
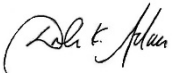


MEMORANDUM

TO: All PA County Jail Wardens
All PA County Mental Health Administrators
All PA County Mental Health/Criminal Justice Liaisons
All PA County Judges and Clerks of Court
All PA County District Attorney's Offices
All PA County Public Defender's Offices
All PA County Jail Medical Staff

FROM: Philip E. Mader 
Director
Bureau of Community
and Hospital Operations

Dale K. Adair 
Chief Psychiatric Officer
Office of Mental Health and
Substance Abuse Services

DATE: March 21, 2022

SUBJECT: Revised Outpatient Competency Evaluation Program Memorandum and Referral Form – Revision: March 2022

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) administers the Outpatient Competency Evaluation Program (OCEP) for individuals who are facing unadjudicated charges and are incarcerated in a Pennsylvania county jail/prison, State Correctional Institutions (SCI), or awaiting trial in the community. These court ordered competency evaluations can be performed inpatient via Regional Forensic Psychiatric Centers (RFPC) or via the OCEP, which is the preferred method, so that individuals who have pending criminal charges can receive services in a more timely manner, rather than waiting for admission to an RFPC. These evaluations are performed by psychologists or psychiatrists who are contracted by OMHSAS and are independent, unbiased assessments of competency.

Completed OCEP referral packets will only be accepted via the OCEP e-mail resource account, RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov. A complete referral packet includes the following information:

- A completed, signed and dated OCEP Referral Form – Revision: March 2022 (Attachment 1);
- A Pennsylvania Court Order for a Competency Evaluation;
- Police records in the form of a affidavit of probable cause and the criminal complaint, for all pending charges;
- Supporting medical/psychiatric records as outlined on page 5 of the OCEP Referral Form – Revision: March 2022.

Upon receipt of a referral packet, the OMHSAS OCEP Liaison will review the submitted packet for completeness and appropriateness. Only complete referral packets will be accepted into the OCEP. If the OCEP Liaison determines a referral packet is incomplete or is missing necessary information, then the referral packet will be returned to the referring agency with a request to provide any missing information/documentation. If the referring agency does not possess all the necessary information to submit a complete referral packet as outlined above and on page 5 of the OCEP referral form, then the referring agency should not submit the referral until all required information has been obtained.

Once a complete referral packet has been received, reviewed for completeness, and accepted, the OCEP Liaison will notify the contracted provider for scheduling. When a competency evaluation has been completed, the evaluator will provide the OCEP Liaison with a written report of their evaluation. Once the written report has been reviewed and finalized, the OCEP Liaison will then share the final evaluation with the Judge who ordered the competency evaluation, the referring agency point of contact, any additional individuals as listed on page 2 of the OCEP referral form, and any party authorized by the Mental Health Procedures Act. It is OCEP's goal to have evaluations completed and returned to the referring agency within 30 business days of receipt of a complete referral packet.

All communications regarding the OCEP will be processed using the e-mail resource account: RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov. Final competency evaluation reports will be sent via e-mail only. Referral packets will only be accepted via e-mail to RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov.

In the event an evaluation is no longer needed, a request to rescind the OCEP referral must be submitted by the referring agency. This form should be completed and sent via e-mail to RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov. The OCEP referral form (Attachment 1) and rescind form (Attachment 2) are attached to this memo.

Please note that when issuing a subpoena to request testimony from an OCEP evaluator, it is recommended that a two-week notice is provided to RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov to ensure the evaluators availability and allow ample time for the evaluator to prepare their testimony.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this memo, the referral form, the rescind form or any other information related to the OCEP, please e-mail RA-OMHSASAssess@pa.gov.