

## What is an involuntary hold or 5150?

5150 is the number of the section of the Welfare and Institutions Code, which allows an adult who is experiencing a mental health crisis to be involuntarily detained for a 72- hour psychiatric hospitalization when evaluated to be a danger to others, or to himself or herself, or gravely disabled.

A person on a 5150 can be held in the hospital involuntarily for up to 72 hours. This does not mean that they will necessarily be held the entire 72 hours; it means that psychiatric hospitals have the legal right to do so if determined to be necessary.

A person can be held involuntarily in a psychiatric facility only if he or she meets at least one of the three basic criteria:

1. A danger to others.
2. A danger to self – Not limited to suicidal behavior.
3. Gravely disabled – Unable to take care of food, clothing, and housing needs.

The law also states that the evaluator shall consider available relevant information about the historical course of the person's mental illness.

## Warning Signs of Suicide

- ☛ Frequently talking about suicide
- ☛ Comments about being hopeless, helpless, or worthless
- ☛ Losing interest in things one used to care about
- ☛ Extreme mood swings
- ☛ Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- ☛ Withdrawn or feeling isolated
- ☛ Family history of suicide or mood disorders
- ☛ Exposure to violence or abuse
- ☛ Substance use

## Resources

CAT- Centralized Assessment Team provides assessment and evaluation of individuals experiencing psychiatric emergencies including threats of harm to self, others, or gravely disabled.

☎ **866-830-6011**

Didi Hirsch Crisis Hotline provides 24-hour, immediate, confidential over-the-phone suicide prevention services to anyone who is in crisis or experiencing suicidal thoughts.

☎ **877-727-4747**

NAMI Warmline provides telephone-based, non-crisis support for anyone struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

☎ **877-910-9276 or 714-991-6412**

The Office of Consumer and Family Affairs provides educational information and support for consumers and family members to better understand the mental health system.

☎ **714-834-5917**

Information and referral by telephone and internet-based live chat to link participants to County Behavioral Health Services. Available Monday through Friday, 8am to 6pm.

☎ **855-OCLINKS or [www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks)**

## Connect With Us!

Call or Chat with us at:

➔ **855-OCLinks**

➔ **[ochealthinfo.com/oclinks](http://ochealthinfo.com/oclinks)**

 **OCHealthInfo**

 **OCHealth**



Orange County Health Care Agency  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES  
Behavioral Health Navigation  
[www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks)

COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

## Navigating the Involuntary Hold Process

a guide for family members and loved ones



	Pre-Crisis	Onset of Crisis	Crisis Event	Response by Crisis Evaluator	If Hospitalization is Needed	Admitted to Inpatient Psych Hospital
<b>What's Happening With Your Friend, Loved One, Family Member?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doing well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop awareness of early warning signs or patterns from previous crisis situations to recognize, i.e., isolated, withdrawn, agitated, seeing or hearing things, bizarre statements, refusing to take meds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A situation involves danger to self and/or others.</li> <li>Gravely disabled (unable to care for self/provide for self).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They may “pull it together” during their interaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually restrained on a gurney during transport by ambulance.</li> <li>Possible outcomes include: discharge, hold up to 72 hours for further evaluation, or admit to a psychiatric facility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involuntary 5150 hold.</li> <li>Psychiatric Evaluation and treatment.</li> <li>Assessed for readiness to discharge vs. 5250 (extended hold of up to 14 days).</li> </ul>
<b>Preparing Yourself</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain phone &amp; internet contacts to OCLINKS (855-OCLINKS), 911, Psychiatric emergency services (866-830-6011).</li> <li>Educate yourself about 5150 procedures including harm to self/others and gravely disabled concepts.</li> <li>How to find support for yourself</li> <li>Developing a safety plan for yourself and your loved one.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your safety is crucial. Develop your own personal safety plan.</li> <li>It's OK to be concerned about your own safety.</li> <li>Check with other important members in the family.</li> <li>Attempt to open lines of communication by establishing rapport and look for triggers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call CAT (Centralized Assessment Team) for Mental Health Evaluation at 866-830-6011.</li> <li>Crisis Hotline 877-727-4747.</li> <li>Always call 911 if you are concerned about anyone's safety, including your own.</li> <li>911 is always an option if you feel there is a risk to anyone involved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety First—if you feel threatened in any way, go outside or lock yourself in a room until help arrives; or stay close to the door or exit.</li> <li>Stay calm and know your rights.</li> <li>Be prepared that your loved one may be taken in handcuffs or on an ambulance gurney to ensure safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There may be a need to be medically cleared at a Medical Hospital first before going to a psychiatric facility or program.</li> <li>Have a plan in place in case your loved one is discharged during this process.</li> <li>Providers may not be able to speak with you due to confidentiality.</li> <li>See if the hospital staff can facilitate a release of information to allow you to speak with them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (714-834-5917) or NAMI Warmline (877-910-9726) for information and support.</li> <li>Work with hospital on discharge plan for follow up treatment upon release at a County Health Care Agency Behavioral Health program.</li> <li>OCLinks (855-OC-LINKS) is available for more information on County Behavioral Health programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Important Information or Things To Do</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call Support services like Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (714-834-5917), NAMI Warmline (877-910-9726), Crisis Hotline (877-727-4747), OCLINKS (855-OCLINKS) to find out what behavioral health services are applicable to your individual situation.</li> <li>Create a written history with important information needed in the case of crisis situation or unexpected hospitalization including: copies of insurance cards, names and dosages of medications, medical and behavioral health providers contact information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What emergency numbers or programs do you have access to and/or understand how to use.</li> <li>Keep your cell phone charged at all times.</li> <li>Make sure there is gas in your car and it is free of items that could be harmful.</li> <li>Keep a copy of the written history you developed with updated information.</li> <li>Remove weapons or sharp objects from immediate area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call friends or family for immediate support for yourself.</li> <li>Take other family members in the home to another family or friend's home.</li> <li>Provide as many facts about the situation as possible to give the evaluator as specific a picture of the situation as possible.</li> <li>County CAT (Centralized Assessment Team) provides mobile response and evaluation in the community for those experiencing mental health crisis 24/7.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay calm.</li> <li>If there are more than one of you there, the second person should provide a brief history of what's happening.</li> <li>Unlock all the doors, and keep keys and cell phone with you.</li> <li>Make sure the lights are on and any animals are contained.</li> <li>Remove anything that may confuse the matter or be perceived or used as a weapon.</li> <li>The situation may reduce in severity during the evaluation. Your loved one may be referred to a lower level of care or diversionary program if appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember to ask where they are headed and attempt to get your loved one to consent to a release of information to be able to communicate with the evaluator</li> <li>Bring historical documentation with you, including insurance information.</li> <li>Disposition will be provided to you with the hospital information.</li> <li>There may be a delay in transition from a hospital emergency room to a psychiatric program, requiring longer stays than expected in the emergency room.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is a current behavioral health provider, inform them of the circumstances. Call for immediate consultation, follow up, or new intake ASAP.</li> <li>Don't get discouraged if your loved one is angry or upset. Keep trying.</li> <li>Develop a contract for return home with the hospital staff/case manager</li> <li>Request notification of discharge from hospital.</li> </ul>