

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §27-5-10

§27-5-10. Transportation for the mentally ill or persons with substance use disorder.

(a) Whenever transportation of an individual is required under the provisions of §27-4-1 *et seq.* and §27-5-1 *et seq.* of this code, the sheriff shall provide immediate transportation to or from the appropriate mental health facility or state hospital as described in §27-5-19(d) of this code: *Provided, That*, where hospitalization occurs pursuant to §27-4-1 *et seq.* of this code, the sheriff may permit, upon the written request of a person having proper interest in the individual's hospitalization, for the interested person to arrange for the individual's transportation to the mental health facility or state hospital if the sheriff determines that those means are suitable given the individual's condition.

(b) Upon written agreement between the county commission on behalf of the sheriff and the directors of the local community mental health center and emergency medical services, an alternative transportation program may be arranged. The agreement shall clearly define the responsibilities of each of the parties, the requirements for program participation, and the persons bearing ultimate responsibility for the individual's safety and well-being.

(c) *Use of certified municipal law-enforcement officers.* — Sheriffs and municipal governments may enter into written agreements by which certified municipal law-enforcement officers may perform the duties of the sheriff as described in this article. The agreement shall determine jurisdiction, responsibility of costs, and all other necessary requirements, including training related to the performance of these duties, and shall be approved by the county commission and circuit court of the county in which the agreement is made. For purposes of this subsection, "certified municipal law-enforcement officer" means any duly authorized member of a municipal law-enforcement agency who is empowered to maintain public peace and order, make arrests, and enforce the laws of this state or any political subdivision thereof, other than parking ordinances, and who is currently certified as a law-enforcement officer pursuant to §30-29-1 *et seq.* of this code.

(d) In the event an individual requires transportation to a state hospital as defined by §27-1-6 of this code, the sheriff, or certified municipal law-enforcement officer shall contact the state hospital in advance of the transportation to determine if the state hospital has suitable bed capacity to place the individual.