

**Sarasota County
Transportation Plan**

In accordance with

Florida Mental Health Act
(Baker Act)

Florida Statute 394

Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Other Drug
Services Act

Florida Statute 397

2023-2026

Submitted For Approval to:

Sarasota County Board of County
Commissioners

and

Central Florida Behavioral Health Network

Sarasota County Baker Act and Marchman Act Transportation Plan

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Sarasota County Baker Act and Marchman Act Transportation Plan

Introduction

In accordance with the changes enacted by 2016 Senate Bill 12 to Florida Statute Chapter 394 (Florida Mental Health Act, commonly referred to as the “Baker Act”) and Florida Statute Chapter 397, (commonly referred to as the Marchman Act), the Sarasota County Acute Care System Task Force in collaboration with Central Florida Behavioral Health Network developed the Sarasota County Transportation Plan to provide a coordinated system for acute care behavioral health services in Sarasota County. This task force supports a comprehensive, efficient and successful system of acute care per legislative intent. This Plan, as approved by the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners, is provided to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Suncoast Region Circuit 12.

Background

This transportation plan describes how Sarasota County shall support and facilitate access to the Designated Receiving System. This includes circumstances to guide selection of the most appropriate transportation method (i.e. law enforcement, funded transportation providers, or emergency medical services); how transportation between participating facilities is handled; and how respect for individual choice of service providers is prioritized.

Prior to initial approval of the Sarasota County Transportation Exception Plan in 2010, Florida Statute required law enforcement to provide transportation of all individuals to the nearest receiving facility for involuntary examination.

Under the Federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) and Florida Statute 395, licensed hospitals are required to provide full medical screening and stabilization within the capability and capacity of the hospital, regardless of whether the facility has licensed psychiatric beds.

Specific Provisions and Objectives

The following objectives have been met by establishing a Transportation Plan in Sarasota County:

- Implements a coordinated system of transportation and access to emergency psychiatric examination services for children and adults under a Baker Act order and substance abuse services for adults under a Marchman Act order in Sarasota County.
- In accordance with F.S. 394.462, assists law enforcement or any Sarasota County-funded transportation with efficient transport of individuals in need of services to the most appropriate facility but limits police involvement with resources such as Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MRTs).

- Supports diversion from inpatient acute care through outpatient crisis intervention and mobile crisis stabilization, referral, linkage, and recovery support.
- Describes methods of transportation to a facility within the designated receiving system for individuals subject to involuntary examination under F.S. 394.463 or involuntary admission under F.S. 397.6772, F.S. 397.679, F.S. 397.6798, or F.S. 397.6811
- Provides specialized services to children and the elderly under a Baker Act.
- Provides a dignified, humane, and streamlined method of transportation to and among acute care facilities, and for individuals in need of acute psychiatric care from nursing homes, assisted living facilities or other residential settings. Community education is provided when necessary.
- Enhances the ability to fully utilize the capacity of acute care services in the county and reduces the unnecessary delay of transfers between facilities.
- Diverts admissions to hospital emergency rooms and maintains updated policies on medical clearance.
- Provides an appropriate alternative to jail and the criminal justice system for persons with behavioral health (mental health and substance use) disorders.
- Ensures continuity and coordination of care among providers, including Care Coordination.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the Sarasota County Transportation Plan requires that law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) transport individuals in need of mental health services under the Baker Act and substance abuse issues under the Marchman Act to the receiving facility directed by this Transportation Plan. This plan does not address patients who are seeking mental health or substance abuse services on a voluntary basis or secondary transports following initial arrival at a receiving facility for an assessment.

The **Transportation Plan** focuses on the following populations for **Baker Acts**:

Children and Adolescents Who Are Age 17 and Under

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of children and adolescents under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County, Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) transport individuals aged 17 and younger to **Bayside Center for Behavioral Health** at 1650 South Osprey Avenue in Sarasota—the designated children’s receiving facility. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County, Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) calls the facility at **941-917-7760**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

Adults Who Are Age 18-64

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of adults that are age 18-64 under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider transport individuals that are age 18-64 to **Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery (formerly First Step of Sarasota)** at 1451 10th Street in Sarasota. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County, or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) calls the facility at **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

Individuals Who Are Age 65 and Older

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of individuals who are age 65 and older under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County, or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) transport individuals 65 and older to Sarasota Memorial Hospital (SMH) Emergency Department for medical clearance. Once cleared, the individuals will be transferred to SMH’s **Bayside Center for Behavioral Health** at 1650 South Osprey Avenue in Sarasota. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) calls the Emergency Department Charge Nurse at **941-917-4066**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that should include, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

This Plan focuses on the following population for **Marchman Acts**:

Individuals who are age 18 and older

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of individuals who are 18 and older under a Marchman Act. Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) transport individuals under a Marchman Act to the Addictions Receiving Facility (ARF) at **Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery** at 1726 18th Street in Sarasota. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) calls the facility at **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that should include, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

Children and Adolescents Who Are Age 17 and Under

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of children and adolescents under a Marchman Act. Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County and Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) may transport individuals aged 17 and younger to one of two available Juvenile Addictions Receiving Facilities (JARF) in the region. The JARF is designed to provide quality, comprehensive care and assessment for youths, ages 13 through 17, who are in need of assessment and stabilization due to substance abuse impairment. Clients may come voluntarily or involuntarily via family, guardian, physician, police, or court order.

- **Agency for Community Treatment Services (ACTS) JARF**
8620 N. Dixon Ave., Tampa, FL 33604
813-993-4446
- **Personal Enrichment Mental Health Services (PEMHS)**
11254 58th St. N., Pinellas Park, FL 33782
727-545-6477 Ext. 390

Individual and Family Choice

Whenever possible, when an individual presents to a Sarasota County receiving facility, law enforcement, mobile crisis response team, or an emergency care center and a specific facility within the county is preferred by the individual or family, the person may be transported directly to that facility under this Plan. The individual's preferred health insurance provider also guides this decision. If deemed to be in need of inpatient services, the individual is transported to the Sarasota County receiving facility where his/her insurance benefits cover the cost of inpatient care, and if requested by the individual or their family, when at all possible. Clinical and public safety circumstances are always assessed in the process.

Transportation

Law enforcement agencies in Sarasota County or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) remain the responsible parties to transport those individuals in need of mental health services under the Baker Act or substance abuse services under the Marchman Act to the appropriate receiving facilities within Sarasota County.

The appropriate facility within the designated receiving system must provide persons brought by law enforcement officers or Sarasota County funded transportation provider(s) with a basic screening or triage sufficient to refer the person to the appropriate services.

When an individual has a medical issue that needs to be addressed or an intoxication level that is medically compromising, law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) or Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) transports the individual being detained under a Baker Act order to the nearest emergency care center for medical stabilization. Emergency Medical Services should only be utilized to bring individuals to the emergency care center when the physical health conditions are beyond the safe management capability of law enforcement the Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s). When the individual has been stabilized, the emergency care center may arrange for transportation to a more appropriate destination. The Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) shall transport any individual in need of medical care during transit to an emergency care center.

When any law enforcement officer has arrested a person for a felony and it appears that the person meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination or placement under this part, such person shall first be processed in the same manner as any other criminal suspect. The law enforcement agency shall thereafter immediately notify the nearest public receiving facility, which shall be responsible for promptly arranging for the examination and treatment of the person. A receiving facility is not required to admit a person charged with a crime for which the facility determines and documents that it is unable to provide adequate security but shall provide mental health examination and treatment to the person where he or she is held.

When any law enforcement officer has custody of a person based on either noncriminal or minor criminal behavior that meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination under this part, the law enforcement officer shall transport the person to the nearest receiving facility for examination.

Once an individual is in a facility, there are occasions when that individual needs to be discharged from one facility and transferred to another facility. Transportation between facilities is coordinated by the transferring facility.

Upon completion of treatment for individuals who are designated “on hold” as a result of being booked prior to treatment, the receiving facility is required to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency to arrange for transportation to the Sarasota County Jail.

If the individual being detained by a Marchman Act order is combative or uncooperative, law enforcement transports the individual directly to the Sarasota County Jail.

Medical Stabilization

The Acute Care System Task Force maintains and revises the medical exclusionary guidelines that are used to assist in determining the most appropriate inpatient setting for patients requiring hospitalization. These guidelines are used among all the community partners to ensure that individuals who are assessed to need medical care are treated in a hospital or medical facility. Any changes to each organization's exclusion guidelines will be communicated timely with members of the Acute Care System Task Force. Once the individual is medically stabilized, the medical facility determines the most appropriate Receiving Facility to meet the individual's needs. Transportation from one facility to another is coordinated by the transferring facility. The Sarasota County-funded transportation provider(s) provide this service. Law enforcement is not responsible to transport from one facility to another.

Acute Care System Resources

The following mental health and substance abuse services are available in Sarasota County's acute care system:

Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery:

- **Adult Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU):** The Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery Adult CSU and Adult CSU II are located at 1451 10th Street in the city of Sarasota. The Adult CSU and Adult CSU II are public Baker Act Receiving Facilities. The secure, inpatient services at Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery focus on the immediate needs of adults who are age 18-64 and who meet Baker Act criteria. Exceptions to this age range are permissible, if insurance is available and can be accepted by the facility, if in the best interest of the individual. This service is available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. The telephone number for the Adult CSU and Adult CSU II is **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**.

Adult Addictions Receiving Facility

- The Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery Adult Addictions Receiving Facility is a secure adult unit for individuals detained on a Marchman Act order. It is operated by Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and

Recovery and is located at 1726 18th Street in Sarasota. This service is available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. The ARF provides medically supervised detoxification. The telephone number for the Adult Addictions Receiving Facility is **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**.

Emergency Access Center Services

- The Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery Access Center is located at 1451 10th Street in the city of Sarasota. At this location, individuals in need of mental health and substance abuse services can receive services, five days per week to determine the most appropriate placement within the acute care system. The Access Center hours of operation are: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The telephone number for the Access Center is **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**.

Journeys Program

- The Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery Journeys program provides services to Sarasota County adolescents who either live in the community and experience severe substance abuse problems or have completed a residential substance abuse treatment program and will be participating in community re-entry. Outreach, In-home and On-site (IHOS) Therapeutic Services and Recovery Support Services are provided in home, school, and in community settings. Journeys is available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week by calling **941-732-6837 (941-RECOVER)**.

Bayside Center for Behavioral Health at Sarasota Memorial Hospital:

- The Bayside Center for Behavioral Health is a designated unit that treats children and adults who are experiencing signs and symptoms of mental illness that meet Baker Act criteria. This service is available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. This unit is located at 1650 South Osprey Avenue in the city of Sarasota and serves the Baker Act population age 65 and older in Sarasota County as well as adults meeting Baker Act criteria who choose to be transported to the Bayside Center and all children age 17 and under. Exceptions to this age range are permissible, if insurance is available and can be accepted by the facility, if in the best interest of the individual. The main telephone number for the Bayside Center for Behavioral Health is **941-917-7760**.

Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery Mobile Response Team:

- The Lightshare Mobile Response Team (MRT) provides free crisis stabilization and case management services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to individuals who are at risk for serious emotional disturbance in Sarasota County. MRT's are comprised of clinicians who have formal training to effectively resolve mental health crises and potentially reduce use of the Baker or Marchman Acts for non-life-threatening emergencies. MRT can provide short term counseling services, match the individual/family to community resources based upon the assessed needs of the individual/family, and provide additional short-term services to the individual/family, including case management services such as linkage to financial, educational, medical, or housing assistance. Services are available at your home, school and other community-based locations or at the Access Center location (1451 10th Street) via phone, telehealth. Interventions are provided by a multi-disciplinary team of mental health and substance use professionals who work with individuals and families create a comprehensive plan for stabilization and sustained recovery. The MRT is available to all residents of all ages in Sarasota County. MRT is available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week by calling **941-732-6837**.

No Wrong Door

Sarasota operates a "No Wrong Door" model; a model for the delivery of acute care services to persons who have mental health or substance use disorders, or both, which optimizes access to care, regardless of the entry point to the behavioral healthcare system.

Care Coordination

Care Coordination means the implementation of deliberate and planned organizational relationships and service procedures that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the behavioral health system by engaging in purposeful interactions with individuals who are not yet effectively connected with services to ensure service linkage. Examples of care coordination activities include development of referral agreements, shared protocols, and information exchange procedures. The purpose of care coordination is to enhance the delivery of treatment services and recovery supports and to improve outcomes among priority populations.

988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline

211Tampa Bay Cares is the 988 primary provider for Pinellas County. 988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now known as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) and is now active across the United States.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

The previous Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will always remain available to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis.

The Lifeline's network of over 200 crisis centers has been in operation since 2005 and has been proven to be effective. It's the counselors at these local crisis centers who answer the contacts the Lifeline receives every day. Numerous studies have shown that callers feel less suicidal, less depressed, less overwhelmed and more hopeful after speaking with a Lifeline counselor.

Acute Care System Task Force and Baker Act/Marchman Act Advisory Committee

The Acute Care System Task Force committee that includes representatives from all law enforcement agencies, Sarasota County-funded transportation providers, receiving facilities, hospitals, funders, consumers, families and government officials meets no less than quarterly to monitor and analyze data that will determine if individuals are moving through the acute care receiving system in a timely and respectful manner and it evaluates the Transportation Plan to determine whether there has been an improvement in the acute care system since the implementation.

The Acute Care System Task Force provides an opportunity for individuals served, their family members, or other representatives designated by the individual to bring grievances to the committee for resolution.

The benefit of a coordinated system of care is less fragmentation of services and a more efficient and cost-effective methods of providing care. The provisions outlined in this plan have decreased unnecessary transports of individuals by law enforcement or Sarasota County-funded transportation providers to an incorrect facility, reduces the number of transfers between facilities, and reduces the need for area hospitals to treat those individuals who need to be in a more appropriate setting.

This 2020 Transportation Plan was developed and endorsed by the community partners listed below as part of the Acute Care System Task Force:

- The Academy at Glengary
- Bayside Center for Behavioral Health
- CenterPlace Health (Federally Qualified Health Center)
- Centerstone of Florida
- Central Florida Behavioral Health Network
- Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare
- Community Assisted and Supported Living (CASL)

- Department of Children and Families
- Doctors Hospital
- Englewood Community Hospital
- Lightshare Behavioral Wellness and Recovery
- Jewish Family and Children's Services
- Longboat Key Police Department
- Naphcare
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Sarasota and Manatee Counties
- North Port Police Department
- Operation PAR
- Sarasota County Funded Transportation Provider
- Sarasota County Health and Human Services
- Sarasota County School Board
- Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
- Sarasota Memorial Hospital System
- Sarasota Memorial Hospital Public Safety
- Sarasota Police Department
- The Florida Center for Early Childhood
- 12th Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office
- 12th Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office
- Venice Police Department

This plan supersedes the Transportation Plan dated July 2020.