



QUESTIONS FOR PSYCHIATRIC SECURITY REVIEW BOARD NOMINEE

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PSYCHIATRIC SECURITY REVIEW BOARD

The Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) holds hearings to determine the appropriate level of supervision and treatment for people acquitted of crimes due to a mental disease or defect. These individuals are called "acquittees." Depending on the danger an acquittee poses, the board may order confinement in a maximum-security facility or psychiatric hospital, approve temporary leave or conditional release, or transfer custody to the Department of Developmental Services. In addition, the board makes court recommendations when an acquittee petitions to be discharged from supervision.

The board consists of six members appointed by the governor and confirmed by either house of the General Assembly: a psychiatrist, a psychologist, someone with experience in probation, an attorney, a person experienced in victim advocacy, and a member of the public. Its activities are governed by CGS §§ [17a-580](#) through [17a-603](#).

QUESTIONS

1. The law specifies that the board's primary concern is to protect society. How should the board balance that concern against the rights of acquittees?
2. PSRB hearings are open to the public, and victims may give statements at board hearings, either in person or in writing. How much consideration should the board give to a victim's statement?
3. Are there currently enough community-based services available for all acquittees the board finds suitable for conditional release?

4. What are the most important factors the board should consider when deciding whether to recommend an acquittee be discharged from custody? Should the law specify additional factors that the board should weigh when making such decisions?
5. The law requires the board to conduct hearings and review the status of an acquittee at least every two years. Is that often enough?
6. Connecticut is among a small number of states without an outpatient civil commitment law. Generally, these laws provide for court-ordered, community-based treatment for people with untreated severe mental illness, often focused on those with a history of medication and treatment noncompliance. This issue is among those being studied by the Behavioral Health Task Force. Do you think Connecticut should enact such a law?
7. Have the Newtown shootings, or the legislative response, impacted how the board makes community release decisions?
8. According to the most recent report available on the board's website, in FY 11, no conditionally released acquittees were convicted of crimes, and one was arrested on a misdemeanor charge that was later dropped. What are the statistics on these matters since then?

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