

Psychiatric Security Review Board

At a Glance

ROBERT B. BERGER, ESQ., *Chairman*

Established – 1985

Statutory Authority – Conn. Gen. Stat.

Sec. 17a-581

Central Office – 505 Hudson Street, First Floor,

Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Number of Employees – 4

Recurring Operating Expenses - \$287,200

Organizational Structure – One Administrative Unit

Mission

To protect the safety of Connecticut citizens and certain individuals by ordering appropriate treatment, confinement or conditional release of persons accused of crimes but found not guilty by reason of mental disease or mental defect.

Statutory Responsibility

The Board, through an administrative hearing process, determines the level of supervision and treatment for an acquittee deemed necessary to protect society. The Board, based on its legal findings on the danger that an acquittee poses, due to his/her mental condition, orders confinement in a maximum-security facility, confinement at a psychiatric hospital, approves temporary leave for a confined acquittee, placement in the custody of the Commissioner of Mental Retardation or grants conditional release. In addition, the Board makes recommendations on the issue of discharge or continued confinement to the Superior Court.

Public Service

The general public is the beneficiary of the agency's work. Effectiveness of the agency's work is measured by the recidivism rate of this criminal population. During this fiscal year, there was one motor vehicle violation by a conditionally released acquittee, and no acquittee(s) escaped from custody at Connecticut Valley Hospital. This fiscal year, there were no felony or misdemeanor arrests.

During 2000-2001, 180 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. This fiscal year, seven persons were committed to the Board by the Superior Court. In addition, the Superior Court extended a total of nine acquittees' commitment terms a total of 34 times. Four persons have been removed from the Board's jurisdiction, two due to death and two acquittees' commitment terms expired. No acquittees were discharged by the Superior Court and the Superior Court overturned no acquittees commitment terms. There is ongoing litigation concerning two commitments.

In 2000-2001, the Board held 162 hearings and 40 case conferences resulting in 163 orders being issued. There was a five-percent denial by the Board of applications for a change in placement or status of an acquittee. As of June 30, 2001, 176 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. The status of these persons as of June 30, 2001 is as follows: 31 percent confined in maximum security at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 53 percent confined in a non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 15 percent on conditional release, and one percent in custody of the Commissioner of Mental Retardation. Of the 94 acquittees confined in a non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 38 percent have some access to the community via temporary leave. Again, this year, there is an increase in the number of acquittees confined in the non-maximum Dutcher Service at Connecticut Valley Hospital; this increase is the result of transfers from maximum security and the termination of conditional releases.

Improvements/Achievements 2000-2001

- Developed and piloted individualized monthly progress reports for conditionally release acquirtees.
- Implemented centralized statewide mandatory training for mental health professionals providing services to the acquirtee populations.
- Re-designed exhibit form used to present evidence to expedite hearing procedures.
- Upgraded Management Information System.

Reducing Waste

- Utilizing updated computer equipment, a new customized database and frugal spending habits, thus successfully meeting the 5 percent mandated decrease in agency funds.
- Implemented contractual agreement that will reduce inflationary costs.
- Coordinated hearing dockets to reduce duplication of proceedings and requests for continuances, which permits meeting increased workload at current levels of service funding.

Strategic Planning/Business Planning

The Board's strategic plan includes:

- To work towards the reduction of administrative appeals in conjunction with advice from the Office of the Attorney General.
- To implement Psychiatric Security Review Board no contact orders on the statewide registry for restraining, protective and no contact orders.

The Board's strategic planning process also includes a collaborative process with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to improve its forensic services to this acquirtee population. The goals and objectives include:

- To develop an automated internal tracking system to ensure proper training is provided to all service providers involved with conditionally released acquirtees.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to enhance the integration of risk management into treatment plans for acquirtees and evidence presented to the Board in order to promote community safety and to reduce recidivism.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to identify the needs and methods to improve the delivery of culturally competent treatment services to the culturally diverse population of acquirtees.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to examine the community service system and inpatient services for acquirtees, and to propose methods to establish a comprehensive inpatient and outpatient system that meets both the clinical and public safety requirements for the management of acquirtees.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Board members for 2000-2001 were Robert Berger, Esq., Janet Williams, M.D., Julia Ramos Grenier, Ph.D., John Ryan, Sylvia Cancela and Susan Blair.

The Board is assisted by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in meeting the Affirmative Action requirements of the statute and follows such regulations of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.