

# Psychiatric Security Review Board

## *At a Glance*

**ELLEN LACHANCE, Executive Director**

**Established - 1985**

**Statutory authority - Connecticut General Statutes, Section 17a-580 - 17a-603 inclusive**

**Central office - 505 Hudson Street, First Floor,  
Hartford, CT 06106**

**Number of employees - 3**

**Recurring operating expenses - \$249,027**

**Organizational structure - One Administrative Unit**

## **Mission**

*To protect the safety of Connecticut citizens and certain individuals by ordering appropriate treatment, con-finement or conditional release of persons accused of crimes but found not guilty by reason of mental disease or mental defect.*

## **Statutory Responsibility**

The Psychiatric Security Review Board (the “Board”), determines the level of confinement and treatment, for those individuals found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect, necessary to protect society. Acquittes are committed to the Board by the Superior Court. The Board, in turn, orders the appropriate level of supervision and treatment and orders the conditions under which an acquittee may be released into the community. The Board orders confinement in a maximum-security facility, approves temporary leave from a hospital setting, grants conditional release into the community and provides recommendations to the Superior Court in the matters of discharge from the Board and continued commitment.

## **Public Service**

The general public is the beneficiary of the agency's work. During fiscal year 2012-2013, a total of 13 individuals were committed to the Board Superior Court and 15 individuals had their commitment terms extended by the court. The commitment term for 3 individuals expired, 5 individuals were discharged by the court prior to the end of their commitment and 1 individual died while under the Board’s jurisdiction during this fiscal year.

As of June 30, 2013, 149 individuals remained under the Board’s jurisdiction. Of the 149 individuals, 31 were confined in maximum-security at Connecticut Valley Hospital, 1 acquittee was confined with the Department of Developmental Services, 89 individuals were ordered

confined in a secure non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital and 26 individuals held conditional release status. In addition, 1 acquittee remained in federal custody serving a concomitant sentence with his Board commitment and 1 acquittee has remained on AWOL status since June 1991.

During this fiscal year, the Board held 169 hearings and 86 Board conferences resulting in 188 Memoranda of Decision and 24 Reports to Court regarding the matters of Continued Commitment and Discharge from the jurisdiction of the Board.

There were no arrests of individuals under the Board's jurisdiction during this fiscal year.

### **Improvements/Achievements 2012-2013**

- Maintained zero percent criminal recidivism of conditionally released acquittees, as reflected by no criminal convictions.
- During this fiscal year, the Governor nominated retired Probate Court Judge Sheila Hennessey to serve as Chairperson, succeeding Robert B. Berger who was appointed in 1985 and resigned in 2012. Chairperson Hennessey's nomination was confirmed by the Connecticut State Legislature.
- Successfully changed the Board's statutory language pertaining to sex offender registration requirements for acquittees on Temporary Leave status residing in the community.
- Member, NICS (National Instant Criminal Background Check System) Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP), a multi-agency initiative to improve the quality, completeness and availability of NICS records.
- Apprised the public of all Board hearings and conferences via timely posting of information to agency website.
- Conducted agency procedures as required by law within statutorily mandated timeframes.
- Updated statistical information related to acquittee confinement and movement into the community.
- Maintained administrative meetings with the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and Connecticut Valley Hospital administrators to improve collaboration and address system issues.
- Participated in regularly scheduled community providers meetings with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services regarding conditionally released acquittees.
- Conducted bimonthly Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) trainings in partnership with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and provided on-site statewide PSRB training to a variety of community providers.

### **Strategic Planning/Business Planning**

The Board's strategic plan includes:

- Collaboration with the Office of Attorney General and the Board's Legislative Liaison to implement modifications and additions to the Board's statutes and regulations, as needed.
- Continued partnership with the Department of Information Technology, providing quality improvements to agency acquittee database.
- Cross-training of agency employees to effectively manage continuity of operations.

- Continuation of the Board's collaborative planning process with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services to address ongoing service systems issues and best practice protocols.
- Maintain outreach to community agencies and the public regarding the Board's mission of public safety.
- Update Agency Continuity of Operations Business Plan.

### **Information Reported as Required by State Statute**

*The Board members, as of June 30, 2013, were Sheila Hennessey, Chairperson, Cheryl Abrams, (expert in parole/probation), Susan Blair, M.S., L.P.C. (member with victim advocacy experience), Sylvia Cancela, M.B.A. (member of the general public), Mark Kirschner, Ph.D. (psychologist) and Justin Schechter, M.D. (psychiatrist).* The Board is assisted by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in meeting the Affirmative Action requirements of the statute and follows such regulations of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.