

Miami-Dade County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)  
**Family/Provider Guide for Involuntary Inpatient Mental Health Assessment**

Florida Statute 394 (Mental Health, Baker Act)  
Florida Administrative Code 65E-5



If you sense changes in your loved one, family member or friend's mental health, talk to them to try and understand what they are experiencing. While everyone occasionally has a bad day there are often early warning signs that can signal greater reasons for concern, such as, changes in sleep or social activities, increased hostility/agitation or reported feelings of loneliness, sadness and suspiciousness. One option is to try to encourage him/her to voluntarily see a psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker. The purpose is to prevent a crisis. However, if the individual has become a threat to him/herself or others, and is *not willing to receive treatment voluntarily*, crisis intervention may be necessary, which can be provided by any of the following options.

- ❖ Licensed Mental Health Professional
  - Mobile Crisis Team
- ❖ Ex Parte Baker Act Order
- ❖ Law Enforcement

Each option will require Law Enforcement involvement at a certain point, therefore, it is important to be familiar with the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). Most local Law Enforcement agencies have Crisis Intervention Teams. CIT officers receive 40-hours of specialized training intended to increase their understanding of mental illness and addiction disorders, permitting for more effective communication when assisting a person in crisis. CIT training teaches recognition of the signs and symptoms of mental illness, de-escalation techniques, and knowledge of the community resources in Miami-Dade County's behavioral health system for linkage to treatment.

The CIT program is a collaborative effort among law enforcement, families, the mental health community and other advocates. The goal is to improve officer and citizen safety and more effectively meet the needs of individuals with mental illness and their families. CIT Officers are here to assist.

- ❖ **Licensed Mental Health Professional** s.394.463F.S.

A Physician, Clinical Psychologist, Psychiatric Nurse, Mental Health Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist, Clinical Social Worker or Physician's Assistant may execute a certificate stating that he or she has examined a person within the preceding 48 hours and finds that the person appears to meet the criteria for involuntary examination. A professional who is familiar with the person is best but not required.

**Mobile Response Team**

WestCare/The Village South  
800-HELP-YOU (800-435-7968)

The Mobile Response Team consists of Licensed Mental Health Professionals who will visit the home, school or other location as needed 24/7 (response time may be up to 60 minutes). The professional will assess the person in crisis and determine if a person meets criteria for evaluation or alternative services. If the team decides to initiate a Baker Act, Law Enforcement will be contacted to assist with transport. This team is unable to address medical concerns and is a non-emergency service. Please dial 911 if experiencing a life-threatening emergency. (See next page for more tips)

- ❖ **Ex parte Baker Act Order** s.394.463 F.S.  
Family or providers (petitioner) who witness behavior indicating that an individual is a threat to self or others can visit the **probate court** and request an order for involuntary examination M-F before 4pm:

Probate Court, Suite 234  
73 W. Flagler Street  
Miami, Florida 33130

[http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/families\\_probate\\_baker\\_act.asp](http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/families_probate_baker_act.asp)

Once the order is obtained the petitioner will then need to be with the Order, and person in crisis, when police are called/arrive. The caller should advise the dispatcher that they have an **Ex parte Baker Act Order** signed by a judge and that they would like a trained CIT Officer to assist. (See next page for more tips)

- ❖ **Law Enforcement** s. 394.463 F.S.  
Law Enforcement Officers can assess and transport an individual, meeting criteria for an Involuntary Examination, to a receiving facility. It is appropriate to contact 911 when there is an incident that requires immediate medical attention or assistance involving dangerous behaviors. (See next page for more tips)

**Communication with Treatment Facility**

Once transported, the family/provider can prepare a written history for the psychiatrist. It is important that this information be submitted either at transport or within hours since the physician will be making decisions soon after arrival.

Written is best because it can be included in the person's medical record. That ensures that the information is accessible and available for review by each member of the treatment team throughout the treatment process. (See page 3 for more detailed guide)



# Interaction with Law Enforcement and Treatment Facilities

## Calling 911

Having to call 911 is an extremely stressful situation. It is by definition an emergency. You want to make sure that you give law enforcement enough information so that they will be able to respond effectively and safely. It can be difficult to provide that information when the caller is understandably upset about the current situation.

Try to control the volume of your voice. This can be a very emotionally charged time and if the Operator cannot understand the information being provided it is not efficiently received. As calmly and clearly as possible, provide information to the Operator and try to answer the Operator's questions, follow any directions you are given, and tell the Operator the following:

1. Your name and address
2. That the person has a mental health issue  
Request a Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT) officer, if available
3. Name of person with mental health issue
4. Your relationship to the person
5. Person's diagnosis
6. Any medication being used
7. Has medication stopped? How long?
8. Describe what the person is doing now.
9. Do you feel threatened?
10. Is there a history of violent acting out?
11. Does the person hear voices?
12. Does the person have fears?
13. Location of person in house?
14. Are there weapons available? (Try to remove them if safe to do so.)

## When Law Enforcement Arrives

Officers responding to a 911 emergency call are very focused when they arrive on the scene. First, they will make the scene safe for you, the patient, and themselves. The more informed that the officers are the better likelihood that someone will get the help and support that they require.

Have all the lights in the house turned on so that all occupants can be clearly visible to the arriving officers. Have nothing in your hands if you come out of the house to meet the officers. Do not run up to the officers. They do not know what your involvement is and anything you may carry can possibly be interpreted as a weapon. It is essential that the officers responding to the emergency call assess the current situation and establish an understanding of the environment, everyone involved and whether there is any current level of potential threat. As calmly as possible, identify yourself. Tell the officers:

1. Who you are
2. If there are weapons involved
3. Provide any documents such as court order
4. Who you have called about
5. That the person has a mental illness
6. Your relationship to the person with a mental illness
7. What kind of mental illness it is
8. What medication is being taken
9. Has medication stopped? How long?
10. Is the person violent or delusional/paranoid?
11. History of suicide attempts?
12. The attending psychiatrist's or case manager's names, if any, and their phone #s

Although it can be difficult to do in times of crisis, being calm and patient are essential for a successful outcome. Spend time answering the officers' questions because this information can be crucial when relayed to treatment providers. Answer questions as directly and concisely as you are able. Offer any advice or insight you deem helpful. \* This information was provided courtesy of NAMI California.

# Interaction with Law Enforcement and Treatment Facilities



## Communication with Treatment Facilities

The intention of submitting a written document is to provide additional information to assist the treating psychiatrist to more accurately complete a comprehensive mental health assessment for the patient. Physicians' schedules are often long hours, sometimes overnight or very early morning and is primarily dedicated to speaking with the patient. This makes speaking with physicians difficult for family and providers.

As much as possible the information should consist of facts only and should be provided to the hospital as soon as possible upon patient arrival.

Preferably no more than 2 pages typed. Use bullets whenever possible.

Bulleted items below are areas of high interest, using these labels may help the intended reader to get to the information of interest. Be sure to include your contact information.

- **Patient Name**
- **Writer's Name**, Contact Information and relationship to patient
- **Patient's current living situation** (i.e. Living with family, homeless, etc.) include address, phone number and how long the patient has resided there. If the patient has had several living situations in the last 6 months indicate why
- **Behaviors of concern** in the recent past (emphasis on the last few weeks) include any behaviors that are considered immediate danger to patient or others (keep brief, but enough detail to get your point across)
- **List of medications** patient is currently prescribed and list taken in past and how patient reacted (include allergies to medications)

- **Date or age of onset** of symptoms, list of symptoms
- Any **Advanced Directives** written by the patient (provide copy if available)
- Any **previous hospitalizations** with admission and discharge dates and name of hospital and treating psychiatrist (if known)
- Any **previous outpatient treatment** with dates and treating psychiatrist (if known)
- **Previous Diagnosis** given, date and name of psychiatrist
- **Family history of mental health diagnosis** including relationship to patient (i.e. Maternal grandmother- schizophrenia)
- **Schooling completed** i.e. High school graduate, completed to 6<sup>th</sup> grade, etc.
- **History of substance use** list name of substance, frequency of use, date last used or if none state "none"
- **History medical issues**
- **History of incarcerations**
- **History of compliance** with treatment when in community (focus on the last few weeks)

Once an individual is admitted into treatment, it may not always be possible for family and friends to receive updates from the facility due to privacy laws. The patient will need to sign a release agreeing to sharing of information, with the exception of minors and Legal Guardianship.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) addresses disclosure of an individual's health information and privacy rights.



## Interaction with Law Enforcement and Treatment Facilities

### **Baker Act Receiving Facilities - Adults**

#### ***Aventura Hospital and Medical Center***

20900 Biscayne Blvd.  
Miami, FL 33180  
305 682-7000

#### ***Banyan Health Systems***

3800 West Flagler Street  
Miami, FL 33134  
305 757-0602

#### ***Citrus Health Network***

4175 West 20th Avenue  
Hialeah, FL 33012  
305 825-0300

#### ***Community Health of South Florida (CHI)***

10300 SW 216th Street  
Cutler Bay, FL 33190  
305 253-5100

#### ***Jackson Behavioral Health Hospital***

1695 NW 9th Avenue  
Miami, FL 33136  
305 355-8234

#### ***Jackson Community Mental Health Center***

15055 NW 27th Avenue  
Opa Locka, FL 33054  
786 466-2834

#### ***Jackson South Community Hospital***

9333 SW 152nd Street  
Miami, FL 33157  
305 251-2500

#### ***Keralty (formerly Westchester) General Hospital***

2500 SW 75th Avenue  
Miami, FL 33155  
305 264-5252

#### ***Larkin Community Hospital***

7031 SW 62nd Avenue  
South Miami, FL 33143  
305 284-7500

#### ***Mount Sinai Medical Center***

4300 Alton Road  
Miami Beach, FL 33140  
305 674-2121

#### ***Southern Winds Hospital***

4225 West 20th Avenue  
Hialeah, FL 33012  
305 558-9700

### ***Veterans Affairs Healthcare System***

1201 NW 16th Street  
Miami, FL 33125  
305 575-3214

### **Baker Act Receiving Facilities - Minors**

#### ***Citrus Health Network***

4175 West 20th Avenue  
Hialeah, FL 33012  
305 825-0300

#### ***Jackson Behavioral Health Hospital***

1695 NW 9th Avenue  
Miami, FL 33136  
305 355-8234

#### ***Larkin Community Hospital***

7031 SW 62nd Avenue  
South Miami, FL 33143  
305 284-7500

#### ***Nicklaus Children's Hospital***

3100 SW 62nd Avenue  
Miami, FL 33155  
305 666-6511

### **For more assistance:**

#### **Thriving Mind Help Line**

For assistance or questions related to mental health, substance use and other community services.

M-F, 8AM–4:30PM  
1-888-248-3111

<https://thrivingmind.org>

#### **NAMI Miami-Dade Warm Line**

For peer counseling and connections to community services.

M-F, 9AM–5PM  
305-665-2540

Help available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian. After hours, dial NAMI's national helpline: 800-950-NAMI (6264) or text "NAMI" to 741741