

Mental Health Act

Information for persons subject to a community treatment order

What is a community treatment order (CTO)?

A CTO is a treatment and care plan designed for your specific needs. It is a legal document that outlines the specific things you need to do to allow you to receive treatment while living in the community, instead of being detained at a hospital.

A team of health care providers determines what to include in your CTO care plan. Usually, a CTO includes medications you need to take regularly and appointments you need to keep with care providers.

How do I receive a CTO?

You may be eligible for a CTO under the following criteria:

- Two qualified health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) have determined that you suffer from mental disorder.
A mental disorder affects your thoughts, mood, perception, orientation or memory. It impairs your judgment and behavior and makes it hard to function from day to day.
- One or more of the following is true:
 - You were under a CTO in the last three years.
 - At least twice or for at least 30 days in the last three years, you were a formal patient under the *Mental Health Act* (or you met the criteria to be a formal patient while in a hospital or while being detained in a custodial institution).
 - In the past, you acted in a way that leads two health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) to believe you would be likely to harm others or suffer serious mental or physical decline or serious physical harm because of the mental disorder if you don't receive continuing treatment or care in the community.
 - A review panel made an order for you to be issued a CTO.
- The two health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) believe that within a reasonable time you would be likely to harm yourself or others if you do not receive continuing treatment or care.
- The care you need is available close to where you will be living and the two health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) believe you are able to comply with the order.

Do I have to agree to be placed under a CTO?

You or your substitute decision maker can consent to a CTO. Consent is not required if two health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) determine:

- you have a history of not following the treatment or care required to keep yourself or other people safe from harm caused by the mental disorder; or
- the CTO is reasonable for your circumstances and would be less restrictive than detaining you in a hospital or health centre as a formal patient.

What happens if I do not accept treatment under my CTO?

You must follow the requirements in your CTO. If you do not, a member of your care team will try to help. If requirements continue to be unmet, a health professional can ask a peace officer to bring you to a hospital for examination.

At the hospital, you will be examined within 72 hours by health professionals (including at least one psychiatrist) who will determine if your CTO is still right for you. After their examination you may be:

- Admitted to the hospital as a formal patient under a new admission certificate.
- Returned home under the same or different requirements.
- Released from your CTO (your CTO is cancelled).

If I am on a CTO, am I still a formal patient?

No. Admission or renewal certificates are automatically cancelled once a CTO is issued.

How long does a CTO last?

A CTO is in effect for six months and may be renewed or changed any time before it expires. There is no limit to the number of times a CTO can be renewed for six-month periods.

How can I get my CTO changed or cancelled?

Your CTO can only be changed by certain people. Speak with the person who is supervising your CTO to learn more.

A psychiatrist can cancel your CTO if they believe it is no longer necessary.

You can also apply to a review panel at any time for cancellation of your CTO. The review panel will schedule a hearing and make a decision after hearing from you, your psychiatrist, and others involved in your care. Information on how to make an application to a review panel is at the bottom of this page.

Where can I get further information?

You may ask for help from any person involved in your care, including the physicians or nurse practitioners who issued your CTO, the person who supervises your CTO or any other person closely involved with your care.

The Mental Health Patient Advocate can also help you by:

- providing information on your rights;
- investigating complaints; and
- helping you and those acting on your behalf, including help applying for a review panel hearing.

Contact the Mental Health Patient Advocate:

Edmonton Area: 780-422-1812

Toll Free: 310-0000 (then dial 780-422-1812)

Email: info@albertahealthadvocates.ca

9 Floor, 10055 106 St NW, Edmonton AB T5J 2Y2

albertahealthadvocates.ca

You have the right to legal advice. If you will be in a review panel hearing, you also have the right to legal representation at that hearing. You may request free legal representation directly on the form used to apply for a review panel hearing (Form 12). Your request will be passed along to Legal Aid Alberta.

The organizations below can provide more information on how to connect with a lawyer:

- Legal Aid Alberta: 1-866-845-3425
- Law Society of Alberta: 1-800-661-9003

Mental Health Review Panel

Applications to have your CTO reviewed are made through Form 12. You can get a copy of this form from your CTO supervisor. It is also available online at alberta.ca/mhreviewpanel.

If you need help, another person can fill out the form with you (like your guardian, a relative, or a person who provides care to you).

Applications for a hearing can be sent to:

Edmonton and North

Jane Steblecki Corns
PO Box 53033 RPO Glenora
Edmonton AB T5N 4A8
Fax 866-971-2112

Central Alberta

Britton O. Mockridge
PO Box 27006 RPO City Centre
Red Deer AB T4N 6X8
Fax 587-815-5210

Calgary and South

Deborah Prowse
PO Box 38167 RPO Country Hills
Calgary AB T3K 5G9
Fax 844-360-7980

If you are unsure where to send your application, ask a health care provider or call the Mental Health Patient Advocate's office at 780-422-1812 in Edmonton or Toll Free: 310-0000 (then dial 780-422-1812) or via email at info@albertahealthadvocates.ca.

For more information on review panels and the hearing process, visit alberta.ca/mhreviewpanel.