

United Counseling Service helps people improve their quality of life through a comprehensive system of care, including education, prevention, early intervention, support and treatment for children, adults and families in our community

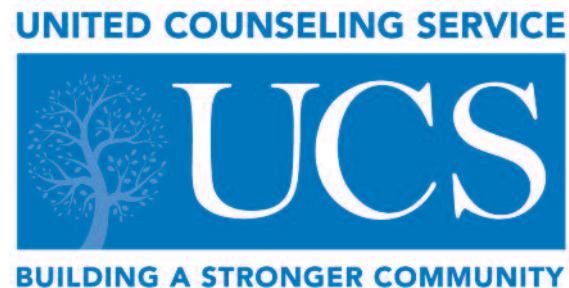
Confidentiality

All contacts and records in this agency are kept in strict confidence governed by federal regulations. No acknowledgement or release of information is given without the consumer's expressed written permission.

Policy of non-discrimination

United Counseling Service is an equal opportunity employer. It is our policy to comply with all applicable federal and state laws related to fair employment practices. To the extent required by these laws, UCS does not discriminate in its employment decisions on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital/civil union status, national origin, citizenship, place of birth, military/uniformed service or veteran status, disability, genetic information, having a positive test result on an HIV related blood test or other legally-protected classification.

UCS is a Designated Agency by the Vermont Agency of Human Services.



24 Hour Emergency Service

Bennington

100 Ledge Hill Drive, P.O. Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 442-5491

Manchester

5312 Main Street, P.O. Box 815
Manchester Center, VT 05255
(802) 362-3950

www.ucsvt.org

Mission

**Building a stronger community by
empowering individuals and families to
live healthy and meaningful lives.**



Welcome to United Counseling Service

This booklet provides basic information to help you use the programs and services provided by UCS. Please refer to additional information for Developmental Services and Head Start.

UCS Programs

Battelle House- Crisis Shelter
Bennington County Head Start / Early Head Start
Bennington JOBS
Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT)
Developmental Services
Emergency Services
Employee Assistance Program
Family Outreach Services
Individuals Preparing for Life, Action, Need (IPLAN)
Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Mental Health First Aid Training (Adult and Youth)
Mentoring at UCS
Mobile Crisis Unit
Psychiatric Services
Reach Up Services
Residential Services
Respite Care and Community Skills Program
Rocking Horse Circle of Hope
School-Based Services
Teens for Change
Transitional Living
Youth and Family Services

For information on any of our services
call 802-442-5491 or visit www.ucsvt.org

CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Who is UCS? | 2 |
| Primary service locations | 3 |
| Emergency services | 4 |
| Programs and services | 5 |
| General fee information | 7 |
| Confidentiality | 8 |
| Receiving services | 9 |
| Bill of rights | 11 |
| Client satisfaction | 12 |
| Safety standards | 13 |

WHO IS UCS?

United Counseling Service is part of a statewide network of sixteen non-profit community-based agencies providing mental health, substance use and intellectual and developmental services and supports.

UCS has been designated as a Center of Excellence by Vermont Care Partners and offers:

- Community-based mental health and
- Developmental services for children, adults, families, and seniors
- Outpatient mental health and substance abuse counseling
- Around the clock crisis intervention/stabilization
- Employee Assistance Program
- Employment programs for clients
- Comprehensive service systems for people with severe mental illness, developmental disabilities, and emotional and behavioral disabilities
- Bennington County Head Start / Early Head Start
- Mentoring at UCS
- Psychiatric Services

PRIMARY LOCATIONS

Administrative Office

100 Ledge Hill Drive, Bennington, VT 05201

Phone: 802-442-5491

Developmental Services

Estelle Bennett Atwood Center

335 Dewey Street, Bennington, VT 05201

Phone: 802-442-5491

Early Head Start/Head Start

2 Park Street Nort Bennington, VT 05257

Phone: 802-442-3686

Community Rehabilitation and Emergency Services

316 Dewey Street, Bennington, VT 05201

Phone: 802-442-5491

Youth and Family Services

314 Dewey Street, Bennington, VT 05201

Phone: 802-442-5491

Northshire UCS

Stephen C. Lundy Building.

5312 Main Street, Manchester, VT 05255

Phone: 802-362-3950

GENERAL HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Universal Access

One point phone contact for triage and linkage to appropriate point of services within UCS or other community service agencies. Operates during general hours of operations.

24-Hour Emergency Service

If you need immediate assistance in a crisis call:

802-442-5491, in Bennington

or **802-362-3950**, in Manchester

UCS provides emergency mental health services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

When our offices are closed, the UCS emergency operator will take your name and phone number. A UCS clinician will return your call as quickly as possible. UCS Emergency Service provides individuals in crisis with immediate assistance, offers post-crisis supportive services, and helps arrange additional services as needed.

For a Child-Related Crisis

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm. The Family Emergency Services (FES) program provides crisis outreach services to families experiencing a youth related crisis. If you need emergency assistance, call: *802-442-1700 Crisis Hotline*

For a Developmental Services - Related Crisis

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Phone: 802-445-7318

24-hr emergency services: 802-442-5491

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Mental Health Programs

- 24-hour emergency service
- Battelle House crisis center
- Child, adult, family, and couples outpatient counseling
- Variety of psychotherapy groups
- Mental health and developmental disabilities evaluation and psychological testing
- Community education and consultation services
- Employee Assistance Program

Substance Abuse Programs

- Alcohol and drug abuse counseling and education
- Substance Abuse Receiving Center
- Assessment for and facilitation of detox or residential services
- Intensive Outpatient Program
- Consultation to agencies and schools
- Individuals Planning for Life, Actions & Need

Community Rehabilitation and Treatment for Adults with Mental Illness

- Residential program
- Community support services
- Supported employment program
- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Programs for those with co-occurring disorders

Psychiatric Services

- Psychiatric evaluation
- Medication management
- Consultation to other clinicians
- Clinical support and supervision

Programs for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

- Residential services
- Community support services
- Family support services
- Employment services
- Crisis services
- Shared living
- Case management

Programs for Individuals with Disabilities

- Adult Family Care

Youth and Family Services

- Family Emergency Services (FES) and crisis intervention
- Runaway and homeless youth services
- Early childhood mental health services and consultation
- Individual, group and family counseling
- Therapeutic case management services
- Community skills and support
- School-based clinical services
- Employment services
- Transitional Living Programs
- Mentoring at UCS

Children's Programs

- Bennington County Early Head Start
- Bennington County Head Start
- Bennington County Early Education Initiative (EEI)

Statement of Non-Discrimination

UCS does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in the provision of services, programs, activities, or in employment. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), any qualified individual with a disability is eligible to participate in or benefit from any service, program, or activity provided by UCS.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you believe you have been denied access to a benefit, service, program, or activity offered by UCS because of a disability, you may file a complaint with:

Grievance and Appeals Coordinator
United Counseling Service
P.O. Box 588
Bennington, Vermont 05201

FEES

To serve the community, UCS must charge fees for services. Many insurance plans provide coverage of mental health services. If you are a Bennington County resident and are unable to pay the full fee, you may apply for reduced fee assistance. Waivers may be available in extreme circumstances.

Our Client Accounts Coordinator will review your health insurance information and, if needed, help you arrange fee assistance. Please bring your Medicaid or other insurance card with you.

Clients who are not eligible for traditional Medicaid and do not have other insurance will be provided Health Exchange information. Our coordinator can supply necessary forms and assist you in completing Vermont Health Exchange application, if necessary. We encourage you to apply before your first visit to assure coverage prior to treatment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about UCS clients is held in strict confidence. All UCS employees understand the importance of confidentiality, are trained to preserve it, and are subject to disciplinary action if they violate your confidentiality.

- 1** When there is a genuine medical emergency, or when there is imminent danger to a 2nd person or others;
- 2** When a person has a serious medical condition and is incapable of rational communication, the family or others may be notified;
- 3** When we are authorized by the client and/or compelled to do so by the court;
- 4** Vermont law mandates that a mental health professional, who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected, must report such abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families.

Additionally, any suspicion of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the elderly (age 60 or older), or a disabled adult with a diagnosed physical or mental impairment, must be reported;

- 5** By Vermont law, if a clinical staff member has reason to believe that you will commit a serious crime against either property or another person, that staff is required to take reasonable steps to warn the intended victim;
- 6** If you are so impaired by alcohol or other drugs as to pose a threat to society in general (e.g. driving a car), the law is interpreted as requiring staff to take steps to protect the public by rendering you harmless (e.g. taking your keys) and/or informing proper authorities.

Your records are securely safeguarded. UCS follows HIPAA and federally funded substance abuse treatment program (42CFR) guidelines.

If it becomes necessary for UCS to release information without your permission, we will limit the information released to the minimum amount necessary under the circumstances.

For more information regarding the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and 42CFR, please see the Notice of Privacy Practices.

RECEIVING SERVICES

This information is designed to help you receive the services you need as quickly and effectively as possible.

A Team Approach

Much of the work done at UCS is done through a team approach. Depending on where you receive your service at UCS, you may have several staff involved in your care.

First Contact

Your first contact with UCS may be by phone or, during office hours, by coming directly to one of our offices. Tell our receptionist that you would like to talk to someone about services, and you will be connected to a Universal Access coordinator. You will speak to, or see, a person who will ask you about your concerns in order to match you with the appropriate services and schedule your Intake appointment.

Your first appointment will focus on evaluating your situation. The next step will be to develop goals for your treatment with a clinician. You may be referred to one of our specialty groups. Outside referrals for special needs may also be discussed. Throughout the process of care, communication may take place within your treatment team about the best way to meet your needs.

Cancellation Policy

Because of the high demand for our services, we require at least a twenty-four (24) hour notice to cancel an appointment. If you fail to notify UCS, you may be billed for the appointment.

WHAT IS THERAPY?

Therapy is a treatment process, usually of a short-term nature, which will focus on the goal that you identify with your treatment provider(s).

How can I measure my progress?

Progress towards your goals that you and your treatment team identified will be evaluated throughout the course of your care. You are encouraged to give and request feedback about your progress with your team.

What if I have a problem with my treatment?

If you are having a problem with your care, first talk with your treatment provider(s). If that does not help or satisfy you, you can ask to speak with your provider's supervisor. If those channels are ineffective, please see the section on the grievance policy.

BILL OF RIGHTS

When you enter into counseling, you have many rights and responsibilities. The following list outlines a few of them.

You have the right...

- To considerate and respectful care which includes freedom from any physical, sexual, fiduciary (financial), or psychological abuse including humiliating, threatening, and exploiting actions;
- To understand what your problem is, what treatment is recommended and why, who will give the treatment, and what outcome to expect;
- To be involved in a process of informed choice, informed refusal, and/or expression of choice related to preference of your treatment services, choice of service provider, and participation in research projects;
- To expect that all communications and records pertaining to your care will be treated as confidential;
- To have continuity of care when you are referred for services outside this agency;
- To examine and receive an explanation of your bill;
- To participate in all aspects of your treatment, including development of your treatment plan.

Your responsibilities are...

- To be honest in your presentation of your problems and to tell those working with you how you feel about what is happening to you;
- To be actively involved in the development of your treatment plan that will outline your problems, needs, goals and expected outcome;
- To be considerate of others and their privacy;
- To present to your counselor any questions, complaints or concerns about your counseling plans or goals so that you may reach an agreement on any problem hindering your progress.

CLIENT GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

UCS will provide assistance to any client who has a disagreement about services. If you feel that any of your rights have been denied, you are encouraged to resolve issues directly with the parties involved. If you feel that has not resolved your problem, you may request to speak with their supervisor. If that is not adequate, you may complete a Grievance and Appeal Form, available with your treatment provider(s) or the reception staff. You are not required to submit your grievance or complaint in writing. You can make a verbal complaint to any staff.

Grievances should be filed if you have been denied services or did not get access appropriately to needed services. Other problems and concerns should be submitted as a complaint.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

UCS seeks input from clients regarding their progress and satisfaction with services. You may be asked to fill out a satisfaction survey at an office visit or when you have completed treatment. You are also encouraged to talk, first and foremost, with your primary service provider regarding any ideas you may have that would be helpful to you or would improve the overall performance of UCS.

ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

UCS respects the dignity of each individual served and will assist in promoting the full development of each individual's potential. All employees are required to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner and adhere to a comprehensive code of ethics. You may receive a copy of the staff code of ethics upon request.

SAFETY STANDARDS

UCS strives to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all of its clients and employees.

Smoking

Smoking and tobacco use are prohibited in and around all agency facilities and grounds.

Weapons

No weapons of any kind, including but not limited to firearms, explosives, knives and projectiles, are allowed on UCS premises.

Drugs and Alcohol

No illicit drugs or alcohol are permitted on UCS property.

Restriction of Service

UCS reserves the right to restrict access to care due to violation of any of the above safety standards. Rights and privileges may be regained through a negotiated process with your primary service provider or his/her supervisor.

Probation/Parole Clients

A person mandated to treatment by the Department of Corrections may not revoke a consent given by them until there has been a formal and effective termination or revocation of such release. This release allows for unrestricted communications.