



APA-2

Alabama Department of Mental Health  
Mental Health and Substance Abuse

NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

AGENCY NAME: Alabama Department of Mental Health

RULE NO. & TITLE: 580-9-44-.24 Level III.5 Clinically Managed  
Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program For Adolescents  
INTENDED ACTION: Amend

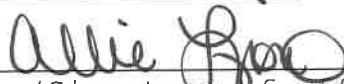
SUBSTANCE OF PROPOSED ACTION: We have created Chapter 580-2-20-.08 to eventually combine the current rules for Mental Illness in Chapter 580-2-9 and Substance Abuse in Chapter 580-9-44.

TIME, PLACE, MANNER OF PRESENTING VIEWS: All interested persons may submit data, views, or arguments in writing to Altorvise (Allie) Ligon, Director, Office of Certification Administration, Alabama Department of Mental Health, 100 North Union Street, Suite 540, Montgomery, Alabama 36130 by mail or in person between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00Pm, Monday through Friday, or by electronic means to contactoca.dmh@mh.alabama.gov until and including December 5, 2022. Persons wishing to submit data, views or arguments orally should contact Ms. Ligon by telephone at (334)353-2069 during this period to arrange for appointment.

FINAL DATE FOR COMMENT AND COMPLETION OF NOTICE:  
**December 5, 2022**

CONTACT PERSON AT AGENCY:  
Persons wishing a copy of the proposal may contact:  
Altorvise (Allie) Ligon  
Department of Mental Health  
100 North Union Street, Suite 540  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130  
(334)353-2069

A copy of the proposed change is available on the department's website at <https://mh.alabama.gov/division-of-administration/certification-administration/>



(Signature of officer authorized  
to promulgate and adopt  
rules or his or her deputy)

**580-9-44-.24 Level III.5: Clinically Managed Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program For Adolescents.**

(1) Rule Compliance. In addition to compliance with the rules as specified in this chapter, each Level III.5 Clinically Managed Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program for Adolescents shall comply with the rules as specified in the following chapters.

(a) Program Description. The entity shall develop, maintain and implement a written program description that defines its Level III.5 Adolescent Clinically Managed Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program, as according to Rule 580-9-44-.13 and the following specifications:

1. Location. The entity shall specifically identify and describe the setting in which the Level III.5 Adolescent Program shall be provided. Services may be provided in any facility that meets all applicable federal, state and local certification, licensure, building, life-safety, fire, health and zoning regulations, including the DMH facility certification standards.

2. Admission Criteria: The entity shall develop, maintain and document implementation of written criteria for admission to its Level III.5 Adolescent Program in compliance with the requirements of Rule 580-9-44-.13(9) and the following specifications:

(i) The entity's admission criteria shall specify the target population for its Level III.5 Adolescent Services which shall include, at a minimum, individuals:

(I) Who are less than nineteen (19) years old.

(II) Whose assessed severity of illness warrants this level of care including but not limited to individuals who have impaired functioning across a broad range of psychosocial domains that may be expressed as:

I. Disruptive behaviors.

II. Delinquency and juvenile justice involvement.

III. Educational difficulties.

IV. Family conflicts and chaotic home situations.

V. Developmental immaturity and/or

VI. Psychological problems.

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(III) Who do not require significant medical, psychiatric, or nurse monitoring or interventions.

(IV) For whom treatment for identified problems has been rendered ineffective at less intensive levels of care.

(ii) The entity shall provide written documentation in individual case records that each client admitted to a Level III.5 Adolescent Program meets:

(I) The diagnostic criteria for a substance related disorder as defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders; and

(II) The dimensional criteria for admission to this level of care as defined in the most recent edition of the ASAM PPC-2R.

(iii) Co-occurring Disorders Program Specific Criteria. The entity shall provide written documentation in individual case records that each individual admitted to a Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Enhanced Treatment Program meets:

(I) The diagnostic criteria for a substance related and mental illness disorder as defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders.

(II) The dimensional criteria for admission to this level of care as defined in the most recent edition of the ASAM PPC-2R.

(iv) Women and Dependent Children Program Specific Criteria: The entity shall provide written documentation in individual case records that each client admitted to a Level III.5 Adolescent Program for Women and Dependent Children:

(I) Meets the diagnostic criteria for a substance related disorder as defined in the most recent edition Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders.

(II) The dimensional criteria for admission to this level of care as defined in the most recent edition of the ASAM PPC-2R.

(III) Is pregnant; or

(IV) Has care and custody of dependent children; or

(V) Has lost custody of dependent children and has the potential for family reunification.

3. Core Services: Each Level III.5 Adolescent Medium

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Intensity Residential Program shall demonstrate the capacity to provide a basic regimen of treatment services appropriate to the adolescent's developmental and cognitive levels and other assessed needs.

(i) At a minimum, the entity shall demonstrate and document its capacity to provide a twenty-four (24) hour structured residential treatment environment with accessibility to the following core services:

- (I) Placement assessment.
- (II) Individual counseling.
- (III) Group counseling.
- (IV) Family counseling.
- (V) Psychoeducation.
- (VI) Peer support.
- (VII) Medical and somatic services.
- (VIII) Daily living skills.
- (IX) Medication management.
- (X) Medication administration.
- (XI) Alcohol and/or drug screening/testing.
- (XII) Transportation.
- (XIII) Activity therapy.
- (XIX) Case management:
  - I. Case planning.
  - II. Linkage.
  - III. Advocacy.
  - IV. Monitoring.

(ii) Medical Services. The entity shall implement procedures for the provision of medical services as according to protocols established in compliance with Rule 580-9-44-.13(24).

(I) Clients who have not had a physical examination within the last twelve (12) months shall be scheduled a physical examination within two (2) weeks of admission.

(II) Pregnant clients who are not receiving routine prenatal care shall be seen by physician within two (2) weeks of admission.

(iii) Mental Health Services. The entity shall develop, maintain and document implementation of written policies and procedures to ensure that each client's mental health needs are identified through the assessment process and access to appropriate care for these needs is provided concurrently with treatment for assessed substance related disorders.

(iv) Family Support. The entity shall initiate and document in the client record continuous efforts to involve the client's family and other natural supports in the treatment process.

(v) Co-occurring Disorders Program Specific Criteria: Each Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Disorders Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program shall document the capacity to provide each of the core services and the following services:

(I) Mental health consultation.

(II) Crisis intervention services.

(vi) Women and Dependent Children Program Specific Criteria: Each Level III.5 Adolescent Women and Dependent Children Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program shall document the capacity to provide each of the core services and the following services:

(I) Child sitting services.

(II) Developmental delay and prevention services.

(III) Parenting skills development.

4. Therapeutic Component Implementation. The entity shall document the implementation of a planned regimen of twenty-four (24) hour professionally directed program activities for adolescents and their families. Evaluation, treatment and care shall be provided in an amount, frequency and intensity appropriate to the client's assessed needs and expressed desires for care.

(i) Service strategies for each Level III.5 Adolescent Residential Program shall include, at a minimum:

(I) On duty, awake staff shall provide supervision of client's health, welfare and safety twenty-four (24) hours a day.

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(II) Clients shall have access to clinical services personnel twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

(III) Daily clinical services to improve the client's ability to structure and reorganize the tasks of daily living and recovery.

(IV) The provision of daily scheduled treatment, recovery support services and other activities that shall, at a minimum, include those that address:

I. Implementation of individualized service plan strategies.

II. Development and application of recovery skills including relapse prevention.

III. Interpersonal choice/decision making skill development.

IV. Enhancement of the understanding of addiction.

V. Development of a social network supportive of recovery.

VI. Random drug screening.

VII. Health education.

VIII. Medication administration and monitoring.

IX. Promotion of successful involvement in regular productive daily activity such as school or work.

X. Enhancement of personal responsibility, developmental maturity and prosocial values.

XI. Educational services in accordance with state and local regulations.

XII. Opportunities to remedy educational deficits created by involvement with alcohol and other drugs.

(ii) The entity shall actively promote and provide referrals and/or access to community support services.

(iii) All services shall be shall be organized and provided according to evidence-based and best practice standards and guidelines.

(iv) Co-occurring Disorders Program Specific Criteria: Each Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Enhanced Program shall document the capacity to provide the service strategies and the

following therapeutic components:

- (I) Groups and classes that address the signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use disorders.
- (II) Groups, classes and training to assist clients in becoming aware of cues or triggers that enhance the likelihood of alcohol and drug use or psychiatric decompensation and to aid in development of alternative coping responses to those cues.
- (III) Dual recovery groups that provide a forum for discussion of the interactions of and interrelations between substance use and mental health disorders.
- (IV) Intensive case management.
- (v) Women and Dependent Children Program Specific Criteria: Each Level III.5. Adolescent Women and Dependent Children Program shall document the capacity to provide the service strategies and the following therapeutic components:

- (I) Gender specific services which address issues of relationships, parenting, abuse and trauma.
- (II) Primary medical care including prenatal care.
- (III) Primary pediatric care for children.
- (IV) Therapeutic interventions for children which address their developmental needs and issues of sexual abuse and neglect.
- (V) Outreach to inform pregnant women of the services and priorities.
- (VI) Interim services while awaiting admission to this level of care.
- (VII) Recreation and leisure time skills training.
- (VIII) Academic and vocational services.
- (IX) Family planning services.

5. Documentation: Each Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Residential Program shall provide the following documentation in each client record:

- (i) Individualized progress notes shall be recorded each day for each respective service provided.

6. Support Systems. Each Level III.5 Adolescent



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Program shall develop, maintain and document implementation of written policies and procedures which govern the process used to provide client access to support services on site, or through consultation or referral, which shall minimally include:

- (i) Emergency consultation with a physician available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- (ii) Telephone or in person consultation with emergency services twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- (iii) Telephone or in person consultation with a MAS nurse twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- (iv) Indicated laboratory and toxicology testing.
- (v) Indicated medical procedures.
- (vi) Medical treatment.
- (vii) Psychological and psychiatric treatment.
- (viii) Direct affiliation with or coordination through referral to more and less intensive levels of care, including detoxification services.

7. Program Personnel. Each Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Residential Program shall employ an adequate number of qualified individuals to provide personalized care for its clientele and to meet the program's goals and objectives.

~~(i) Program Coordinator. Each Level III.5 Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Program shall have a full-time program coordinator or manager who shall have a minimum two (2) years work experience in a direct service area treating adolescents who have substance use or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.~~

(ii) Direct Care Personnel. All direct care personnel shall have the qualifications, as a qualified paraprofessional to provide the specific services delineated in the entity's program description for this level of care.

(iii) Clinical Personnel. The entity shall maintain an adequate number of clinical personnel to sustain the Level III.5 Program as delineated in its operational procedures.

(iv) Administrative Support Personnel. The entity shall maintain an adequate number of support personnel to sustain the program's administrative functions.

(v) Each primary counselor shall maintain a case load not to exceed ten (10) clients with active cases at any one time.

(vi) Co-occurring Disorders Program Specific Criteria.

(I) Each Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Enhanced Medium Intensity Residential Program shall be coordinated by a full-time member of the staff who has the minimum of a master's degree in a mental health related field and at least two (2) years supervised experience in a direct service area treating adolescent clients with substance related mental health or co-occurring disorders.

(II) Each Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Enhanced Medium Intensity Residential Program shall have access to psychiatric services led by a qualified psychiatrist or nurse practitioner that are fully capable of evaluating, diagnosing and prescribing medications to clients with co-occurring disorders. On-call psychiatric services shall be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

(III) The treatment organization/agency shall have access to an Alabama licensed physician, full time, part time or on contract who shall be available to the program for client care and shall assume responsibility for the medical aspects of the program.

(IV) All other direct care personnel in a Level III.5 Adolescent Co-occurring Enhanced Medium Intensity Residential Program shall be qualified, as a qualified paraprofessional to provide the specific services delineated in the entity's operational plan for this level of care.

(V) Every client in a Level III.5 Adolescent Residential Program shall be assigned to a specific primary counselor for care management.

(VI) Each primary counselor shall maintain a case load not to exceed sixteen (16) clients with active cases at any one time.

(vii) Women and Dependent Children Program Specific Criteria.

(I) Each Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Women and Dependent Children Residential Program shall be coordinated by a full-time member of the staff who has a minimum of a master's degree in a behavioral health related field and at least two (2) years supervised experience in a direct service area treating women who have substance use, mental health or co-occurring mental health and substance related disorders.

(II) Direct Care Personnel. All direct care personnel shall be qualified, as a qualified paraprofessional to provide

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the specific services delineated in the entity's operational plan for this level of care.

(III) Clinical Personnel. The entity shall maintain an adequate number of clinical personnel to sustain the Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Women and Dependent Children Residential Program as delineated in its operational plan.

(IV) Administrative Support Personnel. The entity shall maintain an adequate number of support personnel to sustain the program's administrative functions.

(V) Every client in a Level III.5 Adolescent Women and Dependent Children program shall be assigned to a specific Primary Counselor for care management.

(VI) Each primary counselor shall maintain a case load not to exceed ten (10) clients with active cases at any one time.

8. Training. The entity shall provide written documentation that all Level III.5 Adolescent Program personnel satisfy the competency and training requirements as specified in Rule 580-9-44-.02(3).

9. Service Intensity:

(i) The entity shall document that the amount and frequency of Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Residential Treatment Services are established on the basis of the unique needs of each client served. To assist in addressing these needs, the entity shall ensure the availability of no less than fifteen (15) hours of structured services each week.

(ii) The entity shall provide written documentation describing the procedures utilized to ensure the provision of services appropriate to the client's developmental stage and level of comprehension, including any necessary adaptations.

10. Length of Service: The entity shall provide written documentation that the duration of treatment in each Level III.5 Adolescent Medium Intensity Residential Program shall vary as determined by:

(i) The severity of the client's illness.

(ii) The client's ability to comprehend the information provided and use that information to implement treatment strategies and attain treatment goals.

(iii) The appearance of new problems that require another level of care; or

(iv) The availability of services at an assessed level

of need, when a Level III.5 Adolescent Residential Program has been utilized to provide interim services.

11. **Service Availability:** The entity shall provide written documentation describing the process utilized to establish hours of availability for screening assessment and intake services at its Level III.5 Medium Intensity Adolescent Residential Program. At a minimum, this process shall:

(i) Include consideration of the needs of the target population, including work, school and parenting responsibilities.

(ii) Include consideration of transportation accessibility.

(iii) Not be based solely on standard eight (8) to five (5), Monday through Friday office hours.

**Author:** Substance Abuse Services Division

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §22-50-11.

**History: New Rule:** Filed January 26, 2012; effective March 1, 2012. **Amended:** Filed October 19, 2022.