

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 - \$270,469

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 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 or misdemeanor arrests.

During 1999-2000, 183 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. This fiscal year, 10 persons were committed to the Board by the Superior Court, and a total of 10 acquittees' commitment terms were extended by the Superior Court. Nine persons have been removed from the Board's jurisdiction, one due to death, five acquittees' commitment terms expired, two acquittees were discharged by the Superior Court and one acquittee's commitment was overturned by the Superior Court.

In 1999-2000, the Board held 206 hearings and 41 case conferences resulting in 203 orders being issued. There was a 12 percent denial by the Board of applications for a change in placement or status of an acquittee. As of June 30, 2000, 174 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. The status of these persons as of June 30, 2000 is as follows: 32 percent confined in maximum security, 48 percent confined at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 19 percent on conditional release, and one percent in custody of the Commissioner of Mental Retardation. There is a small decrease in the percentage of acquittees confined in maximum-security with a corresponding increase of acquittees confined at the Dutcher Program of Connecticut Valley Hospital. This change is due to the increased beds and enhanced treatment and security of programs at the Dutcher Service.

Improvements/Achievements 1999-2000

- Successfully addressed Y2K issues.
- Expanded management information system to improve administrative efficiency and effectiveness in meeting statutory requirements.
- Implemented new statutory requirements for the registration of sex offenders and the DNA registry.
- Agency went fully online through the CATER System.
- Developed a policy with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services regarding the revocation procedure for conditionally released acquittees to enhance the response time in bringing into custody acquittees who represent a danger to the community.
- Increased collaboration with the Chief Public Defender's Office and Chief State's Attorney's Office to improve quality of evidence at Board hearings.
- Participation with interagency groups concerning the treatment and monitoring of sex offenders.

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.

Strategic Planning/Business 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 develop an automated internal tracking system to ensure proper training is provided to all service providers involved with conditionally released acquittees, and that All Treaters Meetings continue to be held quarterly on all conditionally released acquittees.
- To implement Psychiatric Security Review Board no contact orders on the statewide registry for restraining, protective and no contact orders.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to enhance the integration of risk management into treatment plans for acquittees 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 acquittees.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, to examine the community service system for acquittees, 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 acquittees.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Board members for 1999-2000 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.