



Ohio Revised Code Section 5122.15 Full hearing.

Effective: September 30, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 96

(A) Full hearings shall be conducted in a manner consistent with this chapter and with due process of law. The hearings shall be conducted by a judge of the probate court or a referee designated by a judge of the probate court and may be conducted in or out of the county in which the respondent is held. Any referee designated under this division shall be an attorney.

(1) With the consent of the respondent, the following shall be made available to counsel for the respondent:

(a) All relevant documents, information, and evidence in the custody or control of the state or prosecutor;

(b) All relevant documents, information, and evidence in the custody or control of the hospital in which the respondent currently is held, or in which the respondent has been held pursuant to this chapter;

(c) All relevant documents, information, and evidence in the custody or control of any hospital, facility, or person not included in division (A)(1)(a) or (b) of this section.

(2) The respondent has the right to attend the hearing and to be represented by counsel of the respondent's choice. The right to attend the hearing may be waived only by the respondent or counsel for the respondent after consultation with the respondent.

(3) If the respondent is not represented by counsel, is absent from the hearing, and has not validly waived the right to counsel, the court shall appoint counsel immediately to represent the respondent at the hearing, reserving the right to tax costs of appointed counsel to the respondent, unless it is shown that the respondent is indigent. If the court appoints counsel, or if the court determines that the evidence relevant to the respondent's absence does not justify the absence, the court shall continue the case.



(4) The respondent shall be informed that the respondent may retain counsel and have independent expert evaluation. If the respondent is unable to obtain an attorney, the respondent shall be represented by court-appointed counsel. If the respondent is indigent, court-appointed counsel and independent expert evaluation shall be provided as an expense under section 5122.43 of the Revised Code.

(5) The hearing shall be closed to the public, unless counsel for the respondent, with the permission of the respondent, requests that the hearing be open to the public.

(6) If the hearing is closed to the public, the court, for good cause shown, may admit persons who have a legitimate interest in the proceedings. If the respondent, the respondent's counsel, or the designee of the director or of the chief clinical officer objects to the admission of any person, the court shall hear the objection and any opposing argument and shall rule upon the admission of the person to the hearing.

(7) The affiant under section 5122.11 of the Revised Code shall be subject to subpoena by either party.

(8) The court shall examine the sufficiency of all documents filed and shall inform the respondent, if present, and the respondent's counsel of the nature and content of the documents and the reason for which the respondent is being detained, or for which the respondent's placement is being sought.

(9) The court shall receive only reliable, competent, and material evidence.

(10) Unless proceedings are initiated pursuant to section 5120.17 or 5139.08 of the Revised Code, an attorney that the board designates shall present the case demonstrating that the respondent is a person with a mental illness subject to court order. The attorney shall offer evidence of the diagnosis, prognosis, record of treatment, if any, and less restrictive treatment plans, if any. In proceedings pursuant to section 5120.17 or 5139.08 of the Revised Code, the attorney general shall designate an attorney who shall present the case demonstrating that the respondent is a person with a mental illness subject to court order. The attorney shall offer evidence of the diagnosis, prognosis, record of treatment, if any, and less restrictive treatment plans, if any.



- (11) The respondent or the respondent's counsel has the right to subpoena witnesses and documents and to examine and cross-examine witnesses.
- (12) The respondent has the right, but shall not be compelled, to testify, and shall be so advised by the court.
- (13) On motion of the respondent or the respondent's counsel for good cause shown, or on the court's own motion, the court may order a continuance of the hearing.
- (14) If the respondent is represented by counsel and the respondent's counsel requests a transcript and record, or if the respondent is not represented by counsel, the court shall make and maintain a full transcript and record of the proceeding. If the respondent is indigent and the transcript and record is made, a copy shall be provided to the respondent upon request and be treated as an expense under section 5122.43 of the Revised Code.
- (15) To the extent not inconsistent with this chapter, the Rules of Civil Procedure are applicable.
- (B) Unless, upon completion of the hearing the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the respondent is a person with a mental illness subject to court order, it shall order the respondent's discharge immediately.
- (C) If, upon completion of the hearing, the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the respondent is a person with a mental illness subject to court order, the court shall order the respondent for a period not to exceed ninety days to any of the following:
- (1) A hospital operated by the department of behavioral health if the respondent is committed pursuant to section 5139.08 of the Revised Code;
 - (2) A nonpublic hospital;
 - (3) The veterans' administration or other agency of the United States government;



(4) A board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services or services provider the board designates;

(5) Receive private psychiatric or psychological care and treatment;

(6) Any other suitable facility or person consistent with the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment needs of the respondent. A jail or other local correctional facility is not a suitable facility.

(D) Any order made pursuant to division (C)(2), (3), (5), or (6) of this section shall be conditioned upon the receipt by the court of consent by the hospital, facility, agency, or person to accept the respondent and may include a requirement that a person or entity described in division (C)(2), (3), (5), or (6) of this section inform the board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services or community mental health services provider the board designates about the progress of the respondent with the treatment plan.

(E) In determining the entity or person to which the respondent is to be committed under division (C) of this section, the court shall consider all of the following:

(1) The respondent's diagnosis and prognosis made by a psychiatrist, licensed clinical psychologist, clinical nurse specialist who is certified as a psychiatric-mental health clinical nurse specialist by the American nurses credentialing center, or certified nurse practitioner who is certified as a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner by the American nurses credentialing center;

(2) The respondent's preferences;

(3) The respondent's projected treatment plan.

The court shall order the implementation of the least restrictive alternative available and consistent with treatment goals. If the court determines that the least restrictive alternative available that is consistent with treatment goals is inpatient hospitalization, the court's order shall so state.

(F) During the ninety-day period the entity or person shall examine and treat the respondent. If the respondent is receiving treatment in an outpatient setting, or receives treatment in an outpatient



setting during a subsequent period of continued commitment under division (H) of this section, the entity or person to whom the respondent is committed shall determine the appropriate outpatient treatment for the respondent. If, at any time prior to the expiration of the ninety-day period, it is determined by the entity or person that the respondent's treatment needs could be equally well met in an available and appropriate less restrictive setting, both of the following apply:

(1) The respondent shall be released from the care of the entity or person immediately and shall be referred to the court together with a report of the findings and recommendations of the entity or person;

(2) The entity or person shall notify the respondent's counsel or the attorney designated by a board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services or, if the respondent was committed to a board or a services provider designated by the board, it shall place the respondent in the least restrictive setting available consistent with treatment goals and notify the court and the respondent's counsel of the placement.

The court shall dismiss the case or order placement in the least restrictive setting.

(G)(1) Except as provided in division (G)(2) of this section, any person for whom proceedings for treatment have been commenced pursuant to section 5122.11 of the Revised Code, may apply at any time for voluntary admission or treatment to the entity or person to which the person was committed. Upon admission as a voluntary patient the chief clinical officer of the entity or the person immediately shall notify the court, the patient's counsel, and the attorney designated by the board, if the attorney has entered the proceedings, in writing of that fact, and, upon receipt of the notice, the court shall dismiss the case.

(2) A person who is found incompetent to stand trial or not guilty by reason of insanity and who is committed pursuant to section 2945.39, 2945.40, 2945.401, or 2945.402 of the Revised Code shall not voluntarily commit the person pursuant to this section until after the final termination of the commitment, as described in division (J) of section 2945.401 of the Revised Code.

(H) If, at the end of the first ninety-day period or any subsequent period of continued commitment, there has been no disposition of the case, either by discharge or voluntary admission or treatment, the



entity or person shall discharge the patient immediately, unless at least ten days before the expiration of the period the attorney the board designates or the prosecutor files with the court an application for continued commitment. The application of the attorney or the prosecutor shall include a written report containing the diagnosis, prognosis, past treatment, a list of alternative treatment settings and plans, and identification of the treatment setting that is the least restrictive consistent with treatment needs. The attorney the board designates or the prosecutor shall file the written report at least three days prior to the full hearing. A copy of the application and written report shall be provided to the respondent's counsel immediately.

The court shall hold a full hearing on applications for continued commitment at the expiration of the first ninety-day period and at least every two years after the expiration of the first ninety-day period.

Hearings following any application for continued commitment are mandatory and may not be waived.

For a respondent who is ordered to receive treatment in an outpatient setting, if at any time after the first ninety-day period the entity or person to whom the respondent was ordered determines that the respondent has demonstrated voluntary consent for treatment, that entity or person shall immediately notify the respondent, the respondent's counsel, the attorney designated by the board, and the court. The entity or person shall submit to the court a report of the findings and recommendations. The court may dismiss the case upon review of the facts.

Upon request of a person who is involuntarily committed under this section, or the person's counsel, that is made more than one hundred eighty days after the person's last full hearing, mandatory or requested, the court shall hold a full hearing on the person's continued commitment. Upon the application of a person involuntarily committed under this section, supported by an affidavit of a psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist, alleging that the person no longer is a person with a mental illness subject to court order, the court for good cause shown may hold a full hearing on the person's continued commitment prior to the expiration of one hundred eighty days after the person's last full hearing. Section 5122.12 of the Revised Code applies to all hearings on continued commitment.

If the court, after a hearing for continued commitment finds by clear and convincing evidence that



the respondent is a person with a mental illness subject to court order, the court may order continued commitment at places or to persons specified in division (C) of this section.

(I) Unless the admission is pursuant to section 5120.17 or 5139.08 of the Revised Code, the chief clinical officer of the entity admitting a respondent pursuant to a judicial proceeding, within ten working days of the admission, shall make a report of the admission to the board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services serving the respondent's county of residence.

(J) A referee appointed by the court may make all orders that a judge may make under this section and sections 5122.11 and 5122.141 of the Revised Code, except an order of contempt of court. The orders of a referee take effect immediately. Within fourteen days of the making of an order by a referee, a party may file written objections to the order with the court. The filed objections shall be considered a motion, shall be specific, and shall state their grounds with particularity. Within ten days of the filing of the objections, a judge of the court shall hold a hearing on the objections and may hear and consider any testimony or other evidence relating to the respondent's mental condition. At the conclusion of the hearing, the judge may ratify, rescind, or modify the referee's order.

(K) An order of the court under division (C), (H), or (J) of this section is a final order.

(L) Before a board, or a services provider the board designates, may place an unconsenting respondent in an inpatient setting from a less restrictive placement, the board or services provider shall do all of the following:

(1) Determine that the respondent is in immediate need of treatment in an inpatient setting because the respondent represents a substantial risk of physical harm to the respondent or others if allowed to remain in a less restrictive setting;

(2) On the day of placement in the inpatient setting or on the next court day, file with the court a motion for transfer to an inpatient setting or communicate to the court by telephone that the required motion has been mailed;

(3) Ensure that every reasonable and appropriate effort is made to take the respondent to the inpatient setting in the least conspicuous manner possible;



(4) Immediately notify the board's designated attorney and the respondent's attorney.

At the respondent's request, the court shall hold a hearing on the motion and make a determination pursuant to division (E) of this section within five days of the placement.

(M) Before a board, or a services provider the board designates, may move a respondent from one residential placement to another, the board or services provider shall consult with the respondent about the placement. If the respondent objects to the placement, the proposed placement and the need for it shall be reviewed by a qualified mental health professional who otherwise is not involved in the treatment of the respondent.

(N) The entity or person to whom the respondent was ordered for treatment in an outpatient setting may submit a report to the court indicating that the respondent has either failed to comply with the treatment plan or begun to demonstrate signs of decompensation that may be grounds for hospitalization. On receipt of the report, the court shall promptly schedule a hearing to review the case. The court shall conduct the hearing in a manner consistent with this chapter and due process of law. The board shall receive notice of the hearing and the board and entity or person treating the respondent shall submit a report to the court with a plan for appropriate alternative treatment, if any, or recommend that the court discontinue the court-ordered treatment. The court shall consider available and appropriate alternative placements but shall not impose criminal sanctions that result in confinement in a jail or other local correctional facility based on the respondent's failure to comply with the treatment plan. The court may not order the respondent to a more restrictive placement unless the criteria specified in division (L) of this section are met and may not order the respondent to an inpatient setting unless the court determines by clear and convincing evidence presented by the board that the respondent meets the criteria specified in divisions (A) and (B)(1), (2), (3), or (4) of section 5122.01 of the Revised Code.