



State of Wisconsin  
2017 - 2018 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4378/1  
TJD:wlj

## 2017 SENATE BILL 445

October 12, 2017 - Introduced by Senators COWLES, RINGHAND, BEWLEY, HARSDORF, OLSEN and SHILLING, cosponsored by Representatives JAGLER, GENRICH, BERCEAU, BERNIER, BORN, R. BROOKS, EDMING, GOYKE, HINTZ, HORLACHER, KOLSTE, LOUDENBECK, MASON, POPE, QUINN, RIEMER, TITTL, VANDERMEER, ZEPNICK and TUSLER. Referred to Committee on Health and Human Services.

1     **AN ACT to renumber and amend** 51.15 (2); **to amend** 48.207 (1) (h), 48.207 (1m)  
2             (d), 51.15 (2) (title), 51.15 (4m) (c), 51.15 (5), 51.15 (11), 51.15 (11g), 51.20 (16)  
3             (e), 322.0767 (1) (e), 322.0767 (1) (f), 938.207 (1) (h), 971.14 (6) (b) and 971.17  
4             (3) (e); and **to create** 51.15 (2) (b), 51.17 and 146.816 (2) (b) 4. of the statutes;  
5             **relating to:** transfer for emergency detention and warning of dangerousness.

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### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

Generally, this bill prohibits the transfer of an individual from a hospital's emergency department for emergency detention until a hospital employee or medical staff member determines the transfer is medically appropriate. The bill also specifies the actions that satisfy the duty to warn of the dangerousness of a person, and provides immunity from civil and criminal liability for actions taken in good faith to warn of dangerousness.

#### ***Transportation to detention facility***

Under current law, a law enforcement officer or certain other persons may take an individual into custody for purposes of emergency detention if the officer or other person has cause to believe that the individual is mentally ill, drug dependent, or developmentally disabled, and that the individual shows any of the following: 1) a substantial probability of physical harm to himself or herself; 2) a substantial probability of physical harm to other persons; 3) a substantial probability of physical impairment or injury to himself or herself due to impaired judgment; or 4) due to

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mental illness, the inability to satisfy certain basic needs. The individual may not be detained by the officer or other person and the facility for more than a total of 72 hours after the individual is taken into custody for the purposes of emergency detention. The county department of community programs must approve the need for detention and may not do so unless a psychiatrist, psychologist, or other mental health professional has performed a crisis assessment on the individual and agrees with the need for detention and the county department believes the individual will not voluntarily consent to evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment. Under the bill, if an individual is in a hospital's emergency department, the law enforcement officer or other person may not transport the individual for detention until a hospital employee or medical staff member who is treating the individual determines that the transfer of the individual to the detention facility is medically appropriate.

***Duty to warn***

The bill specifies that a health care provider fulfills any duty to warn by taking any of the following actions: contacting law enforcement or the relevant county department and disclosing knowledge of potential evidence of the individual's substantial probability of harm, approving the emergency detention of the individual if the health care provider is in the position to do so, and taking any other action that a reasonable health care provider would consider as fulfilling the duty to warn a third party of substantial probability of harm. The bill explicitly allows any health care provider and any law enforcement officer to disclose information that an individual poses a substantial probability of serious bodily harm to another person in a good faith effort to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public. Under the bill, any person who discloses information evidencing substantial probability of serious bodily harm or a health care provider who takes one of the actions that fulfill a duty to warn is not civilly or criminally liable for actions taken in good faith. The bill explicitly exempts from the state's requirements for confidentiality of patient health information the good faith disclosure of protected patient health information made in an effort to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of a person or the public.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

- 1           **SECTION 1.** 48.207 (1) (h) of the statutes is amended to read:
- 2           48.207 (1) (h) A place listed specified in s. 51.15 (2) (d) if the child is held under
- 3           s. 48.20 (5).
- 4           **SECTION 2.** 48.207 (1m) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1           48.207 **(1m)** (d) A place listed specified in s. 51.15 (2) (d) if the adult expectant  
2 mother is held under s. 48.203 (4).

3           **SECTION 3.** 51.15 (2) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

4           51.15 **(2)** (title) ~~FACILITIES FOR DETENTION; TRANSPORT; APPROVAL.~~

5           **SECTION 4.** 51.15 (2) of the statutes is renumbered 51.15 (2) (a) and amended  
6 to read:

7           51.15 **(2)** (a) ~~The Subject to par. (b), the~~ law enforcement officer or other person  
8 authorized to take a child into custody under ch. 48 or to take a juvenile into custody  
9 under ch. 938 shall transport the individual, or cause him or her to be transported,  
10 for detention, if the county department of community programs in the county in  
11 which the individual was taken into custody approves the need for detention, and for  
12 evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment if permitted under sub. (8).

13           (c) The county department may approve the detention only if a physician who  
14 has completed a residency in psychiatry, a psychologist licensed under ch. 455, or a  
15 mental health professional, as determined by the department, has performed a crisis  
16 assessment on the individual and agrees with the need for detention and the county  
17 department reasonably believes the individual will not voluntarily consent to  
18 evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment necessary to stabilize the individual and  
19 remove the substantial probability of physical harm, impairment, or injury to  
20 himself, herself, or others. For purposes of this ~~subsection~~ paragraph, a crisis  
21 assessment may be conducted in person, by telephone, or by telemedicine or video  
22 conferencing technology.

23           (d) Detention under this section may only be in a treatment facility approved  
24 by the department or the county department, if the facility agrees to detain the  
25 individual, or a state treatment facility.

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1           **SECTION 5.** 51.15 (2) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

2           51.15 **(2)** (b) If an individual is in a hospital's emergency department, the law  
3 enforcement officer or other person as described under par. (a) may not transport the  
4 individual for detention until a hospital employee or medical staff member who is  
5 treating the individual determines that the transfer of the individual to the  
6 detention facility is medically appropriate and communicates that determination to  
7 the law enforcement officer or other person.

8           **SECTION 6.** 51.15 (4m) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

9           51.15 **(4m)** (c) *Facilities for detention.* The treatment director or treatment  
10 director designee shall transport the individual, or cause him or her to be  
11 transported, for detention to any of the facilities described in sub. (2) (d) and shall  
12 approve evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment if permitted under sub. (8).

13           **SECTION 7.** 51.15 (5) of the statutes is amended to read:

14           51.15 **(5)** DETENTION PROCEDURE; OTHER COUNTIES. In counties having a  
15 population of less than 750,000, the law enforcement officer or other person  
16 authorized to take a child into custody under ch. 48 or to take a juvenile into custody  
17 under ch. 938 shall sign a statement of emergency detention that shall provide  
18 detailed specific information concerning the recent overt act, attempt, or threat to  
19 act or omission on which the belief under sub. (1) is based and the names of persons  
20 observing or reporting the recent overt act, attempt, or threat to act or omission. The  
21 law enforcement officer or other person is not required to designate in the statement  
22 whether the subject individual is mentally ill, developmentally disabled, or drug  
23 dependent, but shall allege that he or she has cause to believe that the individual  
24 evidences one or more of these conditions. The statement of emergency detention  
25 shall be filed by the officer or other person with the detention facility at the time of

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1 admission, and with the court immediately thereafter. The filing of the statement  
2 has the same effect as a petition for commitment under s. 51.20. When, upon the  
3 advice of the treatment staff, the director of a facility specified in sub. (2) (d)  
4 determines that the grounds for detention no longer exist, he or she shall discharge  
5 the individual detained under this section. Unless a hearing is held under s. 51.20  
6 (7) or 55.135, the subject individual may not be detained by the law enforcement  
7 officer or other person and the facility for more than a total of 72 hours after the  
8 individual is taken into custody for the purposes of emergency detention, exclusive  
9 of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.

10 **SECTION 8.** 51.15 (11) of the statutes is amended to read:

11 51.15 (11) LIABILITY. Any individual who acts in accordance with this section,  
12 including making a determination that an individual has or does not have mental  
13 illness or evidences or does not evidence a substantial probability of harm under sub.  
14 (1) (ar) 1., 2., 3., or 4. or a determination under sub. (2) (b) that the transfer of an  
15 individual is medically appropriate, is not liable for any actions taken in good faith.  
16 The good faith of the actor shall be presumed in any civil action. Whoever asserts  
17 that the individual who acts in accordance with this section has not acted in good  
18 faith has the burden of proving that assertion by evidence that is clear, satisfactory  
19 and convincing.

20 **SECTION 9.** 51.15 (11g) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 51.15 (11g) OTHER LIABILITY. Subsection (11) applies to a director of a facility,  
22 as specified in sub. (2) (d), or his or her designee, who under a court order evaluates,  
23 diagnoses or treats an individual who is confined in a jail, if the individual consents  
24 to the evaluation, diagnosis or treatment.

25 **SECTION 10.** 51.17 of the statutes is created to read:

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1           **51.17 Warning of dangerousness. (1) DEFINITION.** In this section, “health  
2 care provider” has the meaning given in s. 146.81 (1).

3           **(2) AUTHORIZATION.** Any health care provider, as permitted by s. 146.816 (2) (b)  
4 4., and any law enforcement officer may make a disclosure of information evidencing  
5 that an individual poses a substantial probability of serious bodily harm to any other  
6 person in a good faith effort to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the  
7 health or safety of a person or the public.

8           **(3) DUTY; HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS. (a)** Any health care provider that reasonably  
9 believes an individual has a substantial probability of harm to himself or herself or  
10 to another person under s. 51.15 (1) (ar) 1., 2., 3., or 4. fulfills any duty to warn a 3rd  
11 party by doing any of the following:

12           1. Contacting a law enforcement officer regarding the individual and disclosing  
13 knowledge of potential evidence of a substantial probability of harm under s. 51.15  
14 (1) (ar) 1., 2., 3., or 4.

15           2. Contacting the county department that the health care provider reasonably  
16 believes is responsible for approving the need for emergency detention of the  
17 individual under s. 51.15 (2) and disclosing knowledge of potential evidence of a  
18 substantial probability of harm under s. 51.15 (1) (ar) 1., 2., 3., or 4.

19           3. If the health care provider is an agent of the county department that is  
20 responsible for approving the need for emergency detention under s. 51.15 (2) and  
21 is authorized by that county department to approve or disapprove the need for  
22 emergency detention under s. 51.15 (2), approving the emergency detention of the  
23 individual.

24           4. Taking any other action that a reasonable health care provider would  
25 consider as fulfilling the duty to warn a 3rd party of substantial probability of harm.

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1 (b) If an individual is not in custody of a facility under s. 51.15 (3) and is not  
2 voluntarily admitted to a inpatient psychiatric unit, a health care provider that takes  
3 any of the actions under par. (a) has no further duty to any person to seek involuntary  
4 treatment, emergency detention, emergency stabilization, or commitment of the  
5 individual; to physically restrain or isolate the individual; to prevent the individual  
6 from leaving the hospital; or to provide treatment or medication without the  
7 individual's consent.

8 (4) **LIABILITY.** Any person or health care provider that acts in accordance with  
9 this section is not civilly or criminally liable for actions taken in good faith. The good  
10 faith of the actor shall be presumed in a civil action. Whoever asserts that the  
11 individual who acts in accordance has not acted in good faith has the burden of  
12 proving that assertion by evidence that is clear, satisfactory, and convincing.

13 **SECTION 11.** 51.20 (16) (e) of the statutes is amended to read:

14 51.20 (16) (e) If the court determines or is required to hold a hearing, it shall  
15 thereupon proceed in accordance with sub. (9) (a). For the purposes of the  
16 examination and observation, the court may order the patient confined in any place  
17 designated in s. 51.15 (2) (d).

18 **SECTION 12.** 146.816 (2) (b) 4. of the statutes is created to read:

19 146.816 (2) (b) 4. For purposes of disclosing information about a patient in a  
20 good faith effort to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or  
21 safety of a person or the public.

22 **SECTION 13.** 322.0767 (1) (e) of the statutes is amended to read:

23 322.0767 (1) (e) If the court-martial determines under par. (a) or (d) that the  
24 person is not likely to become competent to proceed, the court-martial may order  
25 that the person be delivered to a facility under s. 51.15 (2) (d), an approved public

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1 treatment facility under s. 51.45 (2), or an appropriate medical or protective  
2 placement facility.

3 **SECTION 14.** 322.0767 (1) (f) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 322.0767 (1) (f) If the person is discharged from the military forces while  
5 subject to a commitment order under par. (a), the court-martial shall suspend or  
6 terminate the commitment order and may order that the person be delivered to a  
7 facility under s. 51.15 (2) (d), an approved public treatment facility under s. 51.45 (2),  
8 or an appropriate medical or protective placement facility.

9 **SECTION 15.** 938.207 (1) (h) of the statutes is amended to read:

10 938.207 (1) (h) A place ~~listed~~ specified in s. 51.15 (2) (d) if the juvenile is held  
11 under s. 938.20 (5).

12 **SECTION 16.** 971.14 (6) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

13 971.14 (6) (b) When the court discharges a defendant from commitment under  
14 par. (a), it may order that the defendant be taken immediately into custody by a law  
15 enforcement official and promptly delivered to a facility specified in s. 51.15 (2) (d),  
16 an approved public treatment facility under s. 51.45 (2) (c), or an appropriate medical  
17 or protective placement facility. Thereafter, detention of the defendant shall be  
18 governed by s. 51.15, 51.45 (11), or 55.135, as appropriate. The district attorney or  
19 corporation counsel may prepare a statement meeting the requirements of s. 51.15  
20 (4) or (5), 51.45 (13) (a), or 55.135 based on the allegations of the criminal complaint  
21 and the evidence in the case. This statement shall be given to the director of the  
22 facility to which the defendant is delivered and filed with the branch of circuit court  
23 assigned to exercise criminal jurisdiction in the county in which the criminal charges  
24 are pending, where it shall suffice, without corroboration by other petitioners, as a  
25 petition for commitment under s. 51.20 or 51.45 (13) or a petition for protective



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1 placement under s. 55.075. This section does not restrict the power of the branch of  
2 circuit court in which the petition is filed to transfer the matter to the branch of  
3 circuit court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under ch. 51 in the county. Days spent  
4 in commitment or protective placement pursuant to a petition under this paragraph  
5 shall not be deemed days spent in custody under s. 973.155.

6 **SECTION 17.** 971.17 (3) (e) of the statutes is amended to read:

7 971.17 (3) (e) An order for conditional release places the person in the custody  
8 and control of the department of health services. A conditionally released person is  
9 subject to the conditions set by the court and to the rules of the department of health  
10 services. Before a person is conditionally released by the court under this subsection,  
11 the court shall so notify the municipal police department and county sheriff for the  
12 area where the person will be residing. The notification requirement under this  
13 paragraph does not apply if a municipal department or county sheriff submits to the  
14 court a written statement waiving the right to be notified. If the department of  
15 health services alleges that a released person has violated any condition or rule, or  
16 that the safety of the person or others requires that conditional release be revoked,  
17 he or she may be taken into custody under the rules of the department. The  
18 department of health services shall submit a statement showing probable cause of  
19 the detention and a petition to revoke the order for conditional release to the  
20 committing court and the regional office of the state public defender responsible for  
21 handling cases in the county where the committing court is located within 72 hours  
22 after the detention, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. The court  
23 shall hear the petition within 30 days, unless the hearing or time deadline is waived  
24 by the detained person. Pending the revocation hearing, the department of health  
25 services may detain the person in a jail or in a hospital, center or facility specified

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1 by s. 51.15 (2) (d). The state has the burden of proving by clear and convincing  
2 evidence that any rule or condition of release has been violated, or that the safety of  
3 the person or others requires that conditional release be revoked. If the court  
4 determines after hearing that any rule or condition of release has been violated, or  
5 that the safety of the person or others requires that conditional release be revoked,  
6 it may revoke the order for conditional release and order that the released person be  
7 placed in an appropriate institution under s. 51.37 (3) until the expiration of the  
8 commitment or until again conditionally released under this section.

9 (END)