

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services  
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## **Southeast Human Service Center in Fargo opens access to behavioral health assessments; no appointments needed**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services announced that Southeast Human Service Center (SEHSC) in Fargo has become the fourth regional human service center to offer mental health and substance use assessments on designated days without appointments. The regional centers in Jamestown, Minot, and Williston already use the Open Access clinic management model.

“Our goal is to engage people earlier when they are motivated to seek help by offering prompt access to behavioral health assessments and related follow-up services,” said the department’s Chief Clinics Officer, clinical psychologist Rosalie Etherington.

SEHSC serves a six-county region that includes Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele and Traill counties. Residents of those North Dakota counties can go to the center at 2624 Ninth Ave. S., in Fargo for unscheduled assessments on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m., and on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

A triage specialist will meet with individuals to assess their unique situations. Depending on individual needs, there may be a wait time before a clinician can see a person.

If they prefer, people can schedule an assessment at SEHSC by calling 701-298-4500, toll-free 888-342-4900, or ND Relay TTY at 800-366-6888 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Etherington said a behavioral health assessment at a participating regional human service center may take about an hour, and individuals who have the highest need, such as pregnant women seeking addiction evaluation services, receive priority.

She said walk-in assessments benefit individuals whose work schedules vary or who experience other challenges that may prevent them from following through with assessments scheduled too far in the future. They also reduce missed appointments and increase staffing efficiency.

The department plans to implement the Open Access model statewide at the remaining four regional human service centers by June 30, 2017.

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“We are reshaping how we provide services,” Etherington said. “Once fully implemented, Open Access will include not only daily access to behavioral health assessments, but also interventions, including urgent care, and eventually other behavioral health services.”

### Open Access Assessment Schedule at Other Participating Centers

South Central Human Service Center in **Jamestown** offers Open Access behavioral health assessments on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12 to 2:30 p.m.

North Central Human Service Center in **Minot** offers Open Access assessments Mondays through Thursdays, between 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., and Northwest Human Service Center in **Williston** offers Open Access assessments Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8 to 9:30 a.m.

The department operates regional human service centers in Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot, and Williston. Some centers also have rural outreach offices.

Centers provide community-based behavioral health services, aging services, developmental disability program management, and other human services to North Dakotans either directly or through contracts with other service providers.

As publicly-funded behavioral health treatment providers, the centers serve those individuals with the greatest treatment needs. These include adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbance, adults and children with both substance use disorders and serious mental illness, pregnant women with substance use disorders, and intravenous drug users.

Fees for some services are adjusted for income, ability to pay, and the number of household members. Insurance is accepted if available.

More regional human service center information is available online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/regionalhsc/](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/regionalhsc/).

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