

California State Report Card

Last Updated: January 2025

Method and scoring: State involuntary civil commitment laws are evaluated using a 100-point grading scale. The scoring criteria are in accordance with the Treatment Advocacy Center's values and policy preferences. Up to 50 points are awarded to a state based on the quality of its inpatient commitment law, and up to 50 points are awarded based on the state's assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) law. Final letter grades are computed using the following scale:

97 or above	A+	87–89	B+	77–79	C+	67–69	D+	59 or below	F
93–96	A	83–86	B	73–76	C	63–66	D		
90–92	A-	80–82	B-	70–72	C-	60–62	D-		

PART ONE: Inpatient Commitment Statute (up to 50 points)			
Criterion	Citation	Specifications	Points
1. Citizen access to court, emergency evaluation (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5150	<input type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts)	0
2. Quality of emergency petition process (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5150	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process specified and reasonable (2 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timelines specified and reasonable (2 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsible entities identified (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requires certification by more than one professional (-2 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency evaluation criteria inconsistent with inpatient commitment criteria (-5 pts)	3
3. Emergency hold duration (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5150(a)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least 48-hour hold allowed (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least 72-hour hold allowed (2 pts) 72 hours	5
4. Citizen access to court, inpatient petition (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5251	<input type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts)	0
5. Quality of criteria for harm or violence to self or others (up to 10 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5250	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Harm must be imminent (-3 pts)	7
6. Quality of criteria for grave disability/basic needs (up to 10 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5008(h)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Endangerment must be imminent (-3 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria require family to turn person out of home to receive treatment (-3 pts) (See comment below) <input type="checkbox"/> Unreasonably high risk of harm (-3 pts)	10
7. Quality of criteria for psychiatric deterioration (up to 10 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5008(h)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts)	10
SUBTOTAL			35
PART ONE: Extra Credit			
1. Specifies in which court a petition for inpatient commitment shall be filed (1 pt)			
Extra Credit			
PART ONE TOTAL			35

PART TWO: Outpatient Commitment Statute (up to 50 points)			
Criterion	Citation	Specifications	Points
1. AOT explicitly authorized (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5349	<input type="checkbox"/> Requires local government to adopt (-3 pts)	5
2. Citizen access to court for AOT (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(b)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes citizen petition to mental health	3

		system only (-2 pts)	
3. Criteria sufficiently broad to provide actual access (up to 10 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346	Evaluate applicable provision only: <input type="checkbox"/> If inpatient/outpatient criteria are the same: <input type="checkbox"/> Inpatient criteria include psychiatric deterioration standard (10 pts) <u>or</u> <input type="checkbox"/> No psychiatric deterioration standard, adequate grave disability standard (5 pts) or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If outpatient criteria are distinct from inpatient criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allows consideration of length of treatment history ≥ 36 months (2 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Does not exclude periods of incarceration or hospitalization (-1 pt) (See comment below) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not limit application to those currently dangerous or unstable (4 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not limit application to those refusing service or currently lacking insight (4 pts) (See comment below)	10
4. Authorizes AOT directly from community (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(a)		5
5. Procedures sufficiently detailed to guide practitioners (up to 5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process specified and reasonable (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timelines specified and reasonable (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsible entities identified (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Periodic reporting to court required (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renewal process expressly specified (1 pt)	5
6. Procedures require the treatment plan to be shared with the court (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(e)		5
7. Specifies procedures and consequences for nonadherence (5 pts)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5346(d)(6), 5346(f)		5
8. Duration of initial order	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(d)(5)(B)	<input type="checkbox"/> = 90 days (2 pts) <u>or</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> > 90 days (5 pts) Up to 6 months	5
9. Duration of continued order	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(g)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = 180 days (2 pts) <u>or</u> <input type="checkbox"/> > 180 days (5 pts)	2
SUBTOTAL			45
PART TWO: Extra Credit			
1. Specifies court for AOT (1 pt)	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(b)(1)	Superior court	1
2. Court monitoring of voluntary settlement agreements (5 pts)			
Extra Credit			1
PART TWO TOTAL			46
FINAL SCORE			
PART ONE TOTAL			35
PART TWO TOTAL			46
TOTAL			81
GRADE			B-

Comments:

- Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5250(d)(1) provides that a person is not gravely disabled if they can survive safely with the help of responsible family, friends, or others. However, subsection (2) clarifies that absent a written statement of willingness and ability to help, family, friends, or others shall not be considered willing to provide this help.

Subsection (3) further clarifies that this section is not meant to require a finding of refusal of assistance from the family, friends, or others.

- The language of Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(a)(4) excludes periods of hospitalization or incarceration that “immediately precede” the filing of the petition.
- The language of Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5346(e)(2) requires the court finds the person “as failed to engage in, or has refused, treatment.”