

What is the Patient Advocacy Program?

We are dedicated to ensuring the rights of mental health clients.

Mental health clients have the same legal rights afforded to every American citizen.

Information & Assistance

(619) 282-1134 or 1-800-479-2233

Fax: (619) 282-4885

www.jfssd.org/patientadvocacy

Hours: 8:00am–5:00pm, Monday–Friday



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For a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices, please visit our website or contact us.



Consumer Center for
Health Education and Advocacy
1-877-734-3258

Patient Advocacy



Laura's Law
Assisted Outpatient Treatment



The Patient Advocacy Program
is funded by the county of San Diego



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What is Laura's Law—Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT)?

A Court may order a person to obtain Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) if the Court finds that a person meets ALL of the following nine criteria:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Suffer from a mental illness
- Unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision
- Have a history of treatment non-compliance for one of the following: two occurrences of hospitalization or incarceration with the last 36 months; or one occurrence of serious or violent behavior within the last 48 months
- Refused or did not engage in prior opportunities for treatment
- Have a condition that is deteriorating
- AOT must be the least restrictive placement to ensure recovery and stability
- The treatment must be deemed to prevent a relapse or deterioration that would likely result in involuntary treatment through 5150
- Likely to benefit from AOT

This information can be found in the Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 5345-5349.5

What are my rights if I am facing a Laura's Law/AOT Petition?

If you are the subject of an AOT petition, you have all of the following rights:

- To adequate notice of the hearings
- To receive a copy of the Court-ordered evaluation
- To obtain counsel of your choice, or utilize a Public Defender
- To be informed of your right to judicial review by habeas corpus
- To be present at the hearing unless you waive that right
- To present evidence
- To call witnesses on your behalf
- To cross examine witnesses
- To appeal decisions and be informed of your right to appeal

If you have questions or concerns about the Assisted Outpatient Treatment process or your rights, please call

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What services are provided under Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT)?

Laura's Law and AOT will provide recovery-oriented, evidence-based Assertive Community Treatment to adults with serious mental illness. Members may have a secondary co-existing drug and alcohol diagnosis. Services include:

- Mental health services
- Assessment and client planning
- Educational and vocational services
- Co-occurring disorder treatment
- Therapeutic groups
- Crisis intervention
- Medication support
- Case management

You cannot be forced to take medication against your will.

