

1 State of Arkansas  
2 91st General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2017  
4

*As Engrossed: H2/28/17*

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1663

5 By: Representative Boyd  
6 By: Senator Rice  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO BE KNOWN AS THE MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY  
10 COURT ACT OF 2017; CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY  
11 COURTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
12  
13

## Subtitle

15 TO BE KNOWN AS THE MENTAL HEALTH  
16 SPECIALTY COURT ACT OF 2017; AND  
17 CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY  
18 COURTS.  
19  
20

21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
22

23 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 16 is amended to add an additional*  
24 *chapter to read as follows:*

### CHAPTER 100

### MENTAL HEALTH AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

#### Subchapter 1 – General Provisions

#### 16-100-101. Definitions.

#### As used in this chapter:

32 (1) "Evidence-based practices" means supervision, policies,  
33 procedures, and practices proven through research to reduce recidivism;

34 (2) "Mental illness" means a condition of a person who has or  
35 has had in the past a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder  
36 of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified by the



1 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders as it existed on  
2 January 1, 2017, that has resulted in functional impairment that  
3 substantially interferes with or limits one (1) or more major life  
4 activities; and

5 (3) "Validated risk-needs assessment" means a determination of a  
6 person's risk of reoffending and the needs that, when addressed, reduce the  
7 risk of reoffending through the use of an actuarial assessment tool that  
8 assesses the dynamic and static factors that drive criminal behavior.

9  
10 Subchapter 2 – Mental Health Specialty Courts

11  
12 16-100-201. Authorization – Evaluation – Restriction on services and  
13 treatment.

14 (a) A judicial district may establish a mental health specialty court  
15 program, which shall consist of at least one (1) mental health specialty  
16 court, subject to approval by the Supreme Court in the administrative plan  
17 submitted under Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 14.

18 (b) A mental health specialty court program authorized under this  
19 subchapter is also subject to evaluation by the Specialty Court Program  
20 Advisory Committee under § 16-10-139.

21 (c)(1) A mental health specialty court may not order any services or  
22 mental health treatment under this subchapter unless:

23 (A) An administrative and programmatic appropriation has  
24 been made for services or mental health treatment under this subchapter;

25 (B) Administrative and programmatic funding is available  
26 for services or mental health treatment under this subchapter; and

27 (C) Administrative and programmatic positions have been  
28 authorized for services or mental health treatment under this subchapter.

29 (2) If the requirements of subdivision (c)(1) of this section  
30 are not met, a mental health specialty court may still order services or  
31 mental health treatment if the provider waives payment, or if the mental  
32 health specialty court program participant has private insurance that will  
33 pay for the services or mental health treatment.

34  
35 16-100-202. Goals of mental health specialty court program.

36 (a) The goals of a mental health specialty court program established

1 under this subchapter include the following:

2 (1) Integration of mental health treatment with criminal justice  
3 system case processing;

4 (2) Use of a nonadversarial approach in which the prosecution  
5 and defense promote public safety while protecting the right of a mental  
6 health specialty court program participant to due process;

7 (3) Early identification of eligible mental health specialty  
8 court program participants, with the use of a validated risk-needs  
9 assessment, and prompt placement of eligible mental health specialty court  
10 program participants;

11 (4) Access to a continuum of treatment, rehabilitation, and  
12 related services for mental health specialty court program participants;

13 (5) Periodic testing for alcohol and controlled substances at  
14 the discretion of the mental health specialty court, if a mental health  
15 specialty court program participant has been identified as a user of alcohol  
16 or controlled substances;

17 (6) A coordinated strategy among the mental health specialty  
18 court judge, prosecution, defense, and mental health treatment providers to  
19 govern the compliance of a mental health specialty court program participant  
20 with the mental health specialty court program;

21 (7) Ongoing judicial interaction with each mental health  
22 specialty court program participant;

23 (8) Monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of mental  
24 health specialty court program goals and effectiveness;

25 (9) Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective  
26 planning, implementation, and operation of the mental health specialty court  
27 program; and

28 (10) Development of partnerships with public agencies and  
29 community-based organizations to generate local support and enhance mental  
30 health specialty court program effectiveness.

31 (b) Mental health specialty court program success is determined by the  
32 rate of recidivism of all mental health specialty court program participants,  
33 including mental health specialty court program participants who do not  
34 graduate from the mental health specialty court program.

35  
36 16-100-203. Establishment of mental health specialty court.

1 (a) A mental health specialty court is a specialized court within the  
2 existing structure of the court system.

3 (b) A mental health specialty court program shall offer judicial  
4 monitoring of intensive mental health treatment and strict supervision of  
5 mental health specialty court program participants.

6 (c) The creation of a mental health specialty court and the  
7 appointment of a circuit judge to the mental health specialty court shall be  
8 approved by the administrative judge in each judicial circuit and made a part  
9 of the judicial circuit's administrative plan required by Supreme Court  
10 Administrative Order No. 14.

11  
12 16-100-204. Administration of mental health specialty court program.

13 (a) A mental health specialty court program may require a separate  
14 judicial processing system differing in practice and design from the  
15 traditional adversarial criminal prosecution and trial systems.

16 (b)(1) The administrative judge of the judicial district shall  
17 designate one (1) or more circuit judges to be mental health specialty court  
18 judges and to administer the mental health specialty court program.

19 (2) If a county is in a judicial district that does not have a  
20 circuit judge who is able to administer the mental health specialty court  
21 program on a consistent basis, the administrative plan for the judicial  
22 circuit required by Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 14 may designate a  
23 district court judge to be mental health specialty court judge and to  
24 administer the mental health specialty court program.

25 (c) A mental health specialty court team shall be designated by a  
26 mental health specialty court judge and may include:

27 (1) A circuit judge;

28 (2) A prosecuting attorney;

29 (3) A public defender or private defense attorney;

30 (4) One (1) or more healthcare providers with experience in the  
31 field of mental health treatment;

32 (5) One (1) or more probation officers;

33 (6) One (1) or more private mental health treatment provider  
34 representatives with experience in the field of mental health treatment; and

35 (7) Any other individual determined necessary by the mental  
36 health specialty court judge.

1 (d) Each judicial district may develop a training and implementation  
2 manual for the mental health specialty court program with the assistance of  
3 the:

4 (1) Department of Human Services;

5 (2) Department of Health;

6 (3) Department of Community Correction;

7 (4) Administrative Office of the Courts; and

8 (5) Other federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, or  
9 entities with an established history of expertise in mental health  
10 conditions.

11  
12 16-100-205. Eligible persons – Waiver of certain rights.

13 (a) A person is eligible for participation in a mental health  
14 specialty court program if:

15 (1) The person has a mental illness;

16 (2) The person is charged with a criminal offense other than a  
17 criminal offense listed in subsection (b) of this section;

18 (3) The person waives his or her rights to a speedy trial and  
19 other rights as determined by the mental health specialty court and executes  
20 a consent for a limited release of confidential information regarding mental  
21 health treatment permitting the mental health specialty court, the  
22 prosecuting attorney, and the defense attorney access to information relating  
23 to attendance, attitude, participation, results of drug screens if ordered,  
24 and all pertinent medical records; and

25 (4)(A) The person is eighteen (18) years of age or older.

26 (B) Subdivision (a)(4)(A) of this section may be waived  
27 with the consent of the prosecuting attorney.

28 (b) A person charged with one (1) or more of the following offenses is  
29 ineligible to participate in a mental health specialty court program:

30 (1) A serious felony involving violence as defined in § 5-4-  
31 501(c)(2);

32 (2) A felony offense that would require the person to register  
33 as a sex offender; or

34 (3) An offense specifically excluded by the rules of a specific  
35 mental health specialty court program.

36 (c) This subchapter does not require a mental health specialty court

1 to consider or accept every person with a treatable mental health condition,  
2 regardless of the fact that the criminal offense for which the person is  
3 charged is eligible for consideration in the mental health specialty court  
4 program.

5 (d) A person who is denied entry into a mental health specialty court  
6 program is subject to prosecution for the criminal offense with which he or  
7 she was charged as provided by law.

8 (e) A mental health specialty court may require the circuit court  
9 clerk or probate clerk to submit to the Arkansas Crime Information Center a  
10 copy of an order transferring a person to the mental health specialty court.

11  
12 16-100-206. Transfer of cases.

13 (a) A circuit court or district court that determines, on the circuit  
14 court's or district court's own motion or upon application by a person  
15 charged with but not yet convicted of a criminal offense in the court, that  
16 the person may be better served in a mental health specialty court program  
17 may transfer the case to the mental health specialty court if the person  
18 charged with the criminal offense would otherwise be eligible to enter into a  
19 mental health specialty court program.

20 (b)(1) The person charged with a criminal offense whose case the  
21 circuit court or district court is attempting to transfer to a mental health  
22 specialty court may oppose the transfer.

23 (2)(A) A person who opposes a transfer of his or her case to a  
24 mental health specialty court under this subsection shall be appointed  
25 counsel if he or she has not already retained counsel or had counsel retained  
26 for him or her by another person or entity.

27 (B) If after consulting his or her counsel the person  
28 still opposes the transfer of his or her case to a mental health specialty  
29 court, the case shall remain on the current docket and shall proceed under  
30 the normal course of that circuit court's or district court's docket.

31  
32 16-100-207. Mental health treatment under program – Failure to comply  
33 with program.

34 (a)(1) A mental health specialty court shall order mental health  
35 treatment for a mental health specialty court program participant for at  
36 least six (6) months.

1           (2) Any mental health treatment ordered under subdivision (a)(1)  
2 of this section shall meet the minimum standards of mental health treatment  
3 promulgated by the Division of Behavioral Health Services of the Department  
4 of Human Services.

5           (b) A mental health specialty court program participant may be removed  
6 from a mental health specialty court program by the mental health specialty  
7 court following a hearing with notice and an opportunity for the mental  
8 health specialty court program participant to be heard, if:

9           (1) The mental health specialty court program participant:

10           (A) Knowingly fails to abide by the terms and conditions  
11 of the mental health specialty court program; or

12           (B) Is not suffering from a recognized mental illness in  
13 the opinion of a healthcare provider or mental health specialist assigned or  
14 ordered by the mental health specialty court to determine whether or not the  
15 mental health specialty court program participant suffers from a recognized  
16 mental illness; or

17           (2) The mental health specialty court finds that retaining the  
18 mental health specialty court program participant in a mental health  
19 specialty court program does not serve the best interests of justice, the  
20 public, the state, or the mental health specialty court program participant.

21           (c) If a mental health specialty court program participant is removed  
22 from a mental health specialty court program for any of the reasons set out  
23 under subsection (b) of this section, the mental health specialty court  
24 program participant's case shall be transferred to the appropriate court  
25 having jurisdiction.

26  
27           16-100-208. Completion of program – Dismissal of case – Sealing of  
28 record.

29           (a) Upon the mental health specialty court's own motion or upon a  
30 request from a mental health specialty court program participant or his or  
31 her attorney, a mental health specialty court may order dismissal of the case  
32 against the mental health specialty court program participant and the sealing  
33 of the record if:

34           (1) The mental health specialty court program participant has  
35 successfully completed the mental health specialty court program, as  
36 determined by the mental health specialty court;

1           (2) The mental health specialty court program participant has  
2 received aftercare programming or a course of continuing mental health  
3 treatment if recommended by the mental health specialty court program  
4 participant's healthcare provider;

5           (3) The mental health specialty court has received a  
6 recommendation from the prosecuting attorney for dismissal of the case and  
7 the sealing of the record; and

8           (4) The mental health specialty court, after considering the  
9 mental health specialty court program participant's criminal history,  
10 determines that dismissal of the case and the sealing of the record are  
11 appropriate.

12           (b) Unless otherwise ordered by the mental health specialty court,  
13 sealing of the record under this section shall be as described in the  
14 Comprehensive Criminal Record Sealing Act of 2013, § 16-90-1401 et seq.

15           (c) If a mental health specialty court program participant has  
16 successfully completed the program and has his or her case dismissed under  
17 this section, he or she may petition the mental health specialty court for  
18 relief from disability to restore the a mental health specialty court program  
19 participant's right to purchase a firearm and to otherwise be removed from  
20 the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Instant Criminal Background  
21 Check System database.

22  
23           16-100-209. Costs and fees.

24           (a) The mental health specialty court may order the mental health  
25 specialty court program participant to pay:

26           (1) Court costs as provided in § 16-10-305;

27           (2) Healthcare and treatment costs not otherwise covered by the  
28 health insurance of the mental health specialty court program participant;

29           (3) Drug testing costs;

30           (4) A mental health specialty court program user fee;

31           (5) Necessary supervision fees, including any applicable  
32 residential treatment fees;

33           (6) Any fees determined or authorized under § 12-27-  
34 125(b)(17)(B) or § 16-93-104(a)(1) that are to be paid to the Department of  
35 Community Correction;

36           (7) Global Positioning System monitoring; and



1 (8) Continual alcohol monitoring fees.

2 (b)(1) The mental health specialty court shall establish a schedule  
3 for the payment of costs and fees.

4 (2) The cost for healthcare, treatment, drug testing, continual  
5 alcohol monitoring if ordered, and supervision shall be set by the treatment  
6 and supervision providers respectively and made part of the order for payment  
7 of the mental health specialty court.

8 (3) Mental health specialty court user fees shall be set by the  
9 mental health specialty court.

10 (4) Healthcare, treatment, drug testing, continual alcohol  
11 monitoring if ordered, and supervision costs or fees shall be paid to the  
12 respective providers.

13 (5) Fees determined or authorized under § 12-27-125(b)(17)(B) or  
14 § 16-93-104(a)(1) shall be paid to the Department of Community Correction.

15 (6)(A) All court costs and mental health specialty court program  
16 user fees assessed by the mental health specialty court shall be paid to the  
17 circuit court clerk or district court clerk, as applicable, for remittance to  
18 the county treasury under § 14-14-1313.

19 (B) All installment payments shall initially be deemed to  
20 be collection of court costs under § 16-10-305 until the court costs have  
21 been collected in full with any remaining payments representing collections  
22 of other fees and costs as authorized in this section and shall be credited  
23 to the county administration of justice fund and distributed under § 16-10-  
24 307.

25 (C) Mental health specialty court program user fees shall  
26 be credited to a fund to be known as the "mental health specialty court  
27 program fund" and appropriated by the quorum court for the county in which  
28 the mental health specialty court program participant committed the offense  
29 for which he or she is charged for the benefit and administration of the  
30 mental health specialty court program.

31 (7) Court orders for costs and fees shall remain an obligation  
32 of the mental health specialty court program participant with mental health  
33 specialty court monitoring until fully paid.

34 (c) All costs and fees under this section may be fully or partially  
35 waived by the mental health specialty court upon a showing of indigency.

36

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36

*/s/Boyd*