

Brian Field, representing the Money Follows the Person program
Maureen Foley-Roy, Hearing Officer

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The issue to be decided is whether the facility acted in accordance with state law when it proposed to involuntarily discharge the Appellant from the facility because he no longer requires skilled nursing care.

FINDING OF FACTS

1. Prior to being admitted to the facility, the Appellant lived in his own home. Subsequently there was a foreclosure on his home. (Administrator's testimony)
2. On [REDACTED] 2016, the Facility issued a 30 Day Notice of Intent to Transfer or Discharge stating that the Appellant was being discharged because he no longer needed the services of a skilled nursing facility. (Exhibit A: 30 Day Notice of Intent to Transfer or Discharge)
3. The notice stated that the Appellant would be discharged to [REDACTED], which is a motel. (Exhibit A, Administrator & Appellant's testimony)
4. The Facility did not issue a discharge plan to the Appellant in writing. (Administrator's and Appellant's testimony)
5. The Facility's plan was to pay for a motel room for the Appellant for a week and give him gift cards for a local grocery store. (Administrator's testimony)
6. There was no evidence presented at the hearing that the Facility consulted with its Medical Director regarding the safety and medical implications for care if the Resident were to be discharged to the motel. (Hearing Record)
7. The Appellant is being treated for depression. The facility contacted CHR regarding continuing treatment but no plan could be initiated until the Appellant was actually discharged. (Facility Social Work staff testimony)
8. The facility staff and the Appellant contacted several area homeless shelters but the shelters would not consider admitting the Appellant because he currently lives in the facility and therefore, is not homeless. (Facility staff's testimony)
9. The Appellant has been working with the Money Follows the Person ("MFP") program to secure housing after being discharged from the facility. They have encountered difficulties because the Appellant has no income at this time, but

there are several applications pending, for both sources of income and housing. (MFP staff testimony)

CONCLUSION OF LAW

1. Section 19a-535(h)(1) of the Connecticut General Statutes (Conn. Gen. Stat.) authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to hold a hearing to determine whether the transfer or discharge is in accordance with this section.
2. Conn. Gen. Stat. 19a-535(a)(4) provides that the term "discharge" means the movement of a resident from a facility to a non-institutional setting.
3. Conn. Gen. Stat. §19a-535(b) provides that a facility shall not transfer or discharge a resident from the facility except to meet the welfare of the resident which cannot be met in the facility, or unless the resident no longer needs the services of the facility due to improved health; the facility is required to transfer the resident pursuant to section 17b-359 or section 17b-360, or the health or safety of individuals in the facility is endangered, or in the case of a self-pay resident, for the resident's nonpayment or arrearage of more than fifteen days of the per diem facility room rate, or the facility ceases to operate.
4. Conn. Gen. Stat. §19a-535(c)(1) provides that before effecting a transfer or discharge of a resident from the facility, the facility shall notify, in writing, the resident and resident's guardian or conservator, if any, or legally liable relative or other responsible party if known, of the proposed transfer or discharge the reasons therefore, the effective date of the proposed transfer or discharge, the location to which the resident is to be transferred or discharged, the right to appeal the proposed transfer or discharge and the procedures for initiating such an appeal as determined by the Department of Social Services, the date by which an appeal must be initiated in order to preserve the resident's right to an appeal hearing and the date by which an appeal must be initiated in order to stay the proposed transfer or discharge and the possibility of an exception to the date by which an appeal must be initiated in order to stay the proposed transfer or discharge for good cause, that the resident may represent himself or herself or be represented by legal counsel, a relative, a friend or other spokesperson, and information as to bed hold and nursing home readmission policy when required in accordance with section 19a-537. The notice shall also include the name, mailing address and telephone number of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. If the resident is, or the facility alleges a resident is, mentally ill or developmentally disabled, the notice shall include the name, mailing address and telephone number of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities. The notice shall be given at least thirty days and no more than sixty days prior to the resident's proposed transfer or discharge, except where the health or safety of individuals in the facility are endangered, or where the resident's health improves sufficiently to allow a more immediate transfer

or discharge, or where immediate transfer or discharge is necessitated by urgent medical needs or where a resident has not resided in the facility for thirty days, in which cases notice shall be given as many days before the transfer or discharge as practicable.

7. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 19a-535(e) provides that except in an emergency or in the case of transfer to a hospital, no resident shall be transferred or discharged from a facility unless a discharge plan has been developed by the personal physician of the resident or the medical director in conjunction with the nursing director, social worker or other health care provider. To minimize the disruptive effects of the transfer or discharge on the resident, the person responsible for developing the plan shall consider the feasibility of placement near the resident's relatives, the acceptability of the placement to the resident and the resident's guardian or conservator, if any or the resident's legally liable relative or other responsible party, if known, and any other relevant factors which affect the resident's adjustment to the move. The plan shall contain a written evaluation of the effects of the transfer or discharge on the resident and a statement of the action taken to minimize such affects. In addition, the plan shall outline the care and kinds of services which the resident shall receive upon transfer or discharge. Not less than thirty days prior to an involuntary transfer or discharge, a copy of the discharge plan shall be provided to the resident's personal physician if the discharge plan was prepared by the medical director, to the resident and the resident's guardian or conservator, if any, or legally liable relative or other responsible party, if known.
8. There was no evidence presented that the Facility's discharge plan had been developed with either the Appellant's personal physician or the Facility's medical director. There was no written evaluation of the effects of the discharge on the Appellant and no statement of action to minimize such affects. There was no outline of the care and services which the Appellant would receive upon discharge.
9. The Facility's proposal to discharge the Appellant does not comply with state statutes.

DISCUSSION

All parties seem to be in agreement that the Appellant no longer needs the level of care provided by a skilled nursing facility. The facility was correct in issuing the notice of discharge. However, the facility did not create a discharge plan that was in accordance with Connecticut General Statute § 19a-535(e).

DECISION

The Appellant's appeal is **GRANTED**.

ORDER

1. The Facility is ordered to rescind its proposal to involuntarily discharge the Appellant from its care.
2. No later than [REDACTED] 2016, the Facility will submit to OLCRAH proof of compliance with this order.

Maureen Foley-Roy
Maureen Foley-Roy
Hearing Officer

Cc: Desiree Pina, LTC Ombudsman Program,
Department of Social Services, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105

Barbara Cass, Section Chief, Facility Licensing and Investigations Section,
Connecticut, Department of Public Health, 410 Capitol Avenue, MS#12HSR,
P.O. Box 340308, Hartford, CT 06134-0308

RIGHT TO REQUEST RECONSIDERATION

The Appellant has the right to file a written reconsideration request within **15** days of the mailing date of the decision on the grounds there was an error of fact or law, new evidence has been discovered or other good cause exists. If the request for reconsideration is granted, the appellant will be notified within 25 days of the request date. No response within **25** days means that the request for reconsideration has been denied. The right to request a reconsideration is based on §4-181a (a) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Reconsideration requests should include specific grounds for the request: for example, indicate what error of fact or law, what new evidence, or what other good cause exists.

Reconsideration requests should be sent to: Department of Social Services, Director, Office of Legal Counsel, Regulations and Administrative Hearings, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

The Appellant has the right to appeal this decision to Superior Court within **45** days of the mailing of this decision, or 45 days after the agency denies a petition for reconsideration of this decision. The right to appeal is based on §4-183 of the Connecticut General Statutes. To appeal, a petition must be filed at Superior Court. A copy of the petition must be served upon the Office of the Attorney General, 55 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106 or the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105. A copy of the petition must also be served on all parties to the hearing.

The 45-day appeal period may be extended in certain instances if there is good cause. The extension request must be filed with the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services in writing no later than 90 days from the mailing of the decision. Good cause circumstances are evaluated by the Commissioner or his/her designee in accordance with §17b-61 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Agency's decision to grant an extension is final and is not subject to review or appeal.

The appeal should be filed with the clerk of the Superior Court in the Judicial District of New Britain or the Judicial District in which the Appellant resides.