



**STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 4.5.61	Subject: MENTAL HEALTH AND SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS CLASSIFICATION
Chapter 4: FACILITY/PROGRAM SERVICES	Page 1 of 5 and 1 attachment
Section 5: Clinical Services	Effective Date: 11/4/21
Department Director Signature: /s/ Brian Gootkin	Revised:
Medical Director Signature: /s/ Dr. Paul Rees	
Clinical Services Division Administrator Signature: /s/ Connie Winner	

I. POLICY

To establish standard protocol for the determination of the mental health status and mental health service needs of offenders.

II. APPLICABILITY

All secure care facilities Department-owned and contracted, as specific in the contract.

III. DEFINITIONS

Mental Disorder - Means exhibiting impaired emotional, cognitive, or behavioral functioning that interferes seriously with an individual's ability to function adequately except with supportive treatment or services. The individual also must:

currently have or have had within the past year a diagnosed DSM mental disorder; and currently exhibit significant signs and symptoms of a mental disorder.

Severe Mental Illness (SMI) – Is a substantial organic or psychiatric disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation or memory which significantly impairs judgment, behavior or ability to cope with the basic demands of life. Intellectual disability, epilepsy, other developmental disability, alcohol or substance abuse, or brief periods of intoxication, or criminal behavior do not, alone, constitute severe mental illness. See MCA 53-21-102 (Mental disorder).

IV. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

A. General Requirements

1. At MDOC facilities, the Mental Health Level Classification System (MHL) provides a standard approach through which the mental health status and service needs of individual offenders may be examined.
2. The Mental Health Level Classification System (MHL) provides information regarding offenders who have special treatment needs or who may present special management concerns.

3. The MHL Classification System provides information that can be used for program planning and administrative purposes, as well as in the allocation of current and future resources.
4. When an MHL Classification is assigned, it should reflect the offender's current mental status and service needs and not be based solely on a history of treatment.

B. Criteria

1. Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP) will determine MHL and SMI during intake and will assess regularly, but no later than annually as determined by NCCHC standards. The QMHP will utilize a Severe Mental Illness Determination form for the initial evaluation.
2. The Mental Health Level Classification system criteria are as follows:
 - a. MH-4 Severe Impairment:
 - 1) The offender has a current mental health diagnosis and is currently experiencing acute symptom severity and needs.
 - 2) The offender could be Severely Mentally Ill (SMI)
 - 3) The offender is either a danger to self or to others or is substantially unable to care for self.
 - 4) The offender may be prescribed psychotropic medications.
 - 5) The offenders must have a documented current significant DSM diagnosis that led the individual to experience significant functional impairment or has consistently demonstrated dysfunctional or disruptive social interactions including withdrawal, bizarre or disruptive behavior etc. as a consequence of any mental health diagnosis set out in the DSM.
 - 6) Acute, intensive or stabilization mental health treatment is recommended.
 - b. MH-3 Moderate Impairment:
 - 1) The offender has a current DSM mental health diagnosis and is currently experiencing significant symptom severity and needs or is currently properly managing acute symptoms.
 - 2) The offender has an on-going mental disorder and may be frequently unstable. The offender typically cannot function in the general population for extended periods of time and requires on-going or periodic mental health monitoring or mental health monitoring and treatment.
 - 3) The offender may be prescribed psychotropic medications.
 - 4) This category typically includes:
 - i. offenders previously assigned as MH-4 who have been stabilized; or
 - ii. offenders receiving stabilization treatment
 - c. MH-2 Mild Impairment:

- 1) The offender has a current DSM mental health diagnosis and is currently experiencing moderate impairment and needs or is currently properly managing significant symptoms.
 - 2) The individual can typically function satisfactorily in a general population setting for extended periods. Monitoring by a therapist may be necessary.
 - 3) The offender may be prescribed psychotropic medication.
- d. MH – 1 Minimum Impairment:
- 1) The offender may have a history of mental health issues or current mental health diagnosis but is stable and has a high degree of symptom management.
 - 2) The offender does not currently require mental health treatment but has a history of self-directed violence, suicidal gestures or attempts, or mental health treatment within the past two years.
 - 3) The offender is not prescribed psychotropic medication and can function satisfactorily in a general population setting.
- e. MH-0 No Evidence of Mental Health Needs:
- 1) The offender has no documented history of mental health treatment within the past year (documented history does not include treatment for substance use alone, nor for evaluation purposes alone).
 - 2) There is no documented or reported behavior that currently indicates any mental health service's needs.
 - 3) No monitoring or treatment by mental health is currently required.

C. Severe Mental Illness Classification

1. An offender with a MH 03 and 04 classification may be considered Severely Mentally Ill and will be subjected to additional criteria. QMHP makes determinations regarding classification by the information provided by the offender and the resources made available to the QMHP. The offender must meet at least one of the following:
 - a. the offender has undergone psychiatric treatment more intensive than outpatient care more than once in a lifetime, such as, emergency services, alternative residential living, or inpatient psychiatric hospitalization;
 - b. the offender has experienced a single episode of psychiatric hospitalization with a diagnosis of a major disorder, or
 - c. the offender has frequent crisis contact with a community health center; or another mental health provider, for more than six months as a result of a mental illness.
2. The offender must also meet at least three of the following criteria:
 - a. The offender is unemployed or has markedly limited job skills or poor work history;
 - b. The offender exhibits inappropriate social behavior that results in concern by the community or requests for mental health or legal intervention;
 - c. The offender has been unable to obtain public services without assistance;

- d. The offender requires public financial assistance for out-of-hospital maintenance or has difficulty budgeting public financial assistance or requires ongoing training in budgeting skills or needs a payee;
- e. The offender lacks social support systems in a natural environment, such as close friends and family; or if the client lived alone or is isolated; or
- f. The offender is unable to perform basic daily living skills without assistance.

D. Mental Health Modifiers

1. Mental Health modifiers are attached to the Mental Health Level to act as descriptors of an offender's behavior and as indicators of what support or service an offender may need.
2. Mental Health modifiers are assessed at every clinical interaction. The modifier that is most fitting for the current period of time is the one that is used.
 - a. The following modifier come before the mental health classification number and indicates if the offender has a Severe Mental Illness (SMI). i.e. MH-S3 (offender with a mental health level of 3 and meets SMI criteria).
 - 1) S - Severely Mentally Ill (SMI).
 - b. The following modifiers come after the number and are descriptive for both clinicians and other staff that work with the offender. (i.e. MH-S3P offender with a mental health level of 3 that meets the SMI criteria and has a psychotic disorder, so the offender can be expected to talk to himself and not be in his right mind, etc.).
 - 1) C – Cognitive impairment (i.e. TBI, FAS, dementia, Huntington's symptoms, substance induced cognitive symptoms).
 - 2) P – Psychotic disorder (i.e. Schizophrenia).
 - 3) M – Mood disorder (i.e. depression, bipolar).
 - 4) A – Anxiety disorder (including PTSD, generalized anxiety).
 - 5) PD – Personality disorders (i.e. Borderline, Antisocial, Narcissistic).
 - 6) T – Temporary (used for those who have adjustment issues or going through process of ruling out diagnoses, T qualifiers should not be retained for more than 6 months).

V. CLOSING

Questions concerning this operational procedure will be directed to the Mental Health Bureau Chief.

VI. REFERENCES

A. *MCA 53-21-102*

B. *Bureau Of Prisons Policy statement 5310.16, Treatment and Care of Inmates with Mental Illness*

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VII. ATTACHMENT

Severe Mental Illness Determination form



Connie Winner, Administrator

Intake Severe Mental Illness Determination Form - ADULT

Inmate Name: _____ DOC ID# _____ Housing Unit: _____

Severe Mental Illness –is a substantial organic or psychiatric disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation or memory which significantly impairs judgment, behavior or ability to cope with the basic demands of life. Intellectual disability, epilepsy, other developmental disability, alcohol or substance abuse, or brief periods of intoxication, or criminal behavior do not, alone, constitute severe mental illness. See MCA 53-21-102 (Mental disorder).

The offender shall be 18 years of age or older, be exhibiting significant functional impairment and shall meet the following criteria:

- A. Offender shall have a current DSM V mental health diagnosis: _____
 1. The offender shall meet **at least one** of the following: (Circle criteria)
 - a. The offender has undergone psychiatric treatment more intensive than outpatient care and more than once in a lifetime, such as, emergency services, alternative residential living, or inpatient psychiatric hospitalization;
 - b. The offender has experienced a single episode of psychiatric hospitalization with a diagnosis of a major mental disorder;
 - c. The offender has been treated with psychotropic medication for at least one year; NEED TO HAVE AN ADDITIONAL CRITERIA TO QUALIFY
 - d. The offender has frequent crisis contact with a community mental health center, or another mental health provider, for more than six months as a result of a mental illness; and
 2. The offender shall meet **at least three** of the following criteria: (Circle criteria)
 - a. The offender is unemployed or has markedly limited job skills or poor work history;
 - b. The offender exhibits inappropriate social behavior that results in concern by the community or requests for mental health or legal intervention;
 - c. The offender is unable to obtain public services without assistance;
 - d. The offender requires public financial assistance for out-of-hospital maintenance or has difficulty budgeting public financial assistance or requires ongoing training in budgeting skills or needs a payee;

- e. The offender lacks social support systems in a natural environment, such as close friends and family, or the client lives alone or is isolated; or
- f. The Offender is unable to perform basic daily living skills without assistance

Mental Health Codes

Code	Diagnosis?	How are they currently doing?		How are they managing symptoms?
0	N	No evidence of MH needs	----	-----
1	Y	Has history of MH issues OR has current MH symptoms but is stable	OR	High Degree of symptom management
2	Y	Mild impairment/needs	OR	Properly managing significant symptoms
3	Y	Moderate impairment/experiencing significant symptom severity/needs	OR	Typically, cannot function in the general population for extended periods of time and requires on-going mental health monitoring
4	Y	Acute symptoms severity/needs	---	May be danger to self/others or may be substantially unable to care for self

Modifier	Meaning	Examples
S	Severe Mental Illness	Can only be MH-S3, MH-S4
C	Cognitive Impairment	Dementia, FASD, Developmental Disorders
P	Psychotic Disorder	Not oriented to reality, hallucinations, delusions (Many times comes with an "S" criteria as well)
M	Mood Disorder	Depression, Bipolar
A	Anxiety Disorder	PTSD, Anxiety, Acute Stress Disorder
PD	Personality Disorder	Antisocial, Borderline, Narcissistic, Histrionic (May not be picked up on initial assessment)

*Primary issue/diagnosis/concern = which modifier to use

QMHP Signature: _____ Date/Time: _____

Assigned MH Code: _____ Entered into OMIS? Y / N