
3. The assigned individual overseeing the development of the IPOS does not provide ABA services.
4. As part of the IPOS, there is a comprehensive individualized ABA behavioral plan of care that includes specific targeted behaviors for improvement, along with measurable, achievable, and realistic goals for improvement.
5. The IPOS must address risk factors identified for the youth and family, specify how the risk factor may be minimized and describe the backup plan for each identified risk.

**C. ABA Interventions:** There are two levels of ABA services: Functional Behavioral Intervention (FBI) and Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention (CBI). Determination of level of Service intensity will be determined by the treatment team and will use information from assessments as well as specific needs of the youth and family. The IPOS will be reviewed every ~~three~~ six months for youth receiving any ABA interventions.

**D. ABA service provider roles and responsibilities shall include training:**

1. Assessment of individuals with physical and mental needs.
2. The Individual Plan of Service (IPOS).
3. ABA behavioral treatment plans.
4. By provider type, i.e. Behavior Technician, Licensed Psychologist (LP) and Limited Licensed Psychologist (LLP), Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA), Qualified Behavioral Health Professional (QBHP)

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E. BABHA shall ensure that ABA service providers meet the following expectations:

1. All ABA providers staff are fully credentialed to be working with the youth and family based on the MDHHS provider qualifications documents. See attachments.
2. All staff are over the age of 18 and receive a criminal background check before their date of hire and biannual thereafter.
3. Families are offered choice of service providers and settings for ABA services.
4. Pre-planning activities include communication with families on their choice of ABA service providers, and how to report abuse and neglect, on an annual basis.
5. The individual plan of service (IPOS) shall be updated at least annually and document choice of services and providers and will include the amount, scope, duration, and frequency of services.
6. Every effort shall be made to complete an exit Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-2 (ADOS-2).

F. BABHA shall ensure credentialing of roles and responsibilities of qualified providers:

1. Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA)-Develops and implements Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention (CBI) and Focused Behavioral Intervention (FBI) treatment program, and reviews and monitors data and makes programmatic changes based on the data. Completes behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention, observation and direction of the Behavior Technician and provides family guidance.
  - i. License/Certification: Current certification as a BCBA through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). The BACB is the national entity accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).
  - ii. Education and Training: Minimum of a master's degree from an accredited institution conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a BACB approved course sequence.
2. Board Certified Assistant Board Analyst (BCaBA)-Provides Behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention, family guidance and behavioral observation and direction. Works under supervision of the BCBA for technical assistance and implementation of the treatment plan and data collection oversight.

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- i. License/Certification: Current certification as a BCaBA through the BACB.
  - ii. Education and Training: Minimum of a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a BACB approved course sequence.
  
3. Behavior Technician- Provides direct behavioral interventions and practices under direct supervision of the BCBA to implement treatment plan and data collection.
  - i. License/Certification: A license or certification is not required.
  - ii. Education and Training: Will receive BACB Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training conducted by a professional experienced in ABA services (BCBA, BCaBA, LP, LLP, and/or QBHP),
  - iii. Works under the supervision of the BCBA or other professional (BCaBA, LP, LLP or QBHP) overseeing the behavioral plan of care, with minimally one hour of clinical observation and direction for every 10 hours of direct treatment.
  - iv. Must be at least 18 years of age; able to practice universal precautions to protect against the transmission of communicable disease; able to communicate expressively and receptively in order to follow individual plan requirements and beneficiary-specific emergency procedures and to report on activities performed; and be in good standing with the law (i.e., not a fugitive from justice, a convicted felon who is either under jurisdiction or whose felony relates to the kind of duty to be performed, or an illegal alien). Must be able to perform and be certified in basic first aid procedures and is trained in the IPOS/behavioral plan of care utilizing the person-centered planning process.
  
4. Licensed Psychologist (LP) - Within scope of practice, provides diagnosis of youth and treatment including testing, evaluations, therapy, behavioral outcome measurement tools, and intensity of services.
  - i. Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, ~~2020~~2025.
  - ii. License/Certification: LP means a doctoral level psychologist licensed by the State of Michigan. Must complete all coursework and experience requirements.
  - iii. Education and Training: Minimum doctorate degree from an accredited institution. Works within their scope of practice and has extensive

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knowledge and training in behavior analysis. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas:

1. Ethical considerations.
  2. Definitions and characteristics; and principles, processes and concepts of behavior.
  3. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies.
  4. Experimental evaluation of interventions.
  5. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data.
  6. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports.
- iv. A minimum of one-year experience in treating children with ASD based on the principles of behavior analysis. Works in consultation with the BCBA to discuss the caseload, progress, and treatment of the child with ASD.
5. Limited Licensed Psychologist (LLP) - Within scope of practice, provides diagnosis of youth and treatment including testing, evaluations, therapy, behavioral outcome measurement tools, and intensity of services.
- i. Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, ~~2020~~2025.
  - ii. License/Certification: LLP means a master's level psychologist licensed by the State of Michigan. Must complete all coursework and experience requirements.
  - iii. Education and Training: Minimum doctorate degree from an accredited institution. Works within their scope of practice and has extensive knowledge and training in behavior analysis. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas:
    1. Ethical considerations.
    2. Definitions and characteristics; and principles, processes and concepts of behavior.
    3. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies.
    4. Experimental evaluation of interventions.

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5. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data.
6. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports.
- iv. A minimum of one-year experience in treating children with ASD based on the principles of behavior analysis. Works in consultation with the BCBA to discuss the caseload, progress, and treatment of the child with ASD.
6. Qualified Behavioral Health Professional (QBHP)-works under supervision of the BCBA, within scope of practice, provides behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention, and behavioral observation and direction.
  - i. Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, ~~2020~~2025.
  - ii. License/Certification: A license or certification is not required but is optional.
  - iii. Education and Training: QBHP must meet one of the following state requirements:
    1. Must be a physician or licensed practitioner with specialized training and one year of experience in the examination, evaluation, and treatment of children with ASD.
    2. Minimum of a master's degree in a mental health-related field or BACB approved degree category from an accredited institution with specialized training and one year of experience in the examination, evaluation, and treatment of children with ASD. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas:
      - iv. Ethical considerations.
      - v. Definitions and characteristics; and principles, processes and concepts of behavior.
      - vi. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies.
      - vii. Experimental evaluation of interventions.
      - viii. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data.
      - ix. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports.

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G. BABHA will ensure sufficient separation of provider roles and responsibilities:

1. The independent assessor is a part of a team of individuals, and will not make determinations about the amount, scope, and duration of ABA services.
2. Utilization management staff shall be separate from staff that perform evaluation, assessment, planning, and delivery of ABA services.
3. The independent assessment may be used in the development of the IPOS.
4. The case manager, supports coordinator, independent facilitator, or other qualified staff that assist in IPOS development shall not be a provider of any other service for that individual.

H. Discharge Criteria from ABA services is determined by a qualified professional and the treatment team when the following criteria are met:

1. The child has met all of the treatment goals and less intensive services are medically necessary.
2. The youth is no longer eligible for Medicaid or no longer resides in the State of Michigan
3. No measurable improvement or progress towards goals have been demonstrated as evidence by lack of generalization across different settings or symptoms are becoming persistently worse with treatment.
4. The youth no longer meet eligibility criteria based on the annual re-evaluation completed by a qualified licensed provider.
5. The youth and family are not able to participate in ABA services and they do not follow through with treatment recommendations to the degree that treatment compromises the potential effectiveness and outcome of ABA services.

I. BABHA shall maintain evidence that the youth meet needs-based criteria for benefit eligibility as evidenced by the above evaluation and outcomes instruments.

J. A utilization management function will be in place that that ensures sufficient separation of functions and addresses conflict of interest:

1. Service authorization.
2. Clinical service provision.
3. Oversight and approval of ABA services.



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4. Number and percent of administrative hearings related to utilization management function issues (amount, scope, duration of service).
5. ABA services during the quarter were within the suggested range for the intensity of service.

**Definitions:**

ABA – Applied Behavioral Analysis  
 ABI – Applied Behavioral Intervention  
 ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder  
 BACB- Behavior Analyst Certification Board  
 BCBA – Board Certified Behavioral Analyst  
 BCaBA – Board Certified Assistant Behavioral Analyst  
 EIBI – Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention  
 IPOS – Individual Plan of Service  
 iSPA – 1915i State Plan Amendment (to the Home and Community Based Services standards)  
 MDCH – Michigan Department of Community Health  
 MSHN – Mid State Health Network  
 NCCA- National Commission for Certifying Agencies

**Attachments:**

ABA Services Flow Chart  
 Autism Benefit Enrollment Form  
 BCaBA Provider Qualifications  
 BT Provider Qualifications  
 QBHP Provider Qualifications

**Related Forms:**

ADOS-2, ADI-R, Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement (VB MAPP), Individual Plan of Service (IPOS)- (APP available online)

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**Related Materials:**

N/A

**References/Legal Authority:**

Michigan Department of Community Health  
Michigan Medicaid Manual  
1915i State Plan Home and Community Based Services for ABA  
Michigan Specialty Supports and Services Contract

SUBMISSION FORM				
AUTHOR/ REVIEWER	APPROVING BODY/COMMITTEE/ SUPERVISOR	APPROVAL /REVIEW DATE	ACTION (Deletion, New, No Changes, Replacement or Revision)	REASON FOR ACTION - If replacement list policy to be replaced
E. Albrecht	SLT	04/03/15	New	
A.Johnson	N. Kulhanek	6/26/18	Revision	Changes made to reflect current process.
A.Johnson	N. Kulhanek	6/12/23	Revision	Changes made to reflect current process.