

1 [Health Code - Extending Involuntary Psychiatric Holds]

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3 **Ordinance amending the Health Code to authorize the use of an additional 30-day**
4 **involuntary psychiatric hold, as permitted under California Welfare and Institutions**
5 **Code, Sections 5270.10-5270.65, and making a finding that this authorization will not**
6 **result in increased costs to the City or in the reduction of current services.**

7 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
8 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
9 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.
10 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
11 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
12 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
13 subsections or parts of tables.

14 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

15 Section 1. The Health Code is hereby amended by adding Article 41, consisting of §§
16 4101-4102, to read as follows:

17 **ARTICLE 41: MENTAL HEALTH**

18 **Sec. 4101. Findings Regarding Psychiatric Holds.**

19 **Sec. 4102. Extension of Psychiatric Hold.**

20 **SEC. 4101. FINDINGS REGARDING PSYCHIATRIC HOLDS.**

21 (a) Under California Welfare & Institutions Code §§ 5150, et seq., if there is probable cause to
22 believe that an individual is a danger to him or herself, or to others, or is gravely disabled, due to a
23 mental disorder, that individual may be taken into custody for 72 hours for an evaluation and possible
24 treatment.

25 (b) At the end of that 72-hour period, the individual may be involuntarily detained under
California Welfare & Institutions Code §§ 5250, et seq., for an additional 14 days of assessment and
treatment, upon certification by two treating mental health professionals, and subject to review and
challenge by the individual and the individual's patient advocate or attorney.

1 (c) There are situations when the additional 14 days are not sufficient to complete a thorough
2 assessment, achieve patient stabilization, determine future treatment options, and investigate family
3 and/or community resources that can support the individual in the community.

4 (d) Insufficient time for a thorough assessment, treatment, and investigation often results in
5 more restrictive and costly institutional placements of these individuals who then become subject to the
6 supervision of a court-ordered conservatorship, adding to the costs and number of cases handled by the
7 San Francisco Public Conservator and the Superior Court.

8 (e) California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 5270.10 - 5270.65 (Article 4.7 of Chapter 2 of
9 the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act) authorizes up to a 30-day extension of the 14-day hold, for
10 additional treatment without the need for a court-ordered temporary conservatorship, for a maximum
11 total of 47 days, which includes the initial 72-hour hold under § 5150. In California Welfare and
12 Institutions Code § 5270.10, the Legislature stated its intent “to reduce the number of gravely disabled
13 persons for whom conservatorship petitions are filed and who are placed under the extensive powers
14 and authority of a temporary conservator simply to obtain an additional period of treatment without
15 the belief that a conservator is actually needed and without the intention of proceeding to trial on the
16 conservatorship petition. This change will substantially reduce the number of conservatorship petitions
17 filed and temporary conservatorships granted under this part which do not result in either a trial or a
18 conservatorship.”

19 (f) For California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 5270.10 - 5270.65 to be operative in a
20 county, the county must legislatively authorize its application in that county upon finding that any
21 additional costs incurred by the county in implementation of those provisions are funded either by new
22 funding sufficient to cover the resulting costs incurred by the county, or funds redirected from cost
23 savings resulting from implementation, or a combination thereof, so that no current services will be
24 reduced as a result of implementation.

1 (g) The use of a hold under California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 5270, et seq. (a
2 “§ 5270 hold”) better serves the needs and interests of the client, and allows these patients to avoid the
3 stigma and restrictions of a conservatorship. Any person certified for an additional 30 days is entitled
4 to an impartial certification review hearing, within four days of that determination, conducted by a
5 court appointed commissioner or certification review hearing officer. The patient is also entitled to the
6 assistance of an attorney or advocate. Unlike a conservatorship hearing, a § 5270 certification
7 hearing is held at the treatment facility where the patient is located, and patient does not have to
8 appear in court.

9 (h) During FY 2011-12, the San Francisco Public Conservator filed 394 petitions for
10 Conservatorships with the San Francisco Superior Court. Of those cases filed, the court granted 255
11 Temporary Conservatorships. During FY 2012-13, 284 petitions were filed and the San Francisco
12 Superior Court granted 190 applications for Temporary Conservatorships. Thus, far more petitions are
13 filed and investigated than actually result in a Temporary Conservatorship. Authorizing the option of a
14 § 5270 hold in the City and County of San Francisco would obviate the need for many of these
15 petitions.

16 (i) For the majority of patients currently placed under a temporary conservatorship, the
17 temporary conservatorship is dropped within 40 days. The use of the § 5270 hold allows a thorough
18 investigation of these clients in order to regulate medications to achieve stabilization and to develop
19 the skill set necessary for returning to the community.

20 (j) The San Francisco Public Conservator receives approximately 300-400 referrals for
21 Temporary Conservatorships annually. In order for the court to grant a Temporary Conservatorship,
22 the referral must be investigated, which can take between 6 to 10 hours, at a cost of \$125.00 per hour,
23 as of the effective date of this § 4101. More than half of these Conservatorships are for less than 30
24 days. If these individuals were placed on a § 5270 hold, rather than a conservatorship, an
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1 investigation would be unnecessary, thereby saving the City and County of San Francisco \$150,000 to
2 \$200,000 annually, and the individual would receive treatment under a less restrictive alternative.

3 (k) Any additional costs incurred by the City and County of San Francisco in the
4 implementation of California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 5270.10 - 5270.65 will be funded by the
5 resulting cost savings or by new funding, so that no current service reductions will occur.

6 **SEC. 4102. EXTENSION OF PSYCHIATRIC HOLD.**

7 Upon the completion of a 14-day period of intensive treatment as authorized under California
8 Welfare & Institutions § 5250 et. seq., the subject individual may be certified for an additional period
9 of not more than 30 days of intensive treatment as authorized under Welfare and Institutions Code
10 §§ 5270.10 - 5270.65, subject to the requirements and procedures of those sections, or any successor
11 provisions.

12 Section 2. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after
13 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
14 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
15 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor’s veto of the ordinance.

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17 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
18 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

19 By: _____
20 VIRGINIA DARIO ELIZONDO
21 Deputy City Attorney

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