

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 - \$376,999

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 Psychiatric Security Review Board (the “Board”), through an administrative hearing process, determines the level of supervision and treatment for an acquittee deemed necessary to protect society. The Board takes jurisdiction over the acquittee and determines the level of confinement and circumstances under which an acquittee can be released into the community. The Board can order confinement in a maximum-security facility, approve temporary leave from a hospital setting, grant conditional release into the community and provide recommendations to the Superior Court in the matters of discharge from the Board and continued commitment.

Public Service

The general public is the beneficiary of the agency's work. During fiscal year 2008-2009, 159 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. Seven persons were committed to the Board this fiscal year by the Superior Court. Nine individuals had their commitment terms extended by the Superior Court. Three individuals had their commitment terms expire, five individuals were discharged prior to the end of their commitment by the Superior Court, one individual expired and one individual had his commitment overturned.

As of June 30, 2009, 149 individuals were committed to the jurisdiction of the Board as follows: Thirty-five individuals were confined in maximum-security at Connecticut Valley Hospital, one acquittee was confined in a high security setting with the Department of Developmental Services, eighty-four individuals were confined in a secure non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital, twenty-seven individuals were on conditional release and residing in the community, one acquittee was detained in federal custody pending sentencing and one acquittee has been AWOL since June 1991.

The Board held 206 hearings and 34 conferences resulting in 157 Memoranda of Decision and 17 Reports to Court regarding the matters of Continued Commitment and Discharge from the jurisdiction of the Board.

During this fiscal year, there were no arrests for individuals while on conditional release status. One individual absconded from the grounds of Connecticut Valley Hospital and is awaiting sentencing.

Improvements/Achievements 2008-2009

- Maintained zero percent criminal recidivism of conditionally released acquittees, as reflected by no arrests.
- Participated in the Governor's Insanity Acquittee Review Committee (IARC) to review Connecticut's insanity defense and acquittal process and provide quality improvement recommendations.
- Successfully modified the Board's Statutes to provide for expanded supervisory options for acquittee's on Temporary Leave.
- Continued to review and modify the Board's Statutes and Regulations with the Office of Attorney General, as needed, in order to maintain the integrity of the Board's mission.
- Modified agency acquittee database to improve data quality, automated additional reports and implemented state-of-the-art off-site data storage plan.
- Coordinated with Connecticut Network (CT-N) to video a Board hearing for public viewing.
- Compiled statistics and information related to acquittee confinement and movement into the community.
- Maintained administrative meetings with the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and the Superintendent of Connecticut Valley Hospital and related administrators to improve collaboration relative to system issues.
- Participated in regularly scheduled treatment team meetings with community providers and the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services regarding all conditionally released acquittees.
- Conducted bimonthly PSRB trainings in partnership with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and provided on-site statewide PSRB training to a variety of community providers.
- Maintained spending at allocated level.
- Initiated acquittee conservatorship verification process.
- Continued improvements to the Board's medical and legal records.

Strategic Planning/Business Planning

The Board's strategic plan includes:

- Collaborate with the Office of Attorney General and the Board's Legislative Liaison to successfully implement modifications and additions to the Board's regulations and statutes, as needed.
- Continue partnership with the Department of Information Technology to make quality improvements to agency acquittee database.
- Continue the Board's collaborative planning process with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services to address ongoing service systems issues and best practice protocols.
- Maintain outreach to community agencies and the public regarding the Board's mission of public safety.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Board members for 2008-2009 were Robert Berger, Esq. (Chairman), John Ryan (expert in parole/probation), Howard Oakes, Psy.D. (psychologist), Justin Schechter, M.D. (psychiatrist), Sylvia Cancela (member of the general public) and Susan Blair, M.S., L.P.C. (victim advocate).

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.