

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §27-5-9

§27-5-9. Rights of patients.

(a) No person may be deprived of any civil right solely by reason of his or her receipt of services for mental illness, intellectual disability or addiction, nor does the receipt of the services modify or vary any civil right of the person, including, but not limited to, civil service status and appointment, the right to register for and to vote at elections, the right to acquire and to dispose of property, the right to execute instruments or rights relating to the granting, forfeiture or denial of a license, permit, privilege or benefit pursuant to any law, but a person who has been adjudged incompetent pursuant to article eleven of this chapter and who has not been restored to legal competency may be deprived of such rights. Involuntary commitment pursuant to this article does not of itself relieve the patient of legal capacity.

(b) Each patient of a mental health facility receiving services from the facility shall receive care and treatment that is suited to his or her needs and administered in a skillful, safe and humane manner with full respect for his or her dignity and personal integrity.

(c) Every patient has the following rights regardless of adjudication of incompetency:

(1) Treatment by trained personnel;

(2) Careful and periodic psychiatric reevaluation no less frequently than once every three months;

(3) Periodic physical examination by a physician no less frequently than once every six months; and

(4) Treatment based on appropriate examination and diagnosis by a staff member operating within the scope of his or her professional license.

(d) The chief medical officer shall cause to be developed within the clinical record of each patient a written treatment plan based on initial medical and psychiatric examination not later than seven days after he or she is admitted for treatment. The treatment plan shall be updated periodically, consistent with reevaluation of the patient. Failure to accord the patient the requisite periodic examinations or treatment plan and reevaluations entitles the patient to release.

(e) A clinical record shall be maintained at a mental health facility for each patient treated by the facility. The record shall contain information on all matters relating to the admission, legal status, care and treatment of the patient and shall include all pertinent documents relating to the patient. Specifically, the record shall contain results of periodic examinations, individualized treatment programs, evaluations and reevaluations, orders for treatment,

orders for application for mechanical restraint and accident reports, all signed by the personnel involved.

(f) Every patient, upon his or her admission to a hospital and at any other reasonable time, shall be given a copy of the rights afforded by this section.

(g) The Secretary of the Department of Health Facilities shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to protect the personal rights of patients not inconsistent with this section.