

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 - \$319,541

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, orders confinement at a psychiatric hospital, approves temporary leave for a confined acquittee, orders 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 commitment 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 were no motor vehicle violation(s), felony or misdemeanor arrests by conditionally released acquittee(s). Although there were no escapes from custody at Connecticut Valley Hospital, one acquittee was arrested for a misdemeanor while utilizing his temporary leave, and one acquittee residing in maximum-security was convicted of a misdemeanor.

During 2003-2004, 180 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. This fiscal year, six persons were committed to the Board by the Superior Court, and nine acquittees' commitment terms were extended. Eight persons have been removed from the Board's jurisdiction; five acquittees' commitment terms expired and three acquittees were discharged by the Superior Court.

In 2003-2004, the Board held 162 hearings and 59 case conferences resulting in 185 orders being issued, a 10-percent increase over last fiscal year. There was a three-percent denial by the Board of applications for a change in placement or status of an acquittee. The status of the persons under the jurisdiction of the Board as of June 30, 2004 is as follows: 30-percent confined in maximum-security at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 53-percent confined in a non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 16-percent on conditional release, and one-percent in custody of the Commissioner of Mental Retardation. Of the 91 acquittees confined in a non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital 24-percent have been granted temporary leave. The distribution of the acquittee population between the various placement settings has again remained steady; however, the number of acquittees on temporary leave has decreased by three-percent from last year.

Improvements/Achievements 2003-2004

- Hired a new Executive Director following the retirement of the former Executive Director.
- Maintained quarterly treatment team meetings with community service providers and DMHAS regarding all conditionally released acquittees.
- Drafted a Conditional Release Procedure Manual in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to be used as a resource by community service providers.
- Achieved zero percent recidivism of conditional release population, as reflected by no arrests.
- Submitted and implemented print reduction plan in response to the Governor's E-publishing Executive Order.
- Complied with Public Act No. 03-242, and act regarding the collection of DNA samples and the preservation and testing of DNA evidence.

Reducing Waste

- Kept spending at allocated levels.

Strategic Planning/Business Planning

The Board's strategic plan includes:

- Working with Department of Information Technology and Department of Public Safety to implement Psychiatric Security Review Board no contact orders on the statewide registry for restraining, protective and no contact orders.
- Facilitating improved Board communication with Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services in order to enhance the responsiveness of the service system for acquittees.
- Introducing a pilot program for periodic reporting on conditionally released acquittees.
- Reviewing and recommending, as necessary, revisions to Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and/or Connecticut General Statutes that govern the Psychiatric Security Review Board.

The Board's strategic planning process also includes a collaborative process with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to address service system issues for this acquittee population. The goals and objectives include:

- Enhancing integration of risk management practices into treatment plans for acquittees.
- Fostering the quality of information and testimony presented to the Board.
- Reviewing and modifying monthly PSRB-DMHAS training for community service providers in order to provide best practice treatment approaches and promote community safety.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Board members for 2003-2004 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.