

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Use of Jails to Hold Persons Without Criminal Charges Who Are Awaiting Civil Psychiatric Hospital Beds

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 2022

Approved by the Assembly, 2022

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 2017

Approved by the Assembly, 2017

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 2007

Approved by the Assembly, 2007

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

In some jurisdictions, patients for whom civil commitment procedures have been initiated may be temporarily housed in jails or other correctional facilities. The absence of a therapeutic setting and delay of appropriate clinical assessment in such settings are incompatible with the standard of care for acutely ill psychiatric patients.

APA Position:

Holding facilities of the criminal justice system, such as jails, are not appropriate for housing individuals in the process of being civilly committed. Individuals for whom civil commitment procedures have been initiated should be expeditiously admitted to an appropriately staffed and equipped mental health facility.