

Response to Executive Order 2013-6

June 17, 2013

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The petition process of Chapter 4 in the Michigan Mental Health Code is not consistently applied or understood by branches of law enforcement or local hospitals designated as "preadmission screening units." On occasion peace officer petitions are not addressed by mental health professionals when an individual is brought to the preadmission screening unit. On other occasions subjects arrested by law enforcement who need to be cleared by medical staff before booking into jail are treated with a "drive by" or the Emergency Dept. physician walks out to the patrol car and completes the jail forms without examining the subject in custody. The Marquette County Jail has documented evidence that this has happened on at least one occasion locally. These situations are probably not unique to the Upper Peninsula. On other instances the local mental health authority will not be called to respond to the petition or will refuse to see certain "frequent flyers." In the final analysis the county jail becomes the treatment/placement of last resort for mentally ill offenders despite the fact that jails are not equipped to treat the mentally ill. Up to this point nothing has been done to deal with these ongoing problems.