

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

SECTION 5345-5349.5

5345. (a) This article shall be known, and may be cited, as Laura's Law.

(b) "Assisted outpatient treatment" shall be defined as categories of outpatient services that have been ordered by a court pursuant to Section 5346 or 5347.

5346. (a) In any county in which services are available as provided in Section 5348, a court may order a person who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to this section to obtain assisted outpatient treatment if the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that the facts stated in the verified petition filed in accordance with this section are true and establish that all of the requisite criteria set forth in this section are met, including, but not limited to, each of the following:

(1) The person is 18 years of age or older.

(2) The person is suffering from a mental illness as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 5600.3.

(3) There has been a clinical determination that the person is unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision.

(4) The person has a history of lack of compliance with treatment for his or her mental illness, in that at least one of the following is true:

(A) The person's mental illness has, at least twice within the last 36 months, been a substantial factor in necessitating hospitalization, or receipt of services in a forensic or other mental health unit of a state correctional facility or local correctional facility, not including any period during which the person was hospitalized or incarcerated immediately preceding the filing of the petition.

(B) The person's mental illness has resulted in one or more acts of serious and violent behavior toward himself or herself or another, or threats, or attempts to cause serious physical harm to himself or herself or another within the last 48 months, not including any period in which the person was hospitalized or incarcerated immediately preceding the filing of the petition.

(5) The person has been offered an opportunity to participate in a treatment plan by the director of the local mental health department, or his or her designee, provided the treatment plan includes all of the services described in Section 5348, and the person continues to fail to engage in treatment.

(6) The person's condition is substantially deteriorating.

(7) Participation in the assisted outpatient treatment program would be the least restrictive placement necessary to ensure the person's recovery and stability.

(8) In view of the person's treatment history and current behavior, the person is in need of assisted outpatient treatment in order to prevent a relapse or deterioration that would be likely to result in grave disability or serious harm to himself or herself, or to others, as defined in Section 5150.

(9) It is likely that the person will benefit from assisted

outpatient treatment.

(b) (1) A petition for an order authorizing assisted outpatient treatment may be filed by the county mental health director, or his or her designee, in the superior court in the county in which the person who is the subject of the petition is present or reasonably believed to be present.

(2) A request may be made only by any of the following persons to the county mental health department for the filing of a petition to obtain an order authorizing assisted outpatient treatment:

(A) Any person 18 years of age or older with whom the person who is the subject of the petition resides.

(B) Any person who is the parent, spouse, or sibling or child 18 years of age or older of the person who is the subject of the petition.

(C) The director of any public or private agency, treatment facility, charitable organization, or licensed residential care facility providing mental health services to the person who is the subject of the petition in whose institution the subject of the petition resides.

(D) The director of a hospital in which the person who is the subject of the petition is hospitalized.

(E) A licensed mental health treatment provider who is either supervising the treatment of, or treating for a mental illness, the person who is the subject of the petition.

(F) A peace officer, parole officer, or probation officer assigned to supervise the person who is the subject of the petition.

(3) Upon receiving a request pursuant to paragraph (2), the county mental health director shall conduct an investigation into the appropriateness of the filing of the petition. The director shall file the petition only if he or she determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that all the necessary elements to sustain the petition can be proven in a court of law by clear and convincing evidence.

(4) The petition shall state all of the following:

(A) Each of the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment as set forth in subdivision (a).

(B) Facts that support the petitioner's belief that the person who is the subject of the petition meets each criterion, provided that the hearing on the petition shall be limited to the stated facts in the verified petition, and the petition contains all the grounds on which the petition is based, in order to ensure adequate notice to the person who is the subject of the petition and his or her counsel.

(C) That the person who is the subject of the petition is present, or is reasonably believed to be present, within the county where the petition is filed.

(D) That the person who is the subject of the petition has the right to be represented by counsel in all stages of the proceeding under the petition, in accordance with subdivision (c).

(5) The petition shall be accompanied by an affidavit of a licensed mental health treatment provider designated by the local mental health director who shall state, if applicable, either of the following:

(A) That the licensed mental health treatment provider has personally examined the person who is the subject of the petition no more than 10 days prior to the submission of the petition, the facts and reasons why the person who is the subject of the petition meets the criteria in subdivision (a), that the licensed mental health

treatment provider recommends assisted outpatient treatment for the person who is the subject of the petition, and that the licensed mental health treatment provider is willing and able to testify at the hearing on the petition.

(B) That no more than 10 days prior to the filing of the petition, the licensed mental health treatment provider, or his or her designee, has made appropriate attempts to elicit the cooperation of the person who is the subject of the petition, but has not been successful in persuading that person to submit to an examination, that the licensed mental health treatment provider has reason to believe that the person who is the subject of the petition meets the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment, and that the licensed mental health treatment provider is willing and able to examine the person who is the subject of the petition and testify at the hearing on the petition.

(c) The person who is the subject of the petition shall have the right to be represented by counsel at all stages of a proceeding commenced under this section. If the person so elects, the court shall immediately appoint the public defender or other attorney to assist the person in all stages of the proceedings. The person shall pay the cost of the legal services if he or she is able.

(d) (1) Upon receipt by the court of a petition submitted pursuant to subdivision (b), the court shall fix the date for a hearing at a time not later than five days from the date the petition is received by the court, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The petitioner shall promptly cause service of a copy of the petition, together with written notice of the hearing date, to be made personally on the person who is the subject of the petition, and shall send a copy of the petition and notice to the county office of patient rights, and to the current health care provider appointed for the person who is the subject of the petition, if any such provider is known to the petitioner. Continuances shall be permitted only for good cause shown. In granting continuances, the court shall consider the need for further examination by a physician or the potential need to provide expeditiously assisted outpatient treatment. Upon the hearing date, or upon any other date or dates to which the proceeding may be continued, the court shall hear testimony. If it is deemed advisable by the court, and if the person who is the subject of the petition is available and has received notice pursuant to this section, the court may examine in or out of court the person who is the subject of the petition who is alleged to be in need of assisted outpatient treatment. If the person who is the subject of the petition does not appear at the hearing, and appropriate attempts to elicit the attendance of the person have failed, the court may conduct the hearing in the person's absence. If the hearing is conducted without the person present, the court shall set forth the factual basis for conducting the hearing without the person's presence.

(2) The court shall not order assisted outpatient treatment unless an examining licensed mental health treatment provider, who has personally examined, and has reviewed the available treatment history of, the person who is the subject of the petition within the time period commencing 10 days before the filing of the petition, testifies in person at the hearing.

(3) If the person who is the subject of the petition has refused to be examined by a licensed mental health treatment provider, the court may request that the person consent to an examination by a

licensed mental health treatment provider appointed by the court. If the person who is the subject of the petition does not consent and the court finds reasonable cause to believe that the allegations in the petition are true, the court may order any person designated under Section 5150 to take into custody the person who is the subject of the petition and transport him or her, or cause him or her to be transported, to a hospital for examination by a licensed mental health treatment provider as soon as is practicable. Detention of the person who is the subject of the petition under the order may not exceed 72 hours. If the examination is performed by another licensed mental health treatment provider, the examining licensed mental health treatment provider may consult with the licensed mental health treatment provider whose affirmation or affidavit accompanied the petition regarding the issues of whether the allegations in the petition are true and whether the person meets the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment.

(4) The person who is the subject of the petition shall have all of the following rights:

(A) To adequate notice of the hearings to the person who is the subject of the petition, as well as to parties designated by the person who is the subject of the petition.

(B) To receive a copy of the court-ordered evaluation.

(C) To counsel. If the person has not retained counsel, the court shall appoint a public defender.

(D) To be informed of his or her right to judicial review by habeas corpus.

(E) To be present at the hearing unless he or she waives the right to be present.

(F) To present evidence.

(G) To call witnesses on his or her behalf.

(H) To cross-examine witnesses.

(I) To appeal decisions, and to be informed of his or her right to appeal.

(5) (A) If after hearing all relevant evidence, the court finds that the person who is the subject of the petition does not meet the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment, the court shall dismiss the petition.

(B) If after hearing all relevant evidence, the court finds that the person who is the subject of the petition meets the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment, and there is no appropriate and feasible less restrictive alternative, the court may order the person who is the subject of the petition to receive assisted outpatient treatment for an initial period not to exceed six months. In fashioning the order, the court shall specify that the proposed treatment is the least restrictive treatment appropriate and feasible for the person who is the subject of the petition. The order shall state the categories of assisted outpatient treatment, as set forth in Section 5348, that the person who is the subject of the petition is to receive, and the court may not order treatment that has not been recommended by the examining licensed mental health treatment provider and included in the written treatment plan for assisted outpatient treatment as required by subdivision (e). If the person has executed an advance health care directive pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 4650) of Part 1 of Division 4.7 of the Probate Code, any directions included in the advance health care directive shall be considered in formulating the written treatment plan.

(6) If the person who is the subject of a petition for an order for assisted outpatient treatment pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (5) of subdivision (d) refuses to participate in the assisted outpatient treatment program, the court may order the person to meet with the assisted outpatient treatment team designated by the director of the assisted outpatient treatment program. The treatment team shall attempt to gain the person's cooperation with treatment ordered by the court. The person may be subject to a 72-hour hold pursuant to subdivision (f) only after the treatment team has attempted to gain the person's cooperation with treatment ordered by the court, and has been unable to do so.

(e) Assisted outpatient treatment shall not be ordered unless the licensed mental health treatment provider recommending assisted outpatient treatment to the court has submitted to the court a written treatment plan that includes services as set forth in Section 5348, and the court finds, in consultation with the county mental health director, or his or her designee, all of the following:

(1) That the services are available from the county, or a provider approved by the county, for the duration of the court order.

(2) That the services have been offered to the person by the local director of mental health, or his or her designee, and the person has been given an opportunity to participate on a voluntary basis, and the person has failed to engage in, or has refused, treatment.

(3) That all of the elements of the petition required by this article have been met.

(4) That the treatment plan will be delivered to the county director of mental health, or to his or her appropriate designee.

(f) If, in the clinical judgment of a licensed mental health treatment provider, the person who is the subject of the petition has failed or has refused to comply with the treatment ordered by the court, and, in the clinical judgment of the licensed mental health treatment provider, efforts were made to solicit compliance, and, in the clinical judgment of the licensed mental health treatment provider, the person may be in need of involuntary admission to a hospital for evaluation, the provider may request that persons designated under Section 5150 take into custody the person who is the subject of the petition and transport him or her, or cause him or her to be transported, to a hospital, to be held up to 72 hours for examination by a licensed mental health treatment provider to determine if the person is in need of treatment pursuant to Section 5150. Any continued involuntary retention in a hospital beyond the initial 72-hour period shall be pursuant to Section 5150. If at any time during the 72-hour period the person is determined not to meet the criteria of Section 5150, and does not agree to stay in the hospital as a voluntary patient, he or she shall be released and any subsequent involuntary detention in a hospital shall be pursuant to Section 5150. Failure to comply with an order of assisted outpatient treatment alone may not be grounds for involuntary civil commitment or a finding that the person who is the subject of the petition is in contempt of court.

(g) If the director of the assisted outpatient treatment program determines that the condition of the patient requires further assisted outpatient treatment, the director shall apply to the court, prior to the expiration of the period of the initial assisted outpatient treatment order, for an order authorizing continued assisted outpatient treatment for a period not to exceed 180 days from the date of the order. The procedures for obtaining any order

pursuant to this subdivision shall be in accordance with subdivisions (a) to (f), inclusive. The period for further involuntary outpatient treatment authorized by any subsequent order under this subdivision may not exceed 180 days from the date of the order.

(h) At intervals of not less than 60 days during an assisted outpatient treatment order, the director of the outpatient treatment program shall file an affidavit with the court that ordered the outpatient treatment affirming that the person who is the subject of the order continues to meet the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment. At these times, the person who is the subject of the order shall have the right to a hearing on whether or not he or she still meets the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment if he or she disagrees with the director's affidavit. The burden of proof shall be on the director.

(i) During each 60-day period specified in subdivision (h), if the person who is the subject of the order believes that he or she is being wrongfully retained in the assisted outpatient treatment program against his or her wishes, he or she may file a petition for a writ of habeas corpus, thus requiring the director of the assisted outpatient treatment program to prove that the person who is the subject of the order continues to meet the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment.

(j) Any person ordered to undergo assisted outpatient treatment pursuant to this article, who was not present at the hearing at which the order was issued, may immediately petition the court for a writ of habeas corpus. Treatment under the order for assisted outpatient treatment may not commence until the resolution of that petition.

5347. (a) In any county in which services are available pursuant to Section 5348, any person who is determined by the court to be subject to subdivision (a) of Section 5346 may voluntarily enter into an agreement for services under this section.

(b) (1) After a petition for an order for assisted outpatient treatment is filed, but before the conclusion of the hearing on the petition, the person who is the subject of the petition, or the person's legal counsel with the person's consent, may waive the right to an assisted outpatient treatment hearing for the purpose of obtaining treatment under a settlement agreement, provided that an examining licensed mental health treatment provider states that the person can survive safely in the community. The settlement agreement may not exceed 180 days in duration and shall be agreed to by all parties.

(2) The settlement agreement shall be in writing, shall be approved by the court, and shall include a treatment plan developed by the community-based program that will provide services that provide treatment in the least restrictive manner consistent with the needs of the person who is the subject of the petition.

(3) Either party may request that the court modify the treatment plan at any time during the 180-day period.

(4) The court shall designate the appropriate county department to monitor the person's treatment under, and compliance with, the settlement agreement. If the person fails to comply with the treatment according to the agreement, the designated county department shall notify the counsel designated by the county and the person's counsel of the person's noncompliance.

(5) A settlement agreement approved by the court pursuant to this section shall have the same force and effect as an order for assisted outpatient treatment pursuant to Section 5346.

(6) At a hearing on the issue of noncompliance with the agreement, the written statement of noncompliance submitted shall be prima facie evidence that a violation of the conditions of the agreement has occurred. If the person who is the subject of the petition denies any of the facts as stated in the statement, he or she has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the alleged facts are false.

5348. (a) For purposes of subdivision (e) of Section 5346, a county that chooses to provide assisted outpatient treatment services pursuant to this article shall offer assisted outpatient treatment services including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(1) Community-based, mobile, multidisciplinary, highly trained mental health teams that use high staff-to-client ratios of no more than 10 clients per team member for those subject to court-ordered services pursuant to Section 5346.

(2) A service planning and delivery process that includes the following:

(A) Determination of the numbers of persons to be served and the programs and services that will be provided to meet their needs. The local director of mental health shall consult with the sheriff, the police chief, the probation officer, the mental health board, contract agencies, and family, client, ethnic, and citizen constituency groups as determined by the director.

(B) Plans for services, including outreach to families whose severely mentally ill adult is living with them, design of mental health services, coordination and access to medications, psychiatric and psychological services, substance abuse services, supportive housing or other housing assistance, vocational rehabilitation, and veterans' services. Plans shall also contain evaluation strategies, which shall consider cultural, linguistic, gender, age, and special needs of minorities and those based on any characteristic listed or defined in Section 11135 of the Government Code in the target populations. Provision shall be made for staff with the cultural background and linguistic skills necessary to remove barriers to mental health services as a result of having limited-English-speaking ability and cultural differences. Recipients of outreach services may include families, the public, primary care physicians, and others who are likely to come into contact with individuals who may be suffering from an untreated severe mental illness who would be likely to become homeless if the illness continued to be untreated for a substantial period of time. Outreach to adults may include adults voluntarily or involuntarily hospitalized as a result of a severe mental illness.

(C) Provision for services to meet the needs of persons who are physically disabled.

(D) Provision for services to meet the special needs of older adults.

(E) Provision for family support and consultation services, parenting support and consultation services, and peer support or self-help group support, where appropriate.

(F) Provision for services to be client-directed and that employ

psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery principles.

(G) Provision for psychiatric and psychological services that are integrated with other services and for psychiatric and psychological collaboration in overall service planning.

(H) Provision for services specifically directed to seriously mentally ill young adults 25 years of age or younger who are homeless or at significant risk of becoming homeless. These provisions may include continuation of services that still would be received through other funds had eligibility not been terminated as a result of age.

(I) Services reflecting special needs of women from diverse cultural backgrounds, including supportive housing that accepts children, personal services coordinator therapeutic treatment, and substance treatment programs that address gender-specific trauma and abuse in the lives of persons with mental illness, and vocational rehabilitation programs that offer job training programs free of gender bias and sensitive to the needs of women.

(J) Provision for housing for clients that is immediate, transitional, permanent, or all of these.

(K) Provision for clients who have been suffering from an untreated severe mental illness for less than one year, and who do not require the full range of services, but are at risk of becoming homeless unless a comprehensive individual and family support services plan is implemented. These clients shall be served in a manner that is designed to meet their needs.

(3) Each client shall have a clearly designated mental health personal services coordinator who may be part of a multidisciplinary treatment team who is responsible for providing or assuring needed services. Responsibilities include complete assessment of the client's needs, development of the client's personal services plan, linkage with all appropriate community services, monitoring of the quality and followthrough of services, and necessary advocacy to ensure each client receives those services that are agreed to in the personal services plan. Each client shall participate in the development of his or her personal services plan, and responsible staff shall consult with the designated conservator, if one has been appointed, and, with the consent of the client, shall consult with the family and other significant persons as appropriate.

(4) The individual personal services plan shall ensure that persons subject to assisted outpatient treatment programs receive age-appropriate, gender-appropriate, and culturally appropriate services, to the extent feasible, that are designed to enable recipients to:

(A) Live in the most independent, least restrictive housing feasible in the local community, and, for clients with children, to live in a supportive housing environment that strives for reunification with their children or assists clients in maintaining custody of their children as is appropriate.

(B) Engage in the highest level of work or productive activity appropriate to their abilities and experience.

(C) Create and maintain a support system consisting of friends, family, and participation in community activities.

(D) Access an appropriate level of academic education or vocational training.

(E) Obtain an adequate income.

(F) Self-manage their illnesses and exert as much control as possible over both the day-to-day and long-term decisions that affect their lives.

(G) Access necessary physical health care and maintain the best possible physical health.

(H) Reduce or eliminate serious antisocial or criminal behavior, and thereby reduce or eliminate their contact with the criminal justice system.

(I) Reduce or eliminate the distress caused by the symptoms of mental illness.

(J) Have freedom from dangerous addictive substances.

(5) The individual personal services plan shall describe the service array that meets the requirements of paragraph (4), and to the extent applicable to the individual, the requirements of paragraph (2).

(b) A county that provides assisted outpatient treatment services pursuant to this article also shall offer the same services on a voluntary basis.

(c) Involuntary medication shall not be allowed absent a separate order by the court pursuant to Sections 5332 to 5336, inclusive.

(d) A county that operates an assisted outpatient treatment program pursuant to this article shall provide data to the State Department of Health Care Services and, based on the data, the department shall report to the Legislature on or before May 1 of each year in which the county provides services pursuant to this article. The report shall include, at a minimum, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies employed by each program operated pursuant to this article in reducing homelessness and hospitalization of persons in the program and in reducing involvement with local law enforcement by persons in the program. The evaluation and report shall also include any other measures identified by the department regarding persons in the program and all of the following, based on information that is available:

(1) The number of persons served by the program and, of those, the number who are able to maintain housing and the number who maintain contact with the treatment system.

(2) The number of persons in the program with contacts with local law enforcement, and the extent to which local and state incarceration of persons in the program has been reduced or avoided.

(3) The number of persons in the program participating in employment services programs, including competitive employment.

(4) The days of hospitalization of persons in the program that have been reduced or avoided.

(5) Adherence to prescribed treatment by persons in the program.

(6) Other indicators of successful engagement, if any, by persons in the program.

(7) Victimization of persons in the program.

(8) Violent behavior of persons in the program.

(9) Substance abuse by persons in the program.

(10) Type, intensity, and frequency of treatment of persons in the program.

(11) Extent to which enforcement mechanisms are used by the program, when applicable.

(12) Social functioning of persons in the program.

(13) Skills in independent living of persons in the program.

(14) Satisfaction with program services both by those receiving them and by their families, when relevant.

5349. This article shall be operative in those counties in which the county board of supervisors, by resolution or through the county budget process, authorizes its application and makes a finding that no voluntary mental health program serving adults, and no children's mental health program, may be reduced as a result of the implementation of this article. To the extent otherwise permitted under state and federal law, counties that elect to implement this article may pay for the provision of services under Sections 5347 and 5348 using funds distributed to the counties from the Mental Health Subaccount, the Mental Health Equity Subaccount, and the Vehicle License Collection Account of the Local Revenue Fund, funds from the Mental Health Account and the Behavioral Health Subaccount within the Support Services Account of the Local Revenue Fund 2011, funds from the Mental Health Services Fund when included in county plans pursuant to Section 5847, and any other funds from which the Controller makes distributions to the counties for those purposes. Compliance with this section shall be monitored by the State Department of Health Care Services as part of its review and approval of county performance contracts.

5349.1. (a) Counties that elect to implement this article, shall, in consultation with the State Department of Health Care Services, client and family advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders, develop a training and education program for purposes of improving the delivery of services to mentally ill individuals who are, or who are at risk of being, involuntarily committed under this part. This training shall be provided to mental health treatment providers contracting with participating counties and to other individuals, including, but not limited to, mental health professionals, law enforcement officials, and certification hearing officers involved in making treatment and involuntary commitment decisions.

(b) The training shall include both of the following:

(1) Information relative to legal requirements for detaining a person for involuntary inpatient and outpatient treatment, including criteria to be considered with respect to determining if a person is considered to be gravely disabled.

(2) Methods for ensuring that decisions regarding involuntary treatment as provided for in this part direct patients toward the most effective treatment. Training shall include an emphasis on each patient's right to provide informed consent to assistance.

5349.5. (a) This article shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2017, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute that is enacted on or before January 1, 2017, deletes or extends that date.

(b) The State Department of Health Care Services shall submit a report and evaluation of all counties implementing any component of this article to the Governor and to the Legislature by July 1, 2015. The evaluation shall include data described in subdivision (d) of Section 5348.
