

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2553

Introduced by Assembly Member Grove

February 19, 2016

An act to amend Section 5500 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to mental health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2553, as introduced, Grove. Mental health advocacy.

Existing law requires the State Department of State Hospitals and the State Department of Health Care Services to contract with a single nonprofit entity to provide for the protection and advocacy services to persons with mental disabilities, as specified. Existing law requires each local mental health director to appoint, or contract for the services of, one or more county patients' rights advocates. Existing law requires these advocates to, among other things, monitor mental health facilities, services, and programs, as defined, for compliance with statutory and regulatory patients' rights provisions, and receive and investigate certain complaints from or concerning recipients of mental health services residing in licensed health or community care facilities. Existing law authorizes a mental health client, as defined, to enter into an agreement with a county patients' rights advocate for the provision of advocacy services.

This bill would make a technical, nonsubstantive change to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 5500 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
2 is amended to read:
3 5500. As used in this chapter:
4 (a) "Advocacy" means those activities undertaken on behalf of
5 persons who are receiving or have received mental health services
6 to protect their rights or to secure or upgrade treatment or other
7 services to which they are entitled.
8 (b) "Mental health client" or "client" means a person who is
9 receiving or has received services from a mental health facility,
10 service, or program and who ~~has~~ *has*, personally or through a
11 guardian ad litem, entered into an agreement with a county patients'
12 rights advocate for the provision of advocacy services.
13 (c) "Mental health facilities, services, or programs" means a
14 publicly operated or supported mental health facility or program;
15 a private facility or program licensed or operated for health
16 purposes providing services to persons with mental health
17 disorders; and publicly supported agencies providing other than
18 mental health services to clients with mental health disorders.
19 (d) "Independent of providers of service" means that the
20 advocate has no direct or indirect clinical or administrative
21 responsibility for any recipient of mental health services in any
22 mental health facility, program, or service for which he or she
23 performs advocacy activities.
24 (e) "County patients' rights advocate" means an advocate
25 appointed, or whose services are contracted for, by a local mental
26 health director.