



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
*Committee for Public Counsel Services*  
*Mental Health Litigation Division*  
44 Bromfield St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl., Boston, MA 02108

TEL: 617-988-8341  
FAX: 617-988-8488

ANTHONY J. BENEDETTI  
CHIEF COUNSEL

MARK A. LARSEN  
DIRECTOR

**To Persons Admitted Involuntarily under G.L. c. 123, § 12(b)**

**Notice of Your Right to an Attorney**

You were admitted to this mental health facility because the doctor thinks that you have a mental illness and that if you are not hospitalized you would be a danger to yourself or others, or unable to care for yourself. The hospital can hold you involuntarily for up to three (3) business days. Business days do not include weekends or holidays. After three business days, the hospital must either let you leave or ask a court to order that you stay in the hospital for up to six (6) more months. This court proceeding is called a civil commitment hearing.

- ✓ **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO A LAWYER** during this three-day period and for any commitment hearing
  - The lawyer will be a trained mental health lawyer.
  - The lawyer is provided at no cost.
  - The lawyer will represent you at a commitment hearing, if one is necessary.
  
- ✓ **THIS ATTORNEY REPRESENTS YOU AND ONLY YOU!**
  - The lawyer will:
    - Explain the law.
    - Help you understand the law.
    - Protect your rights during the commitment process.
    - Demand an emergency hearing, if your admission was improper.
    - Help you prepare your defense if the hospital files a petition for your civil commitment.
  - The lawyer can also help you find a legal advocate to help with other issues while you are in the hospital.

**If you want a lawyer, tell the hospital staff immediately.** The hospital must contact the Committee for Public Counsel Services so that we can assign a lawyer to represent you. The lawyer will visit with you no later than the next business day. **\*\*Please note that the right to a lawyer does not apply if you are in the hospital voluntarily. However, you can still call the number below to ask questions about your legal rights.**

**If you need more information about your right to counsel, or if you have questions about your legal rights when you are a patient of this facility, please contact the**

**CPCS Mental Health Staff Attorney at: 617-988-8341**