



Ohio Revised Code

Section 5139.45 Office of quality assurance and improvement.

Effective: April 4, 2023

Legislation: Senate Bill 288

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Quality assurance committee" means a committee that is appointed in the central office of the department of youth services by the director of youth services, a committee appointed at an institution by the managing officer of the institution, or a duly authorized subcommittee of that nature and that is designated to carry out quality assurance program activities.

(2) "Institution" means a state facility that is created by the general assembly and that is under the management and control of the department of youth services or a private entity with which the department has contracted for the institutional care and custody of felony delinquents.

(3) "Quality assurance program" means a comprehensive program within the department of youth services to systematically review and improve the quality of comprehensive services, including but not limited to, medical and mental health services within the department and the department's institutions, the safety and security of persons receiving care and services within the department and the department's institutions, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the utilization of staff and resources in the delivery of services within the department and the department's institutions.

(4) "Quality assurance program activities" means the activities of a quality assurance committee, of persons who provide, collect, or compile information and reports required by a quality assurance committee, and of persons who receive, review, or implement the recommendations made by a quality assurance committee. "Quality assurance program activities" include, but are not limited to, credentialing, infection control, utilization review including access to patient care, patient care assessments, medical and mental health records, medical and mental health resource management, mortality and morbidity review, identification and prevention of medical or mental health incidents and risks, and other comprehensive service activities whether performed by a quality assurance committee or by persons who are directed by a quality assurance committee.



(5) "Quality assurance record" means the proceedings, records, minutes, and reports that result from quality assurance program activities. "Quality assurance record" does not include aggregate statistical information that does not disclose the identity of persons receiving or providing services in institutions.

(B) The director of the department of youth services shall appoint a central office quality assurance committee consisting of staff members from relevant divisions within the department. The managing officer of an institution may appoint an institutional quality assurance committee.

(C)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (F) of this section, quality assurance records are confidential and are not public records under section 149.43 of the Revised Code and shall be used only in the course of the proper functions of a quality assurance program.

(2) Except as provided in division (F) of this section, no person who possesses or has access to quality assurance records and who knows that the records are quality assurance records shall willfully disclose the contents of the records to any person or entity.

(D)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (F) of this section, a quality assurance record is not subject to discovery and is not admissible as evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding.

(2) Except as provided in division (F) of this section, no member of a quality assurance committee or person who is performing a function that is part of a quality assurance program shall be permitted or required to testify in a judicial or administrative proceeding with respect to a quality assurance record or with respect to any finding, recommendation, evaluation, opinion, or other action taken by the committee, member, or person.

(3) Information, documents, or records otherwise available from original sources shall not be unavailable for discovery or inadmissible as evidence in a judicial or administrative proceeding under division (D)(1) of this section merely because they were presented to a quality assurance committee. No person testifying before a quality assurance committee or person who is a member of a quality assurance committee shall be prohibited from testifying as to matters within the person's knowledge, but the person shall not be asked about an opinion formed by the person as a result of the quality assurance committee proceedings.



(E)(1) A person who, without malice and in the reasonable belief that the information is warranted by the facts known to the person, provides information to a person engaged in quality assurance program activities is not liable for damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property as a result of providing the information.

(2) A member of a quality assurance committee, a person engaged in quality assurance program activities, or an employee of the department of youth services shall not be liable in damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property for any acts, omissions, decisions, or other conduct within the scope of the functions of the quality assurance program.

(3) Nothing in this section shall relieve any institution from liability arising from the treatment of a patient.

(F) Quality assurance records may be disclosed, and testimony may be provided concerning quality assurance records, only to the following persons or entities or under the following circumstances:

(1) Persons who are employed or retained by the department of youth services and who have the authority to evaluate or implement the recommendations of a quality assurance committee;

(2) Public or private agencies or organizations if needed to perform a licensing or accreditation function related to institutions or to perform monitoring of institutions as required by law;

(3) A governmental board or agency, a professional health care society or organization, or a professional standards review organization, if the records or testimony are needed to perform licensing, credentialing, or monitoring of professional standards with respect to medical or mental health professionals employed or retained by the department;

(4) A criminal or civil law enforcement agency or public health agency charged by law with the protection of public health or safety, if a qualified representative of the agency makes a written request stating that the records or testimony are necessary for a purpose authorized by law;

(5) In a judicial or administrative proceeding commenced by an entity described in division (F)(3) or



(4) of this section for a purpose described in that division but only with respect to the subject of the proceedings.

(G) A disclosure of quality assurance records pursuant to division (F) of this section does not otherwise waive the confidential and privileged status of the disclosed quality assurance records. The names and other identifying information regarding individual patients or employees of a quality assurance committee contained in a quality assurance record shall be redacted from the record prior to the disclosure of the record unless the identity of an individual is necessary for the purpose for which the disclosure is being made and does not constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.