

ROLL CALL TRAINING ONLINE

Deployment Period # 3-19

LESSON PLAN

TOPIC: Law
SUBJECT: Laura's Law
PERPARED BY: Field Training Services Unit,
Police Training and Education (323) 276-2320
Date prepared: 2-19

REFERENCES: Chief of Detective's Notice, "Implementation of Laura's Law",
July 2015
Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5150
LAPD Manual Section 4/260.20
LAPD Notebook Divider "Incidents Involving Persons Suspected of
Suffering from Mental Illness"

INTRODUCTION

Assembly Bill (AB) 1421 established the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Demonstration Project Act of 2002, known as Laura's Law. Laura's law sought to address the needs of mentally ill adults by providing court-ordered outpatient treatment to those who are a substantial risk for relapse and deterioration as a result of not having accessed mental health services or voluntarily maintained participation in such services due to the symptoms of their mental illness.

The AOT-LA program is an optional resource available to police officers. As a qualified reporting party, an officer may generate a referral to the AOT-LA for individuals they believe meet the AOT-LA criteria by completing the "Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Assisted Outpatient Treatment Candidate Referral Form."

CRITERIA

The person must meet each of the following eight criteria to qualify for the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program.

1. 18 years of age or older;
2. Suffering from a mental illness.

3. Unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision;
4. A history of non-compliance with the treatment that has been a significant factor in their being in a hospital, prison, or jail at least twice within the last 36 months; or, resulted in one or more acts, attempts, or threats of serious violent behavior toward self or others within the last 48 months.
5. Offered an opportunity to participate in a treatment plan and the person continues to fail to engage in treatment;
6. Their condition is deteriorating;
7. Participation in the assisted outpatient treatment program would be the least restrictive placement necessary to ensure the person's recovery and stability; and/or
8. In view of the person's treatment history and current behavior, the person is in need of assisted outpatient treatment in order to prevent a relapse or deterioration that would be likely to result in grave disability or serious harm to himself or herself, or to others, as defined in Section 5150.

Once completed by the referring officer, the "Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Assisted Outpatient Treatment Candidate Referral" form must be forwarded to the Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU), via fax at (213) 996-1320 or gray mail (Mail Stop 400) for processing. The MEU is responsible for retaining a copy of the referral form and forwarding the original form to the AOT-LA program. The management of the AOT-LA client is the responsibility of the AOT-LA Program designated outreach personnel.

The AOT-LA case manager may contact the concerned geographic Area for assistance with case management. The geographic Area to which the referring officer is assigned is responsible for:

- Interacting with the AOT-LA case manager and providing additional information needed to assist in the development of a strategy to engage and manage the referred person;
- Conducting "Welfare Checks" at the request of the AOT-LA case manager; and,
- Providing "Civil Standby" for the AOT-LA during field contacts, when requested.

Note: Officers are reminded of Department Manual 4/260.20 - TAKING PERSONS WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS INTO CUSTODY, which states in part, "... Upon request, uniformed officers shall assist the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act-designated County Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams, or the court-designated conservator in the apprehension of persons suffering, from a mental illness, or violent mental patients who are being placed on a mental health hold."

SCENARIO

Several calls for service have been received on a homeless individual who is regularly setting up housing in the public restroom and refuses to leave when personnel come to clean. He is verbally abusive to anyone who interacts with him and appears dirty, with torn clothing and is sleeping in unsanitary conditions. You have been the responding officer on several occasions and are aware that he has refused any type of social services. You continue to offer treatment services, but he refuses. You feel that over the past few months his mental and physical condition has deteriorated and believe that this person is possibly suffering from a mental illness and drug abuse. You have conducted a mental health assessment pursuant to Section 5150 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) and he does not meet the criteria for an involuntary mental health hold. You contact the MEU and a search of the MEU database reveals that the subject has been placed on two involuntary holds by police in the last 36 months.

How should you proceed?

Though the subject is resistant to outreach and referrals to mental health services, he should be referred to the AOT-LA program because he has been hospitalized twice in the last 36 months and his condition has deteriorated. Officers should complete the Los Angeles County DMH Assisted Outpatient Treatment Candidate Referral and forward it to MEU via fax or gray mail.

SCENARIO

You have responded to several calls for service involving hoarding at a residence. The neighbor is the person reporting (P/R) and states that he and the resident of the hoarding location have been involved in several verbal altercations resulting in the P/R being threatened by the resident. The P/R is concerned that the hoarding situation is getting worse and that the resident may carry out his threats. Each time you respond you conduct a mental health assessment pursuant to 5150 WIC, assessing whether the subject is a danger to self and/or other, or is gravely disabled due to a possible mental illness. You determine that the subject does not meet the criteria for an involuntary mental health hold, but you suspect that he suffers from an untreated mental illness. You have offered referrals to mental health services and the person has refused. You have contacted Adult Protective Services (APS) to report the living conditions and expressed your concern. The APS has responded to the hoarding location and the subject has refused to engage in services.

How should you proceed?

You should complete the "Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Assisted Outpatient Treatment Candidate Referral" and forward it to MEU via FAX or gray Mail.

QUIZ

1. When handling a call involving a person with a possible mental illness, should you contact MEU?

- A. Always
- B. Sometime
- C. Never

Answer: A. Always. Officers should always contact MEU when a call involves a person with a possible mental illness.

2. The purpose of Laura's Law is to address the needs of mentally ill adults by providing court-ordered outpatient treatment to those who are a substantial risk for relapse and deterioration as a result of not having accessed mental health services or voluntarily maintained participation in such services due to the symptoms of their mental illness.

True or False

Answer: True

3. Officers fill out the Los Angeles County DMH AOT referral form for a subject that meets the criteria for assisted outpatient treatment. Where does the officer send the form via fax or gray mail?

- A. Adult Protective Services (APU)
- B. Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU)
- C. Assisted Outpatient Treatment –Los Angeles (AOT-LA)

Answer: Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU)