

# 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 - \$264,780*

*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, orders 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 hospital for the mentally ill, 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 one acquittee escaped from custody at Connecticut Valley Hospital. This fiscal year, there were no felony arrests.

During 1998-99, 179 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. This fiscal year, five persons were committed to the Board by the Superior Court. A total of 12 acquittees' commitment terms were extended by the Superior Court. Seven persons have been removed from the Board's jurisdiction, three due to death, two acquittees' commitment terms expired, and two acquittees were discharged by the Superior Court.

In 1998-99, the Board held 189 hearings and 58 case conferences resulting in 176 orders being issued. There was a 24 percent denial by the Board of applications for a change in placement or status of an acquittee. As of June 30, 1999, 172 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. The status of these persons as of June 30, 1999 is as follows: 34 percent confined in maximum security, 45 percent confined at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 20 percent on conditional release, and one percent in custody of the Commissioner of Mental Retardation.

## **Improvements/Achievements 1998-99**

- Assessed Y2K needs and secured resources for remediation.
- Worked with Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS) in addressing system issues, and increasing communication and compliance between the Board and DMHAS.
- Recommended changes to Megan's law to improve implementation for the Psychiatric Security Review Board population.
- Designed agency website and brochure to increase public awareness and promote education.
- Initiated state-wide, quarterly All Treater's Meetings for conditionally released acquittees to promote risk management.
- Developed internal financial tracking system to ensure budgetary monitoring and compliance.
- Completed reorganization of medical and legal records, securing collateral documents for statutory compliance.
- Developed Disclosure Protocols for temporary leave and conditional release to minimize risk of dangerousness of acquittees and protection of the general public.

### **Reducing Waste**

The Executive Director worked with the Office of the Attorney General in developing a process for stipulated hearings. This stipulated hearing process has increased efficiency of time, and reduced the cost of hearings.

### **Strategic Planning**

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

- To achieve 100 percent compliance with protocol for quarterly All Treater's Meetings.
- Improve compliance by state agencies regarding the implementation of Board Orders.
- Develop research methods and resources in collaboration with academic centers on outcome measures.

### **Information Reported as Required by State Statute**

*The Board members for 1998-99 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.