

FAQs: Judge Guy Herman Center for Mental Health Crisis Care

What is the Judge Guy Herman Center for Mental Health Crisis Care?

The Judge Herman Center for Mental Health Crisis Care provides short term emergency psychiatric crisis care in Travis County. Services include stabilization, assessment and treatment in a protected residential environment for adults experiencing mental health crises.

Who operates the Herman Center?

Integral Care operates the Herman Center and helps ensure this service is successfully connected and integrated with other key mental health services and stakeholders.

Integral Care helps people build health and well-being so everyone has the foundation to reach their full potential. Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County. Integral Care’s services include a 24-hour helpline for anyone who needs immediate support, ongoing counseling to improve mental health, drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, and housing to regain health and independence. Integral Care provides a strong foundation for well-being. Integral Care is the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority for Travis County and has been providing services to the community for 50 years.

What services are provided at the Herman Center?

The following services are provided. All patients are cared for with the oversight of a psychiatrist.

- Crisis assessment
- Crisis stabilization and extended observation
- Medications
- Therapy – individual and group
- Nursing services
- Case management
- Peer support
- Discharge planning
- Linkage to ongoing care and community resources

Where is the Herman Center located?

The Herman Center is located at 6600 E. Ben White Blvd., Austin, TX 78741.

Who is appropriate for admission to the Herman Center?

Adults experiencing a mental health crisis. The Herman Center serves:

- Individuals on emergency detention or who voluntarily seek treatment.
(Please see “Who can refer someone to the Herman Center?” for detailed referral guidelines.)
- Individuals who are not actively violent.
- Individuals where there is reason to believe the immediate crisis will resolve within 48 hours.

Who cannot be served by the Herman Center?

Individuals experiencing a mental health crisis who require a hospital level of care. This may be due to a serious medical condition or behaviors that require restraint or seclusion.

Why is this service needed in Travis County?

Historically, individuals experiencing a mental health crisis have only had the option of inpatient care, the most expensive type of treatment and one that is not readily available. However, the vast majority of crises resolve within 48 hours, indicating that inpatient care is not always necessary. The Herman Center offers assessment and treatment that will reduce the need for more expensive care. This means better outcomes for patients and reduced cost to taxpayers or other payers. Adding this service to the continuum of care ensures that psychiatric crisis treatment is available in the most appropriate and cost-effective setting.

How does an individual access services at the Herman Center?

Primary referrals to the Herman Center come from law enforcement, healthcare providers such as local emergency departments and other Integral Care crisis services. Law enforcement and healthcare providers access the Herman Center by calling Integral Care’s 24/7 Crisis Helpline at 512-472-HELP (4357). Press 1, then 2. Integral Care staff determines if the Herman Center is the right level of care for the individual. If so, Integral Care will refer the individual to the Herman Center. **Please note: the Herman Center is not appropriate for self-referral or walk-in services.**

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How big is the Herman Center?

The crisis center has 16 beds and is approximately 12,000 total square feet.

How long can individuals stay at the Herman Center?

Because mental health crises look different for everyone, an individual's length of stay will vary based on need. The goal is to quickly resolve the individual's immediate crisis by prompt assessment and initiation of appropriate treatment so the individual can return home or transfer to another Integral Care residential program for ongoing support and recovery. Transfer to a higher level of care, such as inpatient psychiatric services, can also be facilitated if clinically necessary.

How are clients connected to peer support during and after their stay at the Herman Center?

A peer support specialist is part of the treatment team at the Herman Center. The peer support specialist provides emotional support to individuals during their stay at the Herman Center and works to link the individual to community organizations for ongoing peer support post discharge. Organizations might include The Shack, NAMI, Austin Clubhouse and the Depression and Bipolar Alliance. If the individual transitions to other Integral Care programs, they will be connected to another Integral Care peer support specialist.

What does the admission process look like?

When an individual arrives, they are greeted by a nurse who rules out any medical conditions that would require additional medical treatment and a Licensed Counselor who orients the individual to the admission process. The individual can then access a private shower and clean clothes, followed by a more detailed assessment and nutritional screening with a nurse. Following, the individual is taken to their bedroom and introduced to the Herman Center's features. On an Emergency Detention, the individual sees a nurse practitioner or doctor (in person or via telemedicine) within 8 hours of arrival. If voluntary, the individual is seen within 24 hours of arrival. Within 24 hours after admission, the individual works with a counselor or case manager to create safety, discharge and care plans that include the individual's personal support network.

How does the Herman Center connect individuals to ongoing medical care after discharge?

Individuals without insurance meet with an authorization specialist who helps them apply for MAP (Medical Access Program). Before discharge, Integral Care makes a referral to CommUnityCare, our primary healthcare partner. Any ongoing mental healthcare services will be provided by Integral Care. Integral Care and CommUnityCare provide integrated mental and primary healthcare services at multiple clinics around Austin.

What happens to clients who experience homelessness or have unstable housing?

Individuals who experience homelessness or have unstable housing meet with staff at the Southeast Health and Wellness Center to complete a Coordinated Assessment. Herman Center staff help individuals get to their Coordinated Assessment appointments.

During a Coordinated Assessment appointment, staff helps identify housing needs and connects individuals to housing programs, which may include shelters. Integral Care also offers a variety of housing services from temporary housing to permanent supportive housing.

How many people were served at the Herman Center? (NEW)

In FY18, the Herman Center served over 600 individuals. We anticipate doubling that number in FY19.

What other crisis care options does Integral Care offer in Travis County?

Depending on the level of care needed, many options exist for crisis care in our community.

- **Integral Care's 24/7 Crisis Helpline**, 512-472-HELP (4357), provides immediate crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Integral Care's Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES)** is an urgent care, walk-in clinic for adults and children experiencing a mental health crisis. Individuals can receive follow-up care for up to 90 days.
 - Located at 1165 Airport Blvd, TX 78702.
 - Monday through Friday, 8am to 10pm and Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, 10am to 8pm.
- **Integral Care's Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT)** goes anywhere someone needs help. MCOT can be dispatched by Integral Care's 24/7 Crisis Helpline. Individuals can receive follow-up care for up to 90 days.

What is the relationship between the Herman Center for Mental Health Crisis Care and the Southeast Health and Wellness Center?

They are separate facilities run by different organizations. Integral Care operates the Herman Center. The Southeast Health and Wellness Center is owned by Central Health and operated by CommUnityCare.

Will the Herman Center be connected to the Sobering Center?

No, the Herman Center is not affiliated with the Sobering Center.

For More Information

Please contact Tracy Abzug, Practice Manager, at Tracy.Abzug@integralcare.org or (512) 804-3740.