

**Department of Behavioral Health
TRANSMITTAL LETTER**

SUBJECT DBH Officer-Agent Certification		
POLICY NUMBER DBH Policy 220.1	DATE FEB 05 2014	TL# 226

Purpose. This policy was revised to convert the former DMH policy into a Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) policy. No substantive changes were made to the policy.

Applicability. Applies to the Behavioral Health Authority; DBH programs and mental health providers that employ, or will employ DBH Officer-Agents; and individuals who seek DBH Officer-Agent certification. *DBH shall ensure that District agencies approved by DBH as needing DBH Officer-Agents follow all required processes in this policy.*

Policy Clearance. Reviewed by affected responsible staff and cleared through appropriate Behavioral Health Authority offices.

Implementation Plans. Specific staff should be designated to carry out the implementation and training as needed, and program managers are responsible for following through to ensure compliance.

Policy Dissemination and Filing Instructions. Managers/supervisors of DBH and DBH contractors must ensure that staff are informed of this policy. Each staff person who maintains policy manuals must ensure that this policy is filed in the DBH Policy and Procedures Manual, and contractors must ensure that this policy is maintained in accordance with their internal procedures.

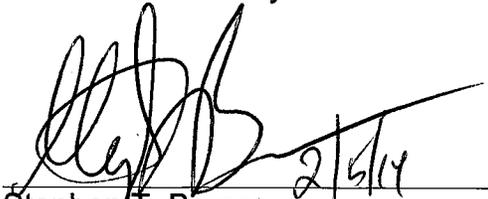
ACTION

REMOVE AND DESTROY

DMH Policy 220.1A

INSERT

DBH Policy 220.1



Stephen T. Baron
Director, DBH

<p>GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</p> 	<p>Policy No. 220.1</p>	<p>Date FEB 05 2014</p>	<p>Page 1</p>
<p>DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</p>		<p>Supersedes: DMH Policy 220.1A, DMH Officer-Agent Certification, dated May 9, 2013</p>	
<p>Subject: DBH Officer-Agent Certification</p>			

1. **Purpose.** To establish a formal process for the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to certify individuals as DBH accredited Officer-Agents who will be able to complete an FD-12 application for emergency hospitalization. See Sections 5 and 6b below for further explanation and eligibility requirements.
2. **Applicability.** Applies to the Behavioral Health Authority; DBH programs and mental health providers that employ, or will employ DBH Officer-Agents; and individuals who seek DBH Officer-Agent certification. *DBH shall ensure that District agencies approved by DBH as needing DBH Officer-Agents follow all required processes in this policy.*
3. **Authority.** Department of Behavioral Health Establishment Act of 2013; DC Code § 21-521, Emergency Hospitalization; and DCMR Title 22, Chapter A76, Department of Mental Health Officer-Agent Certification.
4. **Definitions.** For purposes of this policy:
 - 4a. **Certification.** Successful completion of the DBH Officer-Agent Certification Training and a determination that a person has met requisite qualifications established by the DBH Officer-Agent Certification Committee (OACC).
 - 4b. **DBH Officer-Agent.** A person who has been certified by DBH pursuant to DCMR Title 22, Chapter A76.
 - 4c. **DBH Officer Agent Certification Committee (OACC).** The committee that oversees the certification process and establishes the requirements for individuals to become certified DBH Officer-Agents. The DBH Chief Clinical Officer (CCO)/designee will chair the OACC and appoint no more than twelve (12) committee members.
 - 4d. **DBH Training Institute.** The central coordinating body for the implementation of DBH training objectives.
 - 4e. **FD-12.** Application form used for emergency admission for observation and diagnosis. Also see Section 5 below.
 - 4f. **Mental Health Provider.** (a) any individual or entity, public or private, that is licensed or certified by the District of Columbia to provide mental health services or mental health supports, or (b) any individual or entity, public or private, that has entered into an agreement with DBH to provide mental health services or mental health supports.
 - 4g. **Mental Illness.** A psychosis or other disease which substantially impairs the mental health of a person.

4h. Qualified Practitioner. (i) a psychiatrist; (ii) a psychologist; (iii) a licensed independent clinical social worker; (iv) an advanced practice registered nurse; (v) a registered nurse; (vi) a licensed professional counselor; (vii) a licensed independent social worker; and (viii) an addiction counselor.

4i. Revoke. To nullify or cancel DBH Officer-Agent certification.

5. Overview of FD-12 Application Process for Involuntary Emergency Hospitalization.

5a. When there is reason to believe that a person is mentally ill and, because of such illness, is likely to injure self or others if not immediately detained, that person may be taken into custody without a warrant and transported/presented for involuntary emergency admission to a public or private hospital or the DBH Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) by:

- an accredited officer-agent of the Department of Behavioral Health of the District of Columbia,
- a law enforcement officer authorized to make arrests in the District of Columbia, or
- the physician/qualified psychologist of the person in question.

5b. The individuals listed above must evaluate a person to determine if they meet the FD-12 criteria. If so, they must complete an FD-12, application for emergency admission, and provide the FD-12 application form at the time of presentation for assessment.

5c. The FD-12 application only represents the first step in the process of involuntary admission of an individual, and only guarantees that the person can be transported/presented for assessment (observation and diagnosis). The application (FD-12) must clearly state the circumstances under which the person was taken into custody and the reasons therefore. All applicants for admission will be carefully screened and evaluated and alternatives to hospitalization must be considered before the decision to admit is made.

6. Policy.

6a. DBH shall train and certify eligible persons to be accredited Officer-Agents in the District of Columbia for the purpose of applying for involuntary emergency admission.

6b. To be eligible for DBH Officer-Agent certification, a person must:

- (1) Be a qualified practitioner employed by a mental health provider approved by DBH; or
- (1) Be a paramedic nominated by the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Agency (FEMS); or
- (3) Be nominated by another District agency approved by DBH as needing DBH Officer-Agents; or
- (4) Be a DBH staff member from a DBH program approved by the DBH Chief Clinical Officer as needing DBH Officer-Agents (e.g., Homeless Outreach, adult and children's Mobile Crisis Teams); **and**

(5) Be approved by the DBH Officer-Agent Certification Committee (OACC) or designee.

6c. DBH shall provide a 2-year certification for eligible persons who successfully complete the DBH Officer-Agent Certification Training, and issue a certificate and photo identification with a 2-year expiration date. The 2-year certification shall be contingent upon continued employment with the nominating mental health provider, DBH program, or District agency.

6d. Officer-Agents may be required to repeat the certification training prior to the expiration of their two (2) year certification in order to be recertified.

7. **DBH Officer-Agent Certification Training** shall be offered at least twice per year through the DBH Training Institute. The training may include, but not be limited to:

(1) reviewing the clinical and legal definition of "mental illness," "injure," and "likelihood of injury,"

(2) determining when a mental illness is likely to cause a person to injure self or others,

(3) assessing risk of harm and level of functioning,

(4) defining cultural competency,

(5) reviewing the process of applying for admission for emergency observation, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 21-521, Emergency Hospitalization, through the preparation of a valid FD-12 application form, and

(6) testifying in court regarding an FD-12 application.

8. **Responsibilities and Procedures.**

8a. The DBH CCO shall determine the total number of persons to be certified as DBH Officer Agents, and determine which DBH programs, mental health providers, and District agencies have the most need for DBH Officer-Agents.

8b. Supervisors of DBH approved mental health providers, District agencies, and DBH programs shall nominate eligible employees to attend certification training, and submit a written application through the DBH CCO/designee for consideration by the Officer Agent Certification Committee two (2) weeks prior to scheduled training date.

8c. DBH shall offer Officer-Agent Certification Training and issue a certificate and photo I.D. with a 2-year expiration date to persons who successfully complete the training.

8d. DBH programs, mental health providers, and District agencies who have Officer-Agents in their employment shall collect an Officer-Agent's I.D. and return to the DBH CCO/designee upon the Officer-Agent's:

(1) Change of job duties that would not require completing FD-12s,

(2) termination of employment, or

(3) revocation of certification by the DBH CCO.

8e. CPEP shall maintain a copy of all FD-12s received, and submit to the OACC through the office of the DBH CCO monthly upon request.

8f. The DBH Officer-Agent Certification Committee (OACC) shall:

- (1) Approve the curriculum for certification.
- (2) Ensure nominees meet the eligibility criteria for certification (see Section 6b above).
- (3) Maintain a current central registry of Officer-Agents.
- (4) Meet quarterly, or as determined by the OACC chair, to:
 - monitor the certification process,
 - provide peer review and quality control of FD-12 applications, and
 - monitor the number of Officer-Agents in each program.
- (5) Recommend recertification of Officer-Agents, if appropriate.
- (6) Notify Officer-Agents of upcoming expiration date and need to repeat training in order to be recertified.
- (7) Make recommendations to the DBH CCO regarding revocation of an Officer-Agent's certification as necessary.

8g. DBH Officer-Agents must be available to their agency to provide Officer-Agent services when needed to assess if an individual meets the FD-12 criteria.

9. **Revocation.** Failure to provide Officer-Agent services when requested, incomplete or poorly written FD-12s, or inactivity will be grounds for revocation of certification. The DBH CCO will make the final decision on revoking a person's certification. Written notification will be provided to the Officer-Agent and his/her supervisor/employer.

10. **Inquiries.** Questions related to this policy may be addressed to the DBH Adult Systems of Care Manager at (202) 671-2900.

Approved By:

Stephen T. Baron
Director, DBH


(Signature) 2/6/14
(Date)