

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

An Act to amend and reenact § 37.2-817 of the Code of Virginia, relating to availability of community services board representative and treating physician at commitment hearing.

[H 560]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 37.2-817 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 37.2-817. Involuntary admission and mandatory outpatient treatment orders.

A. The district court judge or special justice shall render a decision on the petition for involuntary admission after the appointed examiner has presented his *the* report, orally or in writing, pursuant to required by § 37.2-815, and after the community services board or behavioral health authority that serves the county or city where the person resides or, if impractical, where the person is located has presented a preadmission screening report, orally or in writing, with recommendations for that person's placement, care, and treatment pursuant to § 37.2-816. These reports, if not contested, may constitute sufficient evidence upon which the district court judge or special justice may base his decision. *The examiner, if not physically present at the hearing, and the treating physician at the facility of temporary detention shall be available whenever possible for questioning during the hearing through a two-way electronic video and audio or telephonic communication system as authorized by § 37.2-804.1.*

B. *An employee or a designee of the local community services board, as defined in § 37.2-809, that prepared the preadmission screening report shall attend the hearing in person or, if physical attendance is not practicable, shall participate in the hearing through a two-way electronic video and audio or telephonic communication system as authorized in § 37.2-804.1. Where a hearing is held outside of the service area of the community services board that prepared the preadmission screening report, and it is not practicable for a representative of the board to attend or participate in the hearing, arrangements shall be made by the board for an employee or designee of the board serving the area in which the hearing is held to attend or participate on behalf of the board that prepared the preadmission screening report. The community services board that prepared the preadmission screening report shall remain responsible for the person subject to the hearing and, prior to the hearing, shall send the preadmission screening report through certified mail, personal delivery, facsimile with return receipt acknowledged, or other electronic means to the community services board attending the hearing. Where a community services board attends the hearing on behalf of the community services board that prepared the preadmission screening report, the attending community services board shall inform the community services board that prepared the preadmission screening report of the disposition of the matter upon conclusion of the hearing. In addition, the attending community services board shall transmit the disposition through certified mail, personal delivery, facsimile with return receipt acknowledged, or other electronic means.*

At least 12 hours prior to the hearing, the court shall provide to the community services board that prepared the preadmission screening report the time and location of the hearing. If the representative of the community services board will be present by telephonic means, the court shall provide the telephone number to the board.

~~B C.~~ After observing the person and ~~obtaining the necessary positive certification~~ and considering any other relevant evidence that may have been offered, if the judge or special justice finds by clear and convincing evidence that (i) the person presents an imminent danger to himself or others as a result of mental illness or has been proven to be so seriously mentally ill as to be substantially unable to care for himself and (ii) *all available less restrictive treatment alternatives to involuntary inpatient treatment, pursuant to subsection D, that would offer an opportunity for the improvement of the person's condition have been investigated and deemed unsuitable and there is no less restrictive alternative to involuntary inpatient treatment and determined to be inappropriate,* the judge or special justice shall by written order and specific findings so certify and order that the person be admitted involuntarily to a facility for a period of treatment not to exceed ~~180~~ 30 days from the date of the court order. Such involuntary admission shall be to a facility designated by the community services board or behavioral health authority that serves the city or county in which the person was examined as provided in § 37.2-816. If the community services board or behavioral health authority does not designate a facility at the commitment hearing, the person shall be involuntarily admitted to a facility designated by the Commissioner. ~~The~~ *Upon the expiration of any order for involuntary admission, the person shall be released at the expiration of 180 days unless he is involuntarily admitted by further petition and order of*

57 a court, which shall be for a period not to exceed 180 days from the date of the subsequent court order,
58 or such person makes application for treatment on a voluntary basis as provided for in § 37.2-805, or is
59 ordered to mandatory outpatient treatment pursuant to subsection D.

60 ~~€~~ D. After observing the person and ~~obtaining the necessary positive certification and~~ considering
61 any other relevant evidence that may have been offered, if the judge or special justice finds by clear and
62 convincing evidence that (i) the person presents an imminent danger to himself or others as a result of
63 mental illness or has been proven to be so seriously mentally ill as to be substantially unable to care for
64 himself, (ii) less restrictive alternatives to involuntary inpatient treatment *that would offer an opportunity*
65 *for improvement of the person's condition* have been investigated and ~~are deemed suitable,~~ (iii) *are*
66 *determined to be appropriate,* and (iii) the person (a) has ~~the degree of competency necessary sufficient~~
67 capacity to understand the stipulations of his treatment, (b) ~~expresses~~ *has expressed* an interest in living
68 in the community and ~~agrees~~ *has agreed* to abide by his treatment plan, and (c) is deemed to have the
69 capacity to comply with the treatment plan *and understand and adhere to conditions and requirements*
70 *of the treatment and services,* and (iv) the ordered treatment can be delivered on an outpatient basis ~~and~~
71 ~~be monitored~~ by the community services board, ~~behavioral health authority~~ or designated provider, the
72 judge or special justice shall *by written order and specific findings so certify and order that the person*
73 *be admitted involuntarily to mandatory outpatient treatment. Less restrictive alternatives shall not be*
74 *determined to be appropriate unless the services are actually available in the community and providers*
75 *of the services have actually agreed to deliver the services.*

76 E. Mandatory outpatient treatment, ~~which~~ may include day treatment in a hospital, night treatment in
77 a hospital, outpatient involuntary treatment with anti-psychotic medication pursuant to Chapter 11
78 (§ 37.2-1100 et seq.), or other appropriate course of treatment as may be necessary to meet the needs of
79 the person. The community services board ~~or behavioral health authority~~ that serves the city or county
80 in which the person resides shall recommend a specific course of treatment and programs for the
81 provision of involuntary outpatient treatment. The community services board, ~~behavioral health authority,~~
82 or designated provider shall monitor the person's compliance with the treatment ordered by the court
83 under this section, and the person's failure to comply with involuntary outpatient treatment as ordered by
84 the court may be admitted into evidence in subsequent hearings held pursuant to the provisions of this
85 section. Upon failure of the person to adhere to the terms of the outpatient treatment order, the judge or
86 special justice may revoke it and, upon notice to the person and after a commitment hearing, order
87 involuntary admission to a facility.