

Pennsylvania 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)	50 P.S. § 7302(a)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts)	5
2. Quality of emergency petition process (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7302	<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 type="checkbox"/> Requires certification by more than one professional (-2 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency evaluation criteria inconsistent with inpatient commitment criteria (-5 pts)	5
3. Emergency hold duration (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7302	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least 48-hour hold allowed (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least 72-hour hold allowed (2 pts) 120 hours or five days	5
4. Citizen access to court, inpatient petition (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(c)(1)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts)	5
5. Quality of criteria for harm or violence to self or others (up to 10 pts)	50 P.S. §§ 7301(b)(1), (2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harm must be imminent (-3 pts)	7
6. Quality of criteria for grave disability/basic needs (up to 10 pts)	50 P.S. § 7301(b)(2)(i)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts) <input checked="" 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) <input type="checkbox"/> Unreasonably high risk of harm (-3 pts) (See comments below)	4
7. Quality of criteria for psychiatric deterioration (up to 10 pts)		<input type="checkbox"/> Contains explicit criteria (10 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Language is vague/ambiguous (-3 pts)	0
SUBTOTAL			31
PART ONE: Extra Credit			
1. Specifies court to petition for inpatient commitment (1 pt)	50 P.S. § 7304(c)(1)	Court of common pleas	1
Extra Credit			1
PART ONE TOTAL			32

PART TWO: Outpatient Commitment Statute (up to 50 points)			
Criterion	Citation	Specifications	Points
1. AOT explicitly authorized (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304	<input type="checkbox"/> Requires local government to adopt (-3 pts)	5
2. Citizen access to court for AOT (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(c)(1)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes family/enumerated adults (3 pts) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorizes any responsible adult (2 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Authorizes citizen petition to mental health system only (-2 pts)	5
3. Criteria sufficiently broad to provide actual access (up to 10 pts)	50 P.S. § 7301(c)	Evaluate applicable provision only: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If inpatient/outpatient criteria are the same: <input type="checkbox"/> Inpatient criteria include psychiatric	10

		<p>deterioration standard (10 pts) <u>or</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No psychiatric deterioration standard, adequate grave disability standard (5 pts) (See comments below)</p> <p>or <input type="checkbox"/> If outpatient criteria are distinct from inpatient criteria:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Allows consideration of length of treatment history \geq 36 months (2 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Does not exclude periods of incarceration or hospitalization (-1 pt) <input type="checkbox"/> Does not limit application to those currently dangerous or unstable (4 pts) <input type="checkbox"/> Does not limit application to those refusing service or currently lacking insight (4 pts)</p>	
4. Authorizes AOT directly from community (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(c.2)		5
5. Procedures sufficiently detailed to guide practitioners (up to 5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(c.1), (c.2); 50 P.S. § 7305	<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 type="checkbox"/> Periodic reporting to court required (1 pt) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renewal process expressly specified (1 pt)	4
6. Procedures require the treatment plan to be shared with the court (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(e)(8)		5
7. Specifies procedures and consequences for nonadherence (5 pts)	50 P.S. § 7304(f)(5)		5
8. Duration of initial order	50 P.S. § 7304(g)(1)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = 90 days (2 pts) <u>or</u> <input type="checkbox"/> > 90 days (5 pts)	5
9. Duration of continued order	50 P.S. § 7305(a)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = 180 days (2 pts) <u>or</u> <input type="checkbox"/> > 180 days (5 pts)	2
SUBTOTAL			46
PART TWO: Extra Credit			
1. Specifies court for AOT (1 pt)	50 P.S. § 7304(c)(1)	<i>Court of common pleas</i>	1
2. Court monitoring of voluntary settlement agreements (5 pts)			
Extra Credit			1
PART TWO TOTAL			47
FINAL SCORE			
PART ONE TOTAL			32
PART TWO TOTAL			20
TOTAL			79
GRADE			C+

Comments:

- The statute is ambiguous in that it seeks a finding on the probability of future dangerousness based exclusively on whether or not certain types of harm occurred within the past 30 days, without reference to treatment history.
- Requires that death, serious bodily injury, or serious physical debilitation will occur within 30 days.