

SB70 at a glance

“Modernizing and Clarifying Nevada’s Involuntary Mental Health Crisis Hold and Involuntary Treatment Processes”

Sponsored by the Northern Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board

SB70 is focused on updating and clarifying the steps in the involuntary mental health crisis hold and involuntary admission and treatment processes. SB70 builds on AB85 from the 2019 legislative session in working to strengthen patient rights through creating a more transparent process. A workgroup was formed to obtain support and input from stakeholders across Nevada, and through coordination with the Policy Board, the following objectives were identified to guide the reforms below:

1. Updates and modernizes the mental health crisis hold law, originally written in 1975, to reflect the current system and provide definitions for key terms. Changes include clarifying the family petition process for court ordered pick-up and adjusting hospital discharge notification of courts and legal guardians.

2. Develops and clarifies involuntary outpatient court ordered process “assisted outpatient treatment” (AOT) for use throughout the state. Research shows that assisted outpatient treatment significantly reduces jail days and hospital readmissions for AOT participants, who are adults with mental illness and have a history of poor compliance that resulted in repeated hospitalizations and/ or arrests. This is an effective intervention for early diversion from the criminal justice system.

3. Strengthens continuity of care for individuals at risk of reoccurring mental health crisis by clarifying and updating conditional release process. Some individuals receiving treatment under a court ordered admission in inpatient psychiatric hospitals, once stabilized, lack the skills and resources to remain stable in the community upon discharge. These individuals are at high risk for decompensating back into mental health crisis. Conditional release provides a mechanism for more formalized discharge planning and increased community provider and court coordination to support these individuals in remaining stable in the community for the duration of the involuntary court order. Conditional release is available to those individuals who may not meet the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment or who live in communities where assisted outpatient treatment is unavailable.

4. Clarifies the youth mental health crisis hold process by updating the process so it accurately reflects our current system and without infringing on parental rights.

5. Updates chemical restraint to reflect modern federally approved processes.

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