

A Family Toolkit for Navigating Treatment Centers in Arizona



By Turtle Island Women Warriors

Why This Matters

Across Arizona, families have trusted treatment programs hoping their loved ones would get help, only to find out later that some of these places were not safe.

People have been:

- Trafficked into programs
- Placed in unsafe housing
- Used for insurance billing
- Left without real treatment

Families were left searching, confused, and sometimes grieving.

This guide is here to help you protect your loved ones.

Understanding Treatment Centers in Arizona

Treatment is not just one place. It is a system of care.

Arizona uses a level-of-care system called ASAM. This means treatment ranges from low support to high medical care depending on a person's needs.

Treatment is not one thing. It is a system of levels.

Levels of Care

1. Detox (Medical Detox) – Highest Level

- First step for many people
- 24-hour medical supervision
- Helps safely manage withdrawal

What it looks like

- Hospital or licensed facility
- Doctors, nurses, medications

Used for

- Alcohol

- Opioids including fentanyl
- Benzodiazepines

This is short-term and usually lasts a few days to a week.

2. Inpatient or Residential Treatment

- Live in care with 24-hour support
- Structured environment with daily therapy

What it looks like

- 30 to 90 days or longer
- Therapy, group sessions, case management

Key difference

- Inpatient is more medical
- Residential is more home-like

Best for

- Severe addiction
- Mental health and substance use

3. Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)

- Full day treatment
- You do not live there
- 20 or more hours per week
- Step down from inpatient

4. Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)

- 9 to 20 hours per week
- Therapy and group sessions
- Can still work or attend school

Important

This is a major area of fraud in Arizona

- Billing for services that never happen
- Minimal or fake treatment

5. Outpatient Treatment (OP) – Lowest Level

- Weekly therapy

- Medication management
- Best for mild cases or aftercare

6. Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

- Methadone
- Suboxone
- Naltrexone

Must be provided through certified programs.

Behavioral Health Residential Facility (BHRF)

A BHRF is a **licensed residential setting in Arizona** where individuals live while receiving behavioral health support.

What it provides

- 24-hour supervision
- Structured living environment
- Medication monitoring
- Case management
- Support for mental health and substance use

Important to understand

- Not a hospital
- Not detox
- Not always a full treatment center
- Therapy may happen off-site

Sober Living Homes

Sober living is **housing only, not treatment**.

Should be

- Drug free
- Structured
- Supportive

Reality in Arizona

- Some are safe
- Others are unlicensed, overcrowded, and connected to fraud

Side by Side Comparison

BHRF

- Licensed residential support
- 24-hour staff
- Some services and coordination
- Moderate structure

Sober Living

- Housing only
- Little to no staff
- No clinical treatment
- Structure varies

Treatment Centers

- Licensed clinical care
- Doctors and therapists
- Full treatment services
- Highly structured

The Biggest Confusion

Families are often told their loved one will receive both housing and treatment.

The truth is:

Sober living is housing

BHRF is supervised residential support

Treatment centers provide licensed clinical care

This confusion is where harm happens.

For Tribal Members

If you are a tribal member, there are treatment programs specifically designed for you.

These include:

- Tribal behavioral health programs
- Indian Health Service or 638 facilities
- Native focused treatment centers

These programs often provide:

- Culturally grounded care
- Traditional healing
- Community-based support

These options are often safer and more culturally responsive.

Even if a program says they serve Native clients, always verify:

- Licensing
- Services
- Reputation

Arizona Specific Reality

Families need to understand what is happening in Arizona.

- Sober living homes are often not licensed
- Intensive outpatient programs have been used for fraud
- Patient brokering targets vulnerable communities
- Housing and treatment are often mixed together in harmful ways

This has created a serious public health crisis.

What Is Fraudulent Treatment

Fraud happens when programs:

- Bill for services not provided
- Enroll people for profit
- Do not provide real therapy
- Place people in unsafe homes

What Is Patient Brokering

This includes:

- Free travel
- Cash or incentives
- Promises of luxury treatment

This is illegal and dangerous.

Do not allow your loved ones to be recruited through Facebook groups or social media.

Red Flags to Watch For

- Money or incentives offered
- No clear license
- No treatment plan
- Overcrowded housing

- No real therapy
- Limited or no contact with your loved one
- Pressure or urgency

Additional Red Flags in Arizona

In some cases, individuals in housing or programs are asked to apply for benefits such as food stamps.

While applying for benefits is not always wrong, families should be cautious if:

- Clients are required or pressured to apply for food stamps
- Benefits are used to support the household instead of the individual
- The program relies on clients' benefits to operate
- Clients do not have control over their own food or resources

👉 These situations may be a sign of **financial exploitation or misuse of benefits**

Why This Matters

Legitimate treatment centers and housing programs should:

- Provide basic needs such as food and safe living conditions
- Not depend on clients' personal benefits to sustain operations
- Respect each individual's rights and resources

Simple Way to Say It

If a program cannot provide food and basic needs without using the client's benefits, that is a red flag.

My honest take:

This addition is **very important** because:

- Families don't always recognize this as exploitation
- It's happening quietly
- It connects directly to the bigger issue of fraud

What Good Treatment Looks Like

- Licensed facility
- Qualified staff
- Structured program

- Safe environment
- Real therapy
- Family involvement

Questions Every Family Should Ask

- Is this facility licensed in Arizona
- Who are the clinicians
- What is the daily schedule
- Can I stay in contact
- What is the aftercare plan

What Families Should Do

- Research programs
- Verify licensing
- Stay connected
- Ask questions
- Trust your instincts

What Families Should Not Do

- Do not trust programs offering money or gifts
- Do not send your loved one without verification
- Do not ignore red flags
- Do not allow isolation

Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Safe treatment
- Honest services
- Leave a program
- Contact family
- Report abuse

What To Do If You Suspect Fraud

- Report to ADHS
- Report to AHCCCS Fraud Hotline

- Contact law enforcement
- Contact advocacy groups
- Document everything

How This Connects to Our Advocacy

Fraud happens when:

- Housing is used to control people
- Treatment is billed but not provided
- Families are not informed
- Systems fail to protect people

This is why education matters.

What Actually Helps

Real recovery starts with:

- Safe housing
- Voluntary treatment
- Cultural respect
- Community support
- Family connection

A Message to Families

You are not alone.

If something feels wrong, speak up.

If you are unsure, ask questions.

If your loved one is missing, keep searching.

Your voice matters.

Resources and Support

Immediate Help

- Call 911
- Call or text 988
- Text HOME to 741741

Report Fraud or Unsafe Treatment

- AHCCCS Fraud Hotline 602-417-4193
<https://www.azahcccs.gov/Fraud/>
- Arizona Department of Health Services 602 364 2536
<https://www.azdhs.gov/>
- Arizona Attorney General 602 542 5763
<https://www.azag.gov/>

Verify a Treatment Center

- Arizona Department of Health Services website <https://www.azdhs.gov/>
Always verify before sending a loved one.

Find Treatment

- AHCCCS provider search
<https://www.azahcccs.gov/>
- SAMHSA treatment locator
<https://findtreatment.gov/>

Tribal and Native Focused Resources

- Indian Health Service
<https://www.ihs.gov/>
- Navajo Nation Behavioral Health
- Gila River Indian Community
- Salt River Pima Maricopa
- Tohono O'odham Nation
- White Mountain Apache
- San Carlos Apache
- Pascua Yaqui

These programs often provide culturally grounded and trusted care.

Urban Native and Community Organizations

- Native Health Phoenix 602 279 5262

<https://www.nativehealthphoenix.org/>

- Phoenix Indian Center 602 264 6768

<https://phxindcenter.org>

Advocacy and Community Support

Turtle Island Women Warriors

www.turtleislandww.com

Support includes:

- Family advocacy
- Outreach
- Help locating loved ones
- Community support

Important Reminder

- Do not trust programs offering money, gifts, or travel
- Do not allow recruitment through Facebook or social media
- Always verify licensing and services
- Stay in conta