

MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD OF LUCAS COUNTY

Designation of Health Officers

**COQ: V-A.26; X-A.3
Effective Date: 3/1/14
Supersedes Date: 2/13**

POLICY

The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (MHRSB) of Lucas County will establish a process to credential and designate certain key agency staff to serve Lucas County as Health Officers, as defined in ORC 5122.01(J) to facilitate emergency hospitalization as described in ORC 5122.10.

Accordingly:

- 1) MHRSB will appoint a standing committee (The Health Officers Credentialing Committee) to review credentials of applicants to serve as Health Officers prior to their approval by MHRSB.
- 2) MHRSB will establish guidelines for use by the Health Officers Credentialing Committee that details the MHRSB's required qualifications to serve as a health officer, and rules related to appointment, terms, and removal from office.
- 3) MHRSB will provide a description of the responsibilities of the Health Officer.
- 4) MHRSB will annually review a report of Health Officer activity.

ACCOUNTABILITY

MHRSB Chair, Executive Director

PROCEDURE

Health Officer Credentialing Committee

- 1) The MHRSB will maintain a Health Officer Credentialing Committee made up of at least five individuals, who collectively meet the following requirements:
 - One (1) lay person who is a consumer of mental health services;
 - One (1) Mental Health and Recovery Services Board staff person;
 - A licensed psychologist or a psychiatrist;
 - Two (2) agency clinical managers or supervisors, who are independently licensed mental health professionals, with three (3) years of experience in the community mental health system; and
 - One (1) health officer.

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- 2) The MHR SB Chair will appoint each member annually to a term of one (1) year beginning July 1. There is no limit to the number of terms a committee member may serve.
- 3) The Committee will review applications for designation as a Health Officer only if they are submitted by the Executive Director of the sponsoring agency on behalf of the agency employee. A completed application must include all required elements, for credentialing as described in Health Officer Qualifications and Requirements section of this procedure.

Health Officer Qualifications and Requirements

- 1) Only persons currently employed by an agency that has a contract for services with MHR SB shall be eligible to be designated as Health Officers.
 - a) Termination of the MHR SB's contract with the agency or termination of employment by the agency will result in automatic revocation of the Health Officer's designation.
 - b) A Health Officer who transfers from one contracted agency to another may apply to fulfill his/her term as a transfer at the request of the Agency's Executive Director.
- 2) Health Officers must meet criteria established under the State of Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services Qualified Provider Rules of the Administrative Code, Sections: 5122-23-01 and specifically, 5122-23-08, governing provider qualifications for pre-hospitalization screening services. Agency employees recommended for designation as a Health Officer shall:
 - a) Have two (2) years of experience in mental health assessment of severely and persistently mentally ill persons, and possess appropriate professional licensure (LISW, LPCC, RN-MSN); or
 - b) Be a registered nurse with three (3) years of experience in mental health assessment of individuals with serious mental illness; or
 - c) Be a licensed mental health professional (LSW) with three (3) years of experience in mental health assessment of individuals with serious mental illness.
- 3) An agency seeking to have an employee designated as a Health Officer shall submit:
 - a) A Mental Health and Recovery Service Board Health Officer Application (Form A)
 - b) Copies of professional licenses, registrations and/or certificates;

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- c) At least two written references, which comment on the person's ability to assess individuals with serious mental illness. One of these letters must be external to the sponsoring agency;
 - d) A criminal record check from the Bureau of Criminal Investigation dated within six months of application;
 - e) Verification that the employee has completed the Board-approved training curriculum which at a minimum shall address the following subjects:
 - o Training in Ohio Revised Code pertaining to involuntary mental health treatment which includes understanding of major mental illness and assessing for risk and vulnerability, and training regarding appropriate utilization of community resources;
 - o Training in first aid, CPR, and universal precautions for infection control;
 - o Training in nonviolent physical crisis intervention;
 - o (Separate trainings are not required when the candidate's credentialing already indicates a proficiency).
- 4) The sponsoring agency shall be notified in writing of the designation and term of each Health Officer. The MHR SB shall designate the Health Officer for a specified two (2) year period, after which a recertification review must be initiated by the sponsoring agency. The designation may be revoked at any time at the sole discretion of the Executive Director of the MHR SB upon written notice to the sponsoring agency. A designation as a Health Officer shall automatically expire if the designee terminates employment with the sponsoring agency unless transfer status within the system is endorsed by the receiving agency's director, approved by the Credentialing Committee, and all required information and training is current. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring agency's clinical or executive director to notify the MHR SB of any Health Officers who terminate employment.
- 5) Any agency sponsoring a Health Officer for recertification shall:
- a) At least 60 days prior to the expiration of term, complete the MHR SB Health Officer renewal application (Form B) for review by the Credentialing Committee.
 - b) Provide a summary of the applicant's performance as a Health Officer (a Health Officer requesting renewal must have performed a minimum two (2) field assessments in the previous term. If not, a written letter from the sponsoring agency's clinical director stating that the Health Officer remains competent in clinical assessment for involuntary hospitalizations must be included in the application. A written letter will be accepted as evidence of clinical competency for one (1) renewal application.)

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- 6) Any complaints or grievances pertaining to a Health Officer's performance of duties shall be handled as follows:
 - a) The sponsoring agency shall conduct a thorough investigation and prepare a written report of the complaint or grievance. The written report of the investigation and its findings along with any action taken by the agency shall be submitted to the MHR SB Executive Director with a copy to the Credentialing Committee and the MHR SB Client Rights Officer for review. Such report shall be submitted within 20 days of the complaint or grievance, and be consistent with the Board's Clients Rights and Grievance Policy.
 - b) The MHR SB will require that any agency requiring that an employee be designated as a Health Officer pursuant to this policy shall execute an indemnification with the MHR SB. The Indemnification Agreement will be ongoing, requiring no renewal, and remains in force as long as the agency has currently certified Health Officers.
- 7) The MHR SB will require a Quality Assurance Report for Health Officers from each agency sponsoring individuals as Health Officers that will include: The number of assessments requested; the number of assessments performed; the number of involuntary applications completed; and the final disposition of the client evaluated (CSU; public hospital; private hospital; released). The report summary will be included in the agency quarterly Quality Improvement Report to the MHR SB.

Responsibilities of Health Officers

A person designated as a Health Officer by the MHR SB is empowered to evaluate, take into custody, and transport to an appropriate facility, persons whom they believe to be mentally ill and who represent a substantial risk of physical harm to himself or others if allowed to remain at liberty. The Health Officer's assessment shall be made in accordance with the emergency involuntary hospitalization criteria set forth in the Ohio Revised Code Section 5122.10. In the event that a Health Officer takes a person into custody for the purpose of emergency examination or treatment, they must:

- 1) Provide a written statement to the hospital or pre-screening agency (Rescue Incorporated) that specifies the circumstances under which said person was taken into custody and the basis for the Health Officer's conclusion that the person is mentally ill, and subject to hospitalization as defined in ORC 5122.01 (B) (1-4). (A copy of the written statement must be provided to the respondent or his/her attorney upon the request of either).
- 2) Make every reasonable and appropriate effort to take persons into custody in the least conspicuous manner possible.

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- 3) Explain to the person being taken into custody that the custody-taking is not a criminal arrest, and that the person is being taken for examination by a mental health professional or psychiatrist to a specified mental health facility identified by name. In Lucas County, these facilities include: Rescue, Inc., or any private or public hospital that maintains a psychiatric unit.
- 4) Take precautions to preserve and safeguard the personal property in the possession of or on the premises occupied by that individual.
- 5) Abide by the proper code of ethical conduct for licensed mental health professionals and protect the clients right to privacy and confidentiality.
- 6) Maintain current knowledge of O.R.C. #5122.10 (emergency hospitalization) and O.R.C. #5122.29 (patient rights), and the MHRSB's Designation of Health Officers Policy.
- 7) Health Officers report to the agency's clinical director or other designated supervisor at their respective mental health agency. In the event of termination of employment from the agency, the designation as Health Officer is immediately withdrawn unless transfer to another system provider has been requested and approved.
- 8) The activities of the Health Officer will be compiled by each sponsoring agency for an annual report to the MHRSB that will include:
 - Number of assessments completed.
 - Outcome of the assessment.

Approved:



Scott A. Sylak, Executive Director

4/15/2014
Date