



# BLUEGRASS CENTER FOR AUTISM

Teach to Learn. Learn to Live.

## Client Handbook

Effective May 2021



**WELCOME!**

Welcome to Bluegrass Center for Autism! Please know how excited we are that you have chosen BCA to be a part of your child’s journey. Your dedication to your child and to BCA, makes a significant impact on you, your child, your family, and the autism community.

Bluegrass Center for Autism's mission is to provide children and young adults affected by autism with an individualized spectrum of services for lifelong success.

To achieve this requires patience, persistence, and TEAMWORK. The parent/caregiver relationship with the BCA Team is crucial to success. Whether you are with us for one year, or twenty, we promise that through hard work and commitment to services you will have a long-lasting impact on improving the life of your child.

This Client Handbook was designed to provide you with the insight necessary to be a successful and responsible consumer of BCA services. It tells you our history, what we expect from our clients, and our philosophies. Please read it carefully and use it as a reference tool for any questions you may have about our unique organization.

Once again, we are glad you chose BCA, and we thank you for supporting our mission!

Christen Byrne, BCaBA, LABA  
Executive Director  
Bluegrass Center for Autism

### **Important Information about the Client Handbook**

While Bluegrass Center for Autism wants to provide you with as much insight as possible, we realize we cannot cover every possible situation or opportunity. The policies, programs and procedures described in the Client Handbook are simply guidelines and are presented in summary form, as a matter of information only. If questions arise about how these policies, programs and procedures are applied, final decisions regarding interpretation rests with the Bluegrass Center for Autism's leadership team. We also reserve the right to modify or change any of these guidelines or other policies or procedures at any time. When changes do occur, we will develop, implement, and interpret best practices compatible with our mission and the guidelines of the Behavioral Analysis Certification Board as well as American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Behavioral Health Center of Excellence Requirements. Should changes occur during your time with us, you will receive updated information concerning those changes as soon as practical.

### **Questions**

If you have difficulty understanding any portion of the Client Handbook, or if you have any questions about the policies, procedures and/or guidelines in this handbook please discuss them with a member of the Bluegrass Center for Autism Administrative Team.

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**About Bluegrass Center for Autism**

**Our Mission, Vision and Model**

Bluegrass Center for Autism's mission is to provide children and adults affected by autism with an individualized spectrum of services for lifelong success.

The vision of Bluegrass Center for Autism aspires to remediate deficits and strengthen abilities in the critical areas of:

- Functional Communication
- Functional Social Interaction
- Functional Emotional Regulation
- Functional Academic Skills

Bluegrass Center for Autism's model is an integrated teaching approach, which begins with a strong foundation in ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) while incorporating Speech-Language Therapy, motor skill's training, social skills training, independent living skills, vocational training, and functional academics. We offer 1:1 child-instructor ratio in all our teams, resulting in the most intensely individualized instruction available. Community based services are provided with a 1:1 ratio, as well.

Bluegrass Center for Autism understands that children on the autism spectrum are successful when exposed to multiple opportunities to acquire, master, maintain and generalize skills within a variety of settings. We provide our children and young adults with over 100 learning opportunities every hour throughout the day to accelerate the learning process. Our highly structured days deliver an individualized experience to meet each child's specific needs and promote their learning potential. Bluegrass Center for Autism uses evidence-based treatment approaches to create an intensive therapeutic setting to maximize each child's ability to communicate, learn, adapt and be successful.

Bluegrass Center for Autism utilizes ABA based teaching techniques individualized to each child while focusing on the development of communication, social skills, life skills and functional academics when appropriate. ABA involves the use of objective data to make decisions and determine how well goals are being achieved. The data we collect tells us when a change in teaching needs to be made or when a learner is ready to move to a more advanced skill. Our ABA based model includes:

- Year-round intensive treatment program for ages 3-24.
- Individualized instruction designed around each child's learning style.
- One to one service with highly trained instructors.
- Individualized programs to encourage social, academic and life skills.

- Daily data and program analysis to accurately monitor each child’s progress.
- Vocational Training
- Community based services to prepare children with foundational learning skills and communication.

### **Our History**

Bluegrass Center for Autism began as a response to the need for a center designed for children on the autism spectrum in 2010 as the Academy at Saint Andrews in Louisville, Kentucky. Over the years, and as the need for our services grew, the Academy at Saint Andrews grew beyond the basement of the Saint Andrews Church, and Bluegrass Center for Autism was born. As Bluegrass Center for Autism, we committed ourselves to providing quality intensive 1:1 treatment utilizing the principles and methodologies of Behavior Analysis while incorporating the benefits of Speech Pathology. We moved to two locations to serve two separate age groups. Kosair Charities, Inc. donates our building on Bluegrass Parkway in Jeffersontown, which serves children aged three years old to eleven years old. The Metts family donates our space at the Mid-City Mall serving our children and young adults aged twelve years old to twenty-four years old.

### **Our Locations**

As you have already learned in “Our History”, Bluegrass Center for Autism has two campuses in Louisville, KY. One located in Jeffersontown on Bluegrass Parkway, and our other campus is located on Bardstown Road in the Mid-City Mall. Our Jeffersontown location is considered our Kosair Charities East Campus and is designed for supporting our children ages three to eleven years old. Our Mid-City Mall location is considered our Mid-City Campus and is designed for supporting our children and young adults ages twelve to twenty-four years old.

#### **Kosair Charities East Campus:**

9810 Bluegrass Parkway  
Louisville, KY 40299  
(502) 473-7219

#### **Mid City Campus:**

1250 Bardstown, Suite 15  
Louisville, KY 40204  
(502)473-7219

### **On the Web**

Check out Bluegrass Center for Autism on the web! We can be found online at:

- Online: [www.bcaky.org](http://www.bcaky.org)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BluegrassCenterAutism](http://www.facebook.com/BluegrassCenterAutism)

Our *Calendar* is on our Facebook page, click on “*for Current Students*” or if viewing this handbook online click on the link below:

2020-21 Session

<https://bca9810.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/HumanResources/EVpgxOhPIARMITowgcnKixEBSSsdMQktiL1gYsiZF4r-WQ?e=cKTqEe>

2021-22 Session

<https://bca9810.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/HumanResources/EQhJK2IQMzdLslXtO9JhSycBuGWXxww5KWKQRK5J8bivaQ?e=F2rfql>

### **Office Hours**

Bluegrass Center for Autism

Administrative staff are available Monday-Friday 8am-4pm

Center Based Clients receive services Monday-Thursday 9am-3:30pm and on Fridays until 1:30pm.

Early Care Services are available as early as 7:30am at each campus, daily

Direct Care Staff work 8am to 4pm Monday-Friday

Community Based Clients schedules vary based on client/staff availability

### **Placement and Overview of Services**

Each center-based client is evaluated and assigned a treatment team and team number. Treatment Team includes Clinical Director (BCBA), as well as an additional Board-Certified Behavior Analyst, Speech Pathologist and at a minimum 2 Registered Behavior Technicians, as well as entry-level instructors. Team #'s are assigned so clients are directly cared for by staff assigned to that team. Team #'s are selected for clients based on age, communication style, social awareness and size. Staff rotate on a 30-minute basis to increase generalization of skill sets and decrease client/staff burnout rates. In the event, staff are not present for work, BCA utilizes the ability to move staff between teams to maintain treatment.

Community based clients are assigned a Behavior Analyst, who will work with parents and caregivers to establish learning readiness skills, improvement of daily life activities including but not limited to self-help skills, establishing, and following routines, appropriate transitions and more.

Community based and Center based clients will both receive an initial assessment and evaluation. The assigned Behavior Analyst will complete a functional assessment of maladaptive behavior and complete a developmental assessment to determine language and learning strengths and weaknesses. Bluegrass Center for Autism utilizes the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning (ABLLS), PEAK Assessment, and Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment (VB-MAPP) to design individualized programs for each client. When necessary BCA BCBA's are trained and capable of writing their own

programs. All behavior and acquisition data are graphed daily and reviewed by treatment team at a minimum bi-weekly, in the center. Community based clients will have data graphed prior to the next scheduled session.

A typical daily schedule is comprised of direct instruction, discrete trial teaching and natural environment learning in individualized and group setting as determined appropriate by treatment team. Child specific schedules are created based on the needs of each child. Group times may include gross motor/fine motor activities, turn taking, conversational skills, learning to follow group instruction through daily circle time, music, etc. Community based clients will receive services based on client specific need and may vary.

Due to the intensive nature of either program, commitment to having your child present is imperative to progress. BCA provides a wonderful transition program when able to work with accommodating programs. If you should decide to change your child's schedule or cease services with BCA, please provide as much notice as possible in order to have a planned, successful transition.

## **Parent/Guardian Involvement**

Your child's progress depends greatly on generalizing skills to the home and community. Therefore, active parent involvement is required for continued enrollment in our programs. Parent/Guardian Involvement will include but not limited to:

Completing weekly "homework" designed by you and your Behavior Analyst. The homework will reflect skills your child is working on in the clinic and will be sent home at the beginning of the week/month dependent upon goal.

Some children will also have "homework", it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to be sure that the child completes their homework as assigned. Children turn in homework on daily basis.

Center Based ONLY - Attending or participating in monthly parent sessions with your child's assigned Program Coordinator, Speech Therapist or Lead Instructor either in person, via phone or video conference to review your child's progress, practice teaching skills you can use at home and answer any questions or concerns you may have. Other family members or caregivers are welcome during these meetings.

Community Based ONLY – Parents/caregivers must be present for each session. Parents will be required to begin and end each session with a review. When appropriate parents will actively participate in sessions.

ALL parents/guardians/caregivers must attend at least 2 BCA offered large group parent trainings per year.

- ALL parents/guardians/caregivers will also be responsible for viewing parent trainings through Central Reach software when required.

*\*Failure to adhere to these guidelines can result in a loss of services.*



## **Program Materials**

### Center Based Clients

- Will be responsible for sending in requested materials each year.
- Daily provide lunch and snacks
- Daily wipes and diapers (if needed)
- Change of clothes to keep at clinic
- Reinforcers
- Other items may be requested as needed
- Communication Devices on daily basis (charged)

### Community Based Clients

- Provide 3 drawer storage unit
- Clipboard
- 1" binder
- 3" white binder
- 3" black binder
- 3" green binder
- Pencil Pouch
- Pack of highlighters
- Pencils
- Pens
- Reinforcers/snacks
- Teaching Materials as requested for programming

## **Attendance/Punctuality**

Consistent attendance to the clinic and community sessions is crucial for your child's success. We require that clients have consistent attendance. If your child has prolonged absences without sufficient documentation to support medical necessity, BCA reserves the right to discontinue services.

Being punctual for drop-off and pick-up is important. Not only to keep a consistent schedule and expectations for your child but to not disrupt the learning of others and the expectations of the staff.

If your child is going to absent, late, or picked up early you must communicate this through text or email with your assigned Lead Instructor and Program Coordinator. Drop off and pick up outside of the regularly scheduled hours should take place in the main lobby of each campus.

Please see payment policies and no-show fee policies to better understand consequences of missed sessions.

### **Transitions**

Bluegrass Center for Autism will make all reasonable efforts to transition children out of their services. When a client decides to terminate services with BCA, they will need to connect BCA employees with other parties to work on collaboration and transition services. When BCA deems they can no longer meet the needs of their client they will be required to provide 30-day notice to families and are committed to finding an alternative service treatment model, whenever possible.

### **No Show Fee Policy**

Bluegrass Center for Autism provides services on a 1:1 client/staff ratio. BCA schedules and pays their employees for hours worked. We do not dismiss employees when clients are not present. Insurance companies do not pay for missed appointments or days; these fees remain your responsibility. Anytime BCA is in operation and your insurance cannot be billed for services by BCA, you are ultimately responsible for paying the prompt pay adjusted fees. BCA operates in units for billing purposes. 1 unit = 15 min of service.

- Current prompt pay adjusted fees
  - 15 min/1 unit = \$7.50
  - 1 hour/4 units = \$30.00
  - 1 day of service (Mon-Thur.) = \$195.00
  - 1 day of service (Friday) = \$135.00
- Waived fees: 30.5 hours/122 units (one week of service) of missed time each calendar year will be waived before you will incur No Show Fees. Any missed time will be immediately applied to the 30.5 fee, once these hours are used the No Show Fees will be applied for missed time.
  - Non-Center Based Services will receive the equivalent of one week of scheduled time waived each year. (ex. 8 hours scheduled a week, 8 hours waived for cancellations each year) Canceling without proper notification results in patient responsibility for services scheduled at prompt pay rate. Reoccurring cancellations can result in loss of services.
- Non-Billable Services –
  - Child is being served by an outside therapist (APT/KIDS Center), during BCA hours
  - Child is sleeping (BCA staff always do their best to keep a child awake during BCA hours, at times this task is too difficult and BCA staff should let parents know and discuss best options. Regardless, BCA cannot bill insurance while a client is sleeping)
  - Tardiness or Early Dismissal – Arriving later than 9:10 begins incurring no show fees, as well as leaving prior to 3:20pm.

BCA reserves the right to adjust granting client’s additional waived fees based on circumstance. The Campus Clinical Director and Billing Director will coordinate together to ensure all special requests or circumstances will be considered. The Executive Director will be involved if there are any disputes or disagreements and will make the final decision in these cases at their discretion.

Below are the guidelines for missed time that may be waived.

- Doctor’s note on letterhead MUST be provided. The note MUST include the date of the appt, the procedure/service provided and any additional restrictions to returning to BCA services.
- Services that are critical and outside of common services will be considered.
  - Psychiatric Services, including re-eval
  - Specialists including but not limited to Neuro, Gastro, etc.
  - Services that are critical and require out of town travel.
  - Dentistry appts that are not primary cleanings or require sedation

\*Please keep in mind that BCA is closed 8 weeks out of the year and try to plan your appointments in advance when you are able.

**Medicaid Patient Cap Policy**

As of May 1, 2021, Bluegrass Center for Autism (“BCA”) will adopt the following policy as it relates to accepting Kentucky Medicaid as a primary or secondary source of coverage for provided services:

BCA will continue to accept Kentucky Medicaid insurance for covered services. However, BCA will cap the number of patients utilizing the Medicaid programs at fifty percent of its overall patient capacity. In implementing this policy, BCA will maintain a specific waitlist for Medicaid patients after it reaches capacity. Waitlisted patients will be contacted on a first-come, first-served basis as patient capacity allows BCA to accept new Medicaid patients. BCA will continue to monitor utilizations and will adjust the fifty percent Medicaid Cap, as necessary.

**Drop Off/Pick Up**

**BCA East Campus**

- Carpool begins promptly at 8:50am, Monday through Friday
- Carpool dismissal is promptly at 3:30pm, Monday through Thursday
- Carpool dismissal is promptly at 1:30pm, Fridays only
- Enter carpool from Bluegrass Parkway, via drive nearest the BCA signage
- You will receive carpool tags, please display them in the right corner of the windshield

- Pay attention and follow the directions of the person or persons directing carpool, pull all the way forward when asked
- Staff will bring your child to your vehicle, open the door and buckle
- **STAY IN YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES**
  - If you feel you must get out of your vehicle to buckle your child or for any other reason, then you should exit carpool line and park.
- Keep conversations to a minimum during carpool. You are provided with contact information for all of the pertinent members of your child’s team, and you are free to contact them at any time.
- If anyone other than a parent is picking up your child, then you should notify the staff and let them know they will be asked to present proper identification
- Failure to pick your child up by 3:45pm results in an immediate fine of **\$100.00**
  - Repeated Offenders may suffer from a discontinuation of services

**BCA Mid-City Campus**

- Carpool begins promptly at 8:45am, Monday through Friday
- Carpool ends at 9:10, if you arrive after this you will need to walk your child into the building.
- Carpool dismissal is promptly at 3:30pm, Monday through Thursday
- Carpool dismissal is promptly at 1:30pm, Fridays only
- Carpool takes place on the Baxter Ave side of the mall.
- Passenger side door should be facing the Mall, this is to ensure the safety of learners and staff when entering or exiting a vehicle.
- Pay attention and please pull forward when other cars have moved.
- Please remember we share this space with other mall patrons.
- Staff will bring your child to your vehicle, open the door and buckle
- **STAY IN YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES**
  - If you feel you must get out of your vehicle to buckle your child or for any other reason, then you should exit carpool line and park.
- Keep conversations to a minimum during carpool. You are provided with contact information for all of the pertinent members of your child’s team, and you are free to contact them at any time.
- If anyone other than a parent is picking up your child, then you should notify the staff and let them know they will be asked to present proper identification
- Failure to pick your child up by 3:45pm results in an immediate fine of \$100.00
  - Repeated Offenders may suffer from a discontinuation of services
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**  
**These rules are to keep carpool efficient and most of all for the SAFETY of YOUR CHILDREN and OUR STAFF!**

### Community/In-Home Services

- Parents/caregivers should arrive to designated location at least 5min. prior to scheduled appointment.
- Parents/caregivers MUST be present during the session.
- Parents/caregivers should be ready and available for a recap of session at least 15minutes prior to the end of the regularly scheduled session.
- 

### Medical Treatment

- Center-Based Services
  - Completion of Medical Distribution Form is required for any medication, including over-the-counter medication and supplements as well as ointments and creams.
  - All medication must be stored in its original container.
  - All medications will be stored in a locked safe in a designated area at each campus.
- Community/in-home services
  - Distribution of meds is only to be performed by parents/caregivers.
  - Unless there is life saving medication that would need to be given in case of emergency (ex. Seizure meds, epi-pen)

### Evidenced Based Treatment Practices

Bluegrass Center for Autism delivers treatment utilizing the principles and practices of Applied Behavior Analysis. The Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB) holds their certificants accountable through the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. BCA requires that their employees always remain in good standing with the BACB. Therefore, BCA agrees to not provide the use of non-evidenced based treatments for their clients.

Section 2.09 of the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts states as below.

2.09 Treatment/Intervention Efficacy. (a) Clients have a right to effective treatment (i.e., based on the research literature and adapted to the individual client). Behavior analysts always have the obligation to advocate for and educate the client about scientifically supported, most-effective treatment procedures. Effective treatment procedures have been validated as having both long-term and short-term benefits to clients and society. (b) Behavior analysts have the responsibility to advocate for the appropriate amount and level of service provision and oversight required to meet the defined behavior-change program goals. (c) In those instances where more than one scientifically supported treatment has been established, additional factors may be considered in selecting interventions, including, but not limited to, efficiency and cost-effectiveness, risks and side-effects of the interventions, client preference, and practitioner experience and training. (d) Behavior analysts review and appraise the effects of any treatments about which they are aware that might impact the goals of the behavior-change program, and their possible impact on the behavior change program, to the extent possible.

**Diapering/Toileting Procedures**

Diapering

- All diapering will take place in the bathroom or at the designated changing table (for smaller children) of the center. The door will always be left open/cracked.
- The following supplies will be in the bathroom/changing area prior to diaper change.
  - Client’s diaper/pull-up
  - Disposable wipes
  - Protective gloves
  - Plastic bags
  - Disinfecting Solution/wipes
  - Disposable changing pads or client’s own changing pad provided by parent

**Toileting**

- Bathrooms in the clinics leave doors open/cracked at all times. Stall doors will be closed for privacy.
- Clients using the toilet may require different levels of prompting. Staff will assist client with the appropriate amount of prompts he/she requires.
- Staff will wear protective gloves if child requires the use of physical prompts.
- If the client is independent with toileting, staff will stand right outside until child is done. Staff will insure the client washes hands thoroughly.
- Staff will also wash hands thoroughly.

**Illness**

For everyone’s well-being it is imperative to follow Bluegrass Center for Autism’s illness policy. Illness spreads rapidly, even despite our best efforts to keep the center sanitized. BCA must ensure the wellbeing of all staff and clients. We reserve the right to send a child home if we feel he/she is too sick to participate in the regularly scheduled programming. If you keep your child home for illness, please assure they are symptom-free for 24-hours prior to returning to the center or your community-based services. Please see the detailed illness policy below.

**Bluegrass Center for Autism Illness Policy**

- Parents and caregivers may not drop off children that are ill. In the event that a child becomes ill while in the care of the center, parents/caregivers will be contacted, and the child must be picked up within 60 minutes.
  - If a parent cannot be reached within 30 minutes of their child becoming ill, the emergency contact will be called.
- Client may return once they have been free of vomiting, diarrhea, or fever for at least 24 hours without medication.

- BCA may require a doctor's note at their discretion to admit children back into the care of the center after a child has been ill.

### **Symptoms Requiring Removal of Child from Center**

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- Vomiting: 1 or more times in a 24-hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or is unable to participate in their regularly scheduled activities.

*Bluegrass Center for Autism staff are committed to keeping clients and environment free of illness. Handwashing and cleaning and disinfecting all areas occurs on a daily basis. In the event a campus experiences an epidemic of any kind, Bluegrass Center for Autism will instruct the cleaning crew to "deep clean".*

### **Professional Development Days**

Several times throughout the year BCA is closed for staff development and training. These days are utilized to ensure that we are adhering to the guidelines set by the training requirements for Safe Crisis Management, First Aid, CPR, Child/Abuse and Neglect, and general update and review of implementation of ABA.

These days are scheduled in advance and marked on our calendars. Services to clients will not be performed on these days in the center nor home/community environment. BCA utilizes this time to be sure their staff are implementing therapy that meets the standards of BACB and ASHA. Including, but not limited to ethics, communication, basic principles of ABA, abuse & neglect, HIPAA, etc. Other trainings are available daily through BHCOE and Central Reach to all staff and required to participate regularly.

### **Inclement Weather/Emergency Closings**

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, power failures, gas leaks, widespread illness, etc. can disrupt Bluegrass Center for Autism services. The decision to cease services will be made by the Executive Director and Clinical Director staff. If we should

need to close for an emergency, weather-related or otherwise, we will provide as much notice as possible. We will communicate with you through email and Remind Text Alert Notification System. Upon registering to receive our services you will receive detailed information on how to sign up for the text alert system.

### **Lunch/Snacks**

Bluegrass Center for Autism does not provide regular meals/snacks/drinks. All clients are asked to bring their own lunch/snacks, or money/credit card to purchase food if you are a Mid-City Mall location client. A refrigerator, freezer, microwave, toaster oven is available to store and heat edible items. If your child uses edibles as reinforcers we ask that you send these in bulk, and we will store appropriately. Please be sure to report any special diets/allergies to Bluegrass Center for Autism in your registration packet.

### **Personal Items**

Bluegrass Center for Autism is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property. Therefore, if an item is of significant personal or financial value, we discourage bringing the item of value to the clinic. The previous statement excludes communication/AAC devices. Each client does have their own cubby/locker space where personal items will be stored, such as additional clothing, extra snacks, etc.

### **Controlled Substances**

For the safety of everyone, controlled and/or illegal substances are not permitted at Bluegrass Center for Autism.

### **Tobacco Use**

Bluegrass Center for Autism is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for team members, visitors, and clients. Smoking is allowed only in designated areas outside the building away from client view. The use of e-cigarettes and vape pens are prohibited on either campus. Furthermore, any related paraphernalia such as vape pens, e-cigarettes, etc. is prohibited on either premise. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Personal Values**

Your values and family beliefs are important to us. Please help us get to know your family by sharing what is important to you. This may include information such as family values, personal dreams, and religious beliefs. During your initial meetings with your assigned team members is an appropriate time to discuss these personal items.

### **Discipline and Behavior Intervention Process**

Bluegrass Center for Autism requires that Behavior Support Plans are developed for each client including target behaviors for decrease as well as increase. The Behavior Analyst responsible for writing the plan will be responsible for training all direct care staff, including speech therapists to implement the behavior protocol procedures and record data properly. Collection of data procedures will be outlined in the Behavior



Support Plan. All Behavior Support Plans are reviewed with parent/caregivers and signatures are required. All Behavior Support Plans must be approved by the Clinical Director of specific program.

Bluegrass Center for Autism favors proactive strategies such as replacement skill acquisition, environmental manipulations, communication training, discrimination training, etc. to promote appropriate behavior. When reactive strategies are necessary, BCA chooses the most effective but least restrictive interventions when possible.

- Minimally restrictive procedures may include time-out from reinforcement, privilege restriction, response cost (token economy), response blocking, corrective feedback/social disapproval (“stop”, “no”).
- Mildly restrictive procedures may include positive punishment or overcorrection procedures, guided compliance (physical guidance to complete a necessary activity).
- Bluegrass Center for Autism recognizes that some clients require Behavior Support Plans that include the use of physical restraints in order to maintain safety. If this is the case the procedures will be explained, and you will be asked to sign off on the use of these procedures. Bluegrass Center for Autism trains with and implements the Safe Crisis Management techniques, through JKM Training, Inc. BCA employs a JKM certified SCM instructor in order to train all staff.
- Initial staff trainings are 3 days long and then quarterly reviews take place. All clients are asked to sign the SCM waiver form upon receiving initial services. These safety procedures are guaranteed to only be implemented under absolutely necessary conditions. If a client requires these procedures to be used on a regular basis, due to the severity target behavior, it will be written into the Behavior Support Plan, it will be documented, and parents will be notified.

## **Visitors**

To provide for the safety and security of clients and team members and our facilities, only authorized visitors are allowed in non-public areas of our facilities. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensured security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards team member welfare, and avoids potential distractions, and disturbances. Because of safety and security reasons, family and friends of team members are discouraged from visiting. Visitors and clients alike should be accompanied by a team member at all times when accessing non-public areas of our facilities.

We ask that all visitors enter the building through the main lobby at each campus. Visitors are to wait in the lobby until the designated staff member to their appointment meets them in the lobby to escort them through the building.

Should parents/caregivers want to observe a session with of their child they will be asked to video conference to view session while seated in a BCA office with the assigned Behavior Analyst to explain and answer questions as they view the therapy session.

### **Communication**

Communication is important to us and key to a successful experience with BCA. The direct care staff and your child (when appropriate) will complete a “Daily Log” that will review their progress throughout the day. This will make note of any significant concerns and/or praises.

Mass communication occurs on a monthly basis as a “Bluegrass Banner” email from the Executive Director. This includes events, updates and general information for all clients and community supporters.

Separate emails arrive on a regular based on need of disseminating information.

### **Emergency Action Plans**

Each of our campuses has emergency procedures for severe weather, power outages, and fire, which are established for everyone’s safety. These emergency action plans will be discussed during your orientation period and posted within each facility. Periodic refresher sessions, including evacuation drills, will be administered at each campus. It is your responsibility to be familiar with your campuses emergency procedures and to follow the direction of your supervisor(s) during all emergencies.

The safety and wellbeing of our staff and the children entrusted to their care is of utmost importance. It is critical that each and every individual is accounted for at all times. This is especially true when caring for children during emergency drills, or under the threat of real emergencies.

### **Social Media**

As a multi-faceted Agency with outreach across the state of Kentucky, Bluegrass Center for Autism has a great number of audiences and stakeholders with which it communicates. In an effort to maintain a presence in front of as many audiences as possible, we use social media to expand and strengthen our communication.

For unity and clarity, Bluegrass Center for Autism will maintain a Facebook account that will be managed by the development director. These accounts will provide information on our services, locations, and events. Other than these accounts, there should be no other accounts, profiles or events for Bluegrass Center for Autism on Facebook, Instagram, or any other social media sites.

Clients will sign media release forms and are able to dictate if/how their child’s picture may be used. Clients, parents, and caregivers are asked not to “friend” Bluegrass Center for Autism employees as employees are instructed not to “friend” clients, parents, and caregivers for their personal accounts, as well. Team Members and are welcome to mention Bluegrass Center for Autism as their employer and clients may reference

Bluegrass Center for Autism as their ABA provider on their personal social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc. However, they should refrain from any remarks (disparaging or not) about the company in posts, blogs, etc.

### **Team Member and Client Relationships**

While Bluegrass Center for Autism does not wish to interfere with the personal life of its team members, certain types of relationships may interfere with the Agency's interests. Therefore, dating between team members is strongly discouraged. To prevent unwarranted harassment claims, confidentiality lapses, uncomfortable working relationships, morale concerns among other team members and even the appearance of impropriety, managers and supervisors of the Agency are strictly prohibited from engaging in consensual romantic or sexual relationships with any team member of Bluegrass Center for Autism. Additionally, after-hours relationships with clients or parents/family members of clients are strongly discouraged. If you have any questions concerning the intent of this policy or its application to any existing or contemplated relationship, please consult the Executive Director or Human Resources Department. All such inquiries will be treated confidentially and consistently.

### **Confidential Information and HIPAA**

It is the responsibility of all Bluegrass Center for Autism team members to safeguard sensitive Agency information. Sensitive information is defined as health & healthcare information, methods & concepts, data documentation, client lists & records, donor info, personnel & confidential records, marketing, accounting, pricing or salary information, business plans & strategies, negotiations & contracts, and all other items originated by the Agency. Unless otherwise identified by management, staff assume that all such information is confidential.

Bluegrass Center for Autism is a covered entity as defined by HIPAA; and, in addition, we maintain health care insurance and related plans that are subject to HIPAA requirements. Therefore, HIPAA privacy and security provisions will apply to protected health information (PHI) maintained by the Agency.

HIPAA regulations will be followed in administrative activities undertaken by assigned team members when they involve PHI in any of the following circumstances: health information privacy, health information security and health information electronic transmission. As stated above, the Agency will consider any breaches in privacy and confidentiality extremely serious, and will result in corrective action, up to and including discharge.

Questions regarding HIPAA policy provisions should be addressed to the Billing Team and Executive Director. Agency records that are governed by this policy are maintained for a period relative to each specific record's requirement, and when the maximum retention period has passed, the records will be subject to the Agency's policy for completed record destruction.

**Hazard Communication**

We support OSHA Hazard Communications standards, which require employers to educate their workers on workplace chemical hazards and chemical labeling. Our Hazard Communication Program provides staff with information and training regarding the hazards of certain chemicals you may come in contact with, and how to avoid these hazards. Team members who work with chemicals as part of their jobs will receive specifically designed training on our hazard communication program.

**CPR and First Aid**

CPR and First Aid Training is required for designated staff that provide direct care to clients and who could potentially be faced with situations that require these skills. Training topics to be discussed may include, but are not limited to, recognizing the onset of emergencies, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), self-protection prior to providing care to another, rescue breathing, and injury treatments to wounds. Additionally, refresher training and on-going recertification training are standards in these areas.

**Bloodborne Pathogens**

Bloodborne Pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms found in human blood or body fluids, which may cause diseases in humans. These “pathogens” include the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), the Hepatitis C Virus (HVC), and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). OSHA requires employers to educate staff on health risks caused by blood or bodily fluid exposures.

We provide Blood borne Pathogen training to all team members and specific training to those team members who are most at risk for coming in contact with these microorganisms. This training is designed to protect you from possible exposures during the performance of your job duties or when assisting in an accident/injury situation.

**Complaints and Concerns**

Any problems, questions or complaints related to the care of your child should be discussed with the Clinical Director of the campus or program where your child is assigned. If your assigned Clinical Director is unable to resolve or if you are not satisfied with their response, then you should reach out to the Executive Director.

Clinical Directors of each campus are also the Ethics Officers of Bluegrass Center for Autism. If you have a formal complaint, you will need to complete the Ethics Violation Form, which they can provide to you and submit. As Ethics Officers, the complaint will be reviewed, and proper action will be taken.

Any problems, questions or complaints related to BCA billing practices or your statement should be directed to the Billing Director. If the Billing Director is unable to

resolve or if you are not satisfied with their response, then you should reach out to the Executive Director.

In the instance, that your complaint or concern has not been addressed to your satisfaction by a BCA staff member, you have the option of reporting such instances to our governing bodies. As an ABA provider, our practices are governed by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board, Speech Providers are bound by American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and we choose as an organization to be accepted to and abide by the guidelines in place by the Behavioral Health Center of Excellence accreditation. To make a complaint, please visit the links below and follow instructions.

Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB)

[https://www.bacb.com/ethics/#ethics\\_reporting](https://www.bacb.com/ethics/#ethics_reporting)

Phone: 1-720-438-4321

Days: Monday to Friday

Hours: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Mountain Time)

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

<https://www.asha.org/about/contacts/>

1-800-638-8255

Available 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday

Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (BHCOE) <https://bhcoe.org/become-a-bhcoe/report-a-compliance-concern/>

**Head Office**

Behavioral Health Center of Excellence

7083 Hollywood Boulevard #565

Los Angeles, CA 90028

[310-627-2746](tel:310-627-2746)

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

Bluegrass Center for Autism does not discriminate in enrollment opportunities because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

### **Reportable Incidents**

Employees of Bluegrass Center for Autism are mandatory reporters if they suspect that a child has been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused, neglected or is in danger of harm. Kentucky law requires anyone who suspects abuse or neglect to report it to authorities.

**Discontinuation of Services**

A client may choose to discontinue services at any time. This may be done by contacting a Clinical Director and or Executive Director. Clients will be held responsible for any fees incurred up until the last date of service.

There are times when Bluegrass Center for Autism may choose to discontinue services, based upon the inability to meet the client’s needs or attendance issues. Examples may include, but are not limited to, ongoing medical that cannot be managed by BCA employees, ongoing medical issues that prohibit the client from participating in regularly scheduled activities; clients behavioral needs that do not have sufficient Behavior management services to provide enough support; behaviors that pose a safety risk to others; chronic tardiness or absence more than 20% of scheduled hours; lack of participation or follow through from parents/caregivers; and failure to abide by BCA payment policies.

In the event, that Bluegrass Center for Autism has concerns about the ability to meet a client’s needs, the following procedures to develop a plan are put into place.

- The supervising BCBA will address concerns with the Clinical Director to develop a plan to resolve any concern. Additional training of all direct care staff, as appropriate.
- The supervising BCBA will contact the Parent/Caregiver to report any concerns and discuss ideas for improved supports and/or plan to resolve the concern. Additional training of direct care staff may be provided.
- A team meeting will be called to develop a plan to resolve concerns. At this time, the client may be placed on probationary status. This will include a specific plan of action for resolution. Team meetings will be required every 30 days until the issue of concern is resolved. Continued issues during this probationary period may result in immediate discontinuation of services.
- If the concerns are related to financial obligations to BCA, the Billing Director will contact the responsible parties. Payment plans will be offered, in the event that responsible parties do not abide, services may be discontinued.

Although every effort will be made by Bluegrass Center for Autism to resolve any concerns, there may be circumstances where Bluegrass Center for Autism will have to discontinue services immediately. Examples that would lead to immediate termination of services may include severe injury to self or others, excessive property damage, medical care beyond the scope of practice for BCA staff, insufficient budget for services, or illegal activity demonstrated by client or parent/caregiver.

### **A Final Word**

Once again, while Bluegrass Center for Autism wants to provide you with as much insight as possible, we realize we cannot cover every possible situation or opportunity. The policies, programs and procedures described here are simply guidelines and are presented in summary form, as a matter of information only. If questions arise about how they are applied, final decisions regarding interpretation rests with Bluegrass Center for Autism's leadership team. We also reserve the right to modify or change any of these guidelines or other policies or procedures at any time. When changes do occur, we will develop, implement, and interpret sound client practices compatible with our mission, and in doing so will comply with all Federal, State, and local laws. Should changes occur during your client relationship with BCA, you will receive updated information concerning those changes as soon as practical.

If you have difficulty understanding any portion of the Client Handbook, or if you have any questions at all, please discuss them with the Executive Director.

**Client Handbook Acknowledgement**

This is to certify that I have received this client handbook, and I have read, or will read, the handbook in its entirety, and I am, or will be, familiar with its contents. I understand that it is not a binding contract but a set of guidelines for the implementation of client policies. I understand that Bluegrass Center for Autism may modify any of the provisions of this handbook at any time, with or without notice, and may deviate from any provision of this handbook in its sole discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_

Client (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_

Client (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date