pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES BULLETIN

ISSUE DATE:	EFFECTIVE DATE:	NUMBER:
November 17, 2026	March 31, 2027	OMHSAS-26-06

SUBJECT:	BY:
Voluntary and Involuntary Commitment Forms	Jennifer S. Smith Deputy Secretary Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

SCOPE:

County Mental Health/Intellectual Developmental Disability (MH/IDD) Offices, Mental Health Review Officers, and facilities that conduct voluntary and involuntary commitment evaluations under the Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA).

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to obsolete and replace the OMHSAS-25-02 Voluntary and Involuntary Commitment Forms Bulletin, released on May 27, 2025.

In addition, this bulletin announces that the Department of Human Services (Department) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) has revised forms for voluntary and involuntary commitment evaluations. These revised forms include:

- MH 781: *Consent For Voluntary Inpatient Treatment,*
- MH 781BCD: *Explanation of Voluntary Admission Rights,*
- MH 783: *Application for Involuntary Emergency Examination and Treatment,*
- MH 783A: *Explanation of Rights under Involuntary Emergency Treatment,*
- MH 783B: *Explanation of Warrant,*
- MH 785: *Petition for Involuntary Treatment (Sections 304 and 305), and*
- MH 788: *Petition to Transfer for Persons in Involuntary Treatment (Section 306).*

Furthermore, this bulletin creates a unified procedure for updating all forms utilized under the MHPA to ensure consistency of the forms statewide.

BACKGROUND:

Section 112 of the MHPA authorizes the Department to issue forms necessary to implement the requirements of the Act. The Department previously issued these forms and identified them in

55 Pa. Code § 5100.41. This chapter includes forms MH 781, MH 783, MH 783A, MH 783B, MH 785, and MH 788, which are being revised by the Department.

Over the years, counties have used different customized versions of the MH 783 statewide form. The existence of multiple versions of a form with the same state-issued number has resulted in provider confusion, especially when an individual who is the subject of the 302 warrant is transported to a provider across county lines.

The Department considered stakeholder feedback regarding the amended voluntary and involuntary commitment forms released with Bulletin OMHSAS-25-02. In response to the comments and concerns received, the Department has made amendments to several of the forms.

DISCUSSION:

OMHSAS is issuing updated versions of the following forms to be utilized by all counties and facilities when conducting an involuntary commitment process. The updated forms enclosed in this Bulletin supersede all previous versions of forms MH 783, MH 783A, MH 783B, MH 785, and MH 788.

In addition, OMHSAS is issuing an updated version of form MH 781 which is also to be utilized by all counties and facilities when conducting a voluntary commitment process and supersedes all previous versions of the form.

Specifically, substantive revisions being made to each form include:

- *MH 781: Consent For Voluntary Inpatient Treatment* (ATTACHMENT A) – Previous changes to comply with minor consent provisions outlined in Act 65 of 2020 have been retained. No additional substantive changes were made.

- *MH 781BCD: Explanation of Voluntary Admission Rights* (ATTACHMENT B*)* – A "Notice For Facility Directors or Designees" has been added to remind facility directors and designees to inform minors of their rights under Act 65 of 2020 in accordance with Act of February 13, 1970 (P.L. 19, No. 10), (35 P.S. §§ 10101–10105).

- *MH 783: Application for Involuntary Emergency Examination and Treatment* (ATTACHMENT C) – Previous changes to the instructions, penalty of falsification, standard responses to The Patient's Rights acknowledgment, and the option to indicate acceptance of voluntary treatment under Physician's Examination have been retained.

  Additional substantive revisions have been made, as outlined below, and are effective upon issuance of this bulletin:

  - Contact Information (Page 1)

    To standardize data collection and reporting, the form has been updated to include checkboxes for "Hispanic/Latino" and "Non-Hispanic/Latino" in the "Ethnicity" field.

The following fields were also added to the individual's contact information section: Name of County Program, Name of Base Service Unit (BSU), and BSU Number.

The "Name of Facility" field has been revised to "Name of Facility Where 302 is Initiated," to more accurately specify which facility initiated the 302 process.

- Instructions (Page 1)

  The word, "imminent" and related references were removed from number 1 of the Instructions section, as the term is not used in the MHPA and is not otherwise defined as a standard for involuntary treatment under the applicable regulation.

  The word, "evaluation" was replaced with "examination" in number 2 of the Instructions section.

- Part I: Application (Page 2)

  The "Unknown" checkbox has been removed from all statements that start with the phrase, "*To your knowledge*."

  A section has been added to document the county in which the individual in need of services was located.

  The word "examination" has been removed from language requesting that applicants describe specific behaviors.

  The "Warrant Requested" section has been moved above the applicant signature lines.

- Part II: Authorization for Involuntary Examination Without a Warrant (Page 5)

  To clarify that the section should be completed in all circumstances, regardless of whether an individual requires transportation for evaluation or is being evaluated at the present facility, the following language was added to the fourth paragraph: "OR evaluated at the present facility."

- Part III: Warrant (Page 6)

  The following statement was removed: "*The total length of time that the 302 warrant remains valid to detain the individual for purposes of examination cannot exceed 120 hours*."

  Language under Section A has been updated to clarify that the 120-hour confinement period begins when the individual arrives at the evaluation facility in alignment with OMHSAS-23-04 *Mental Health Emergency Services: Applying the 120-hour timeframe for Emergency Involuntary Commitments - Revised*.

- Part V: Actions Taken to Protect the Patient's Interest (Page 8)

The signature line has been updated to clarify that the signature should be from *the "County MH/IDD Administrator or Facility Representative*.

- Part VI: Physician's Examination (Pages 9-10)

  The physician affirmation statement has been revised to clarify that the two-hour period for examination begins when the individual arrives for the purposes of involuntary examination or within two hours of when the individual is petitioned for involuntary examination if the individual is already at the facility.

  The following section was added to require physicians to affirm whether the individual initially arrived at the facility voluntarily: "*The above-named person is currently at this facility under a voluntary commitment*." This clarification is intended to document the individual's status at the time of admission and distinguish an individual who was initially admitted voluntarily from an individual who may have been brought to the facility under another legal status. This clarification also helps staff to document when the individual arrived for treatment in situations where staff believe that an involuntary commitment is needed after an initial voluntary admission.

  The "INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT NEEDED" instructions under the "Results of Examination" section has been revised to remove the following language: "EVIDENCE THAT INDIVIDUAL PRESENTS IMMINENT RISK OF HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS THAT WARRANTS INVOLUNTARY TREATMENT: (Use additional sheets if necessary)." This revision removes the term "imminent" which is not used in the MHPA and is not otherwise defined as a standard for involuntary treatment under the applicable regulation. This revision also removes the reference to documenting "evidence" as physicians document their clinical findings and conclusions based on their examination of the individual; those findings and conclusions may subsequently be used as evidence in a legal proceeding.

  To provide a sequential progression of options within the "Determination" section, Options B and C have been reordered. The revised Option C clarifies that selection of this option terminates the current involuntary treatment process. Language has also been added to clarify that, if the involuntary treatment process is re-initiated in the future, new 302 forms must be completed. This revision is intended to promote consistency in the application of the process across all Pennsylvania counties.

  The signature line at the bottom of this section has been revised to read "*Signature of Physician Completing Psychiatric Examination*." An additional signature line has been added for the physician completing the physical examination for medical clearance. Although both examinations may be completed by the same physician, separate signature lines are provided to accurately document the physician responsible for completing each examination when different physicians perform the examinations.

- *MH 783A: Explanation of Rights under Involuntary Emergency Treatment* (ATTACHMENT D) – The timeframe for providing the more detailed statement of rights to individuals receiving services has been revised from 24 hours to 72 hours to align with 55 Pa. Code § 5100.52(a) (relating to statement of principle). OMHSAS continues to encourage providers to furnish individuals with information regarding their rights as soon as possible to promote timely understanding of those rights throughout treatment and commitment proceedings.

  Clarification has been added to reflect that the 120-hour confinement period begins when an individual arrives at the evaluation location for the purposes of an involuntary mental health evaluation, as outlined in OMHSAS-23-04 *Mental Health Emergency Services: Applying the 120-hour timeframe for Emergency Involuntary Commitments - Revised*.

- *MH 783B: Explanation of Warrant* (ATTACHMENT E) – Previous changes to clarify when a physician must complete the evaluation, the period of time that an individual may be held pursuant to the warrant, and the circumstances that necessitate conducting a court hearing have been retained. No additional substantive changes have been made.

- *MH 785: Petition for Involuntary Treatment (Sections 304 and 305)* (ATTACHMENT F) – Previous changes to modernize terminology within the form, rename the form to align with § 5100.41 (relating to forms), and add a signature line for the Judge or mental health review officer who conducted the hearing have been retained. No additional substantive changes were made.

- *MH 788: Petition to Transfer Persons in Involuntary Treatment (Section 306)* (ATTACHMENT G) – No substantive changes were made.

PROCEDURES:

These newly issued forms cannot be altered in any way by any entity. In addition to the newly issued forms, forms MH 784, MH 785, MH 789, MH 789A, MH 789B, MH 790, MH 791, MH 792, and MH 793 that are used for Assisted Outpatient Treatment and identified in bulletin OMHSAS-19-04 *Guidelines for Implementing Assisted Outpatient Treatment* are not to be altered in any way by any entity.

All counties are mandated to utilize the state-issued version of the forms. All previous modifications to the forms approved by OMHSAS are obsolete upon the effective date of this bulletin. OMHSAS will no longer provide county-specific approvals to alter forms.

County MH/IDD Offices and facilities may elect to digitize the forms for use in electronic health records, but digitized forms must be identical to the OMHSAS-issued statewide forms. The ability to transmit and store medical records electronically was not anticipated at the time the MHPA was enacted; as such, it is silent on such transmittal or storage. OMHSAS recognizes the need for forms to be transmitted and stored electronically. However, such transmittals are limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act secure transmission portals that ensure the privacy of the information contained within the forms.

All forms will be made available on the Department's website at: https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/for-providers/form-search.html. Client-facing forms (MH 781, MH 781BCD, MH 783A, MH 783B, MH 789, MH 789A, MH 789B, and MH 792) will be provided in English, as well as in the five most common non-English languages among Medical Assistance beneficiaries in the Commonwealth: Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Nepali, Russian, and Arabic.

OBSOLETE BULLETIN:

Bulletin OMHSAS-25-02 and all prior versions of forms MH 781, MH 781BCD, MH 783, MH 783A, MH 783B, MH 785, and MH 788 are obsolete, including any OMHSAS-approved county-specific versions of the forms.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: *Consent For Voluntary Inpatient Treatment (MH 781)*
ATTACHMENT B: *Explanation of Voluntary Admission Rights – English and Spanish (MH 781BCD)*
ATTACHMENT C: *Application for Involuntary Emergency Examination and Treatment (MH 783)*
ATTACHMENT D: *Explanation of Rights under Involuntary Emergency Treatment – English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Nepali, and Russian (MH 783A)*
ATTACHMENT E: *Explanation of Warrant (MH 783B)*
ATTACHMENT F: *Petition for Involuntary Treatment (Sections 304 and 305) (MH 785)*
ATTACHMENT G: *Petition to Transfer Persons in Involuntary Treatment (Section 306) (MH 788).*