**INVOLUNTARY MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION**

A.R.S. Title 36, Chapter 5

**The process**

Perhaps you know someone with a serious mental health disorder who is not willing or is unable to get the help they need. Or perhaps you know a person who is in immediate danger of harming themselves or others and is unable or unwilling to receive voluntary mental health treatment. There is a legal process in Arizona, under A.R.S. Title 36, in which the court can order a mental health evaluation for a person in need. If the evaluation reveals that the person, because of a mental health disorder, is a danger to self, danger to others, persistently and acutely disabled or gravely disabled, and refuses voluntary treatment, the court can order the person to undergo mental health treatment. *Link to Definitions*

The process also gives potential patients the opportunity to have a voluntary evaluation and receive voluntary treatment. While the rights of the patient are protected, the goal is to provide the necessary medical help so the person can live a healthy life.

**1. Application for Evaluation - two types of applications**

Application for Involuntary Evaluation

Used when there is no immediate danger, but there is a history of a

mental health disorder and the person does not want treatment.

*Link to application form Link to chart*

Application for Emergency Admission for Evaluation

Used when there is immediate danger of hurting themselves or others and

the person does not want treatment.

*Link to application form Link to chart*

Any person over the age of 18 may complete the application. If you want help completing the application, there are several options. Contact one of the behavioral healthcare providers listed below or a legal advisor. If there is immediate danger call the mental health crisis helpline at (877) 756-4090. In an emergency, call 911.

Behavioral Health Providers in Yavapai County:

Polara Health, the County licensed screening and evaluating agency. 928-445-5211

Spectrum Healthcare 877-634-7333

Southwest Behavioral Health 928-772-1610

Dignity Health Yavapai Regional Medical Center 928-445-2700

The application can be typed or handwritten. Once fully completed, the application must be notarized before being delivered to Polara Health, located at 8655 East Eastridge Drive, Prescott Valley, AZ  86314. Polara Health at 928-445-5211 Extension 1.

**2. Pre-petition Screening**

For a non-emergency admission, screening is provided within 48 hours. The proposed patient may also choose a voluntary evaluation at this time.

For an emergency admission, the admitting officer may advise a peace officer to take a person into custody, transporting them to the evaluation agency, which performs a screening within 24 hours.

**3. Petition for Evaluation**

If the screening agency determines there is reasonable cause to believe that the proposed patient is, as a result of mental disorder, a danger to self or to others or has a persistent or acute disability or a grave disability and that the proposed patient is unable or unwilling to voluntarily receive evaluation or is likely to present a danger to self or to others, has a grave disability or will further deteriorate before receiving a voluntary evaluation, a petition is filed with the court for a Court Ordered Evaluation. The evaluation can be inpatient or outpatient. If approved an order for pick-up is issued.

**4. Court Ordered Evaluation**

The evaluation requires two psychiatrists and must be completed within 72 hours.

**5. Petition for Treatment**

The petition asks the court to order mandated treatment, which can be inpatient or outpatient and does not to exceed 365 days. A patient can be changed to voluntary status.

**6. Hearing**

The hearing is held withing six business days from the time the Petition for Treatment is filed. The court will order treatment if there is clear and convincing evidence that the person is in need of treatment and is unwilling or unable to accept treatment voluntarily.