

Rights of Involuntary Minor Patients

Absent a risk to self or others, minors treated under Chapter 71.34 RCW have the following rights:

To wear their own clothes and to keep and use personal possessions.
To keep and be allowed to spend a reasonable sum of their own money for canteen expenses and small purchases.
To have individual storage space for private use.
To have visitors at reasonable times.
To have reasonable access to a telephone, both to make and receive confidential calls.
To have ready access to letter-writing materials, including stamps, and to send and receive uncensored correspondence through the mails.
To discuss treatment plans and decisions with mental health professionals.
To have the right to adequate care and individualized treatment.
To not be denied access to treatment by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a church or religious denomination in addition to the treatment otherwise proposed.
Not to have psychosurgery performed on him or her under any circumstances.
Not to consent to the administration of antipsychotic medications beyond the hearing conducted pursuant to RCW 71.34.750 or the performance of electroconvulsive treatment or surgery, except emergency lifesaving surgery, upon him or her unless ordered by a court under procedures described in RCW 71.05.217(1)(j). The minor's parent may exercise this right on the minor's behalf, and must be informed of any impending treatment. <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Procedures under RCW 71.05.217(1)(j)</i></p> (i) The administration of antipsychotic medication or electroconvulsant therapy shall not be ordered unless the petitioning party proves by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that there exists a compelling state interest that justifies overriding the patient's lack of consent to the administration of antipsychotic medications or electroconvulsant therapy, that the proposed treatment is necessary and effective, and that medically acceptable alternative forms of treatment are not available, have not been successful, or are not likely to be effective. (ii) The court shall make specific findings of fact concerning: (A) The existence of one or more compelling state interests; (B) the necessity and effectiveness of the treatment; and (C) the person's desires regarding the proposed treatment. If the patient is unable to make a rational and informed decision about consenting to or refusing the proposed treatment, the court shall make a substituted judgment for the patient as if he or she were competent to make such a determination. (iii) The person shall be present at any hearing on a request to administer antipsychotic medication or electroconvulsant therapy filed pursuant to this subsection. The person has the right:

- (A) To be represented by an attorney;
- (B) to present evidence;
- (C) to cross-examine witnesses;
- (D) to have the rules of evidence enforced;
- (E) to remain silent;
- (F) to view and copy all petitions and reports in the court file; and
- (G) to be given reasonable notice and an opportunity to prepare for the hearing.

The court may appoint a psychiatrist, physician assistant working with a supervising psychiatrist, psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner, psychologist within their scope of practice, physician assistant, or physician to examine and testify on behalf of such person. The court shall appoint a psychiatrist, physician assistant working with a supervising psychiatrist, psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner, psychologist within their scope of practice, physician assistant, or physician designated by such person or the person's counsel to testify on behalf of the person in cases where an order for electroconvulsant therapy is sought.

(iv) An order for the administration of antipsychotic medications entered following a hearing conducted pursuant to this section shall be effective for the period of the current involuntary treatment order, and any interim period during which the person is awaiting trial or hearing on a new petition for involuntary treatment or involuntary medication.

(v) Any person detained pursuant to RCW [71.05.320](#)(4), who subsequently refuses antipsychotic medication, shall be entitled to the procedures set forth in this subsection.

(vi) Antipsychotic medication may be administered to a nonconsenting person detained or committed pursuant to this chapter without a court order pursuant to RCW [71.05.215](#)(2) or under the following circumstances:

- (A) A person presents an imminent likelihood of serious harm;
- (B) Medically acceptable alternatives to administration of antipsychotic medications are not available, have not been successful, or are not likely to be effective; and
- (C) In the opinion of the physician, physician assistant, or psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner with responsibility for treatment of the person, or his or her designee, the person's condition constitutes an emergency requiring the treatment be instituted before a judicial hearing as authorized pursuant to this section can be held.

If antipsychotic medications are administered over a person's lack of consent pursuant to this subsection, a petition for an order authorizing the administration of antipsychotic medications shall be filed on the next judicial day. The hearing shall be held within two judicial days. If deemed necessary by the physician, physician assistant, or psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner with responsibility for the treatment of the person, administration of antipsychotic medications may continue until the hearing is held.