

## HOW TO FILL OUT A DOCTOR'S REPORT ON A MENTAL ILLNESS APPLICATION

*Below is the text of the memo sent by Judge Miller from the Mental Illness court regarding the proper way to fill out an OPC:*

1. The place where the form requests "acts" should only contain specific acts.

"Refusing meds" may seem like an act, but it is as consistent with mental health as with mental illness. Exception: If the refusal is life-threatening. Say, "Patient's blood pressure is so high it is life-threatening and he denies the need of blood pressure medicine." "Not able to care for himself" should be more specific. How about: "Patient does not know how to use the bus, the phone, or to cook for himself." "Aggressive towards staff" or "towards family" should be more specific: just what did the patient do that makes him dangerous to others? How about: "Patient tried to strike a staff member with his fits," or "Patient told his mother he wanted to kill her." "Wants to jump from bridge" Is not an act; neither is "can't make decisions." "Drinking daily" does not differentiate him from anyone else. "Incoherent," "angry," "isolating," "Paranoid," or "agitated" are not acts-they are conclusions, while the application calls for facts.

2. The place where the form requests the patient's statements should only contain his statements.

"Audio hallucinations" or "feels hopeless" are not statements. "Incoherent" is not a statement, although the writer might be trying to say that no words of any ascertainable language are coming from the patient's mouth. "Wants to hurt self and others" could be vastly improved by quoting the patient, as requested by the form. How about: "I'll strangle the first guy who medicates me." "Not hearing direction" is not what the patient said. "Thinks that people are trying to harm her" is not what the patient said. "Reported there were men in his house." Maybe there were!

3. All writing should be LEGIBLE.

4. Be sure the date the physician signs and the date notarized are the same.

5. The physician's certificate must be completed within 5 days of seeing the proposed patient.

In short, the form calls for accurate reporting and specificity. Please comply with these requests and the forms won't be returned for additional information. Legibility is a MUST!

(signed by Michael E. Miller, Judge, Probate Court #3)