



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

***Raised Bill No. 147***

LCO No. 1353



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH

Introduced by:  
(PH)

***AN ACT CONCERNING WHITING FORENSIC HOSPITAL.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 17a-548 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
3 *1, 2020*):

4 (a) Any patient shall be permitted to wear his or her own clothes; to  
5 keep and use personal possessions including toilet articles; to be present  
6 during any search of his or her personal possessions, except a patient  
7 hospitalized in the maximum security service of Whiting Forensic  
8 Hospital when such search is conducted by police officers and probable  
9 cause exists that contraband or hazardous items are hidden in the  
10 patient's living area; to have access to individual storage space for such  
11 possessions; and in such manner as determined by the facility to spend  
12 a reasonable sum of his or her own money for canteen expenses and  
13 small purchases. These rights shall be denied only if the superintendent,  
14 director or his or her authorized representative determines that it is  
15 medically harmful to the patient to exercise such rights. An explanation  
16 of such denial shall be placed in the patient's permanent clinical record.

17 Sec. 2. Section 17a-565 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
18 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2020*):

19 There shall be an advisory board for Whiting Forensic Hospital,  
20 constituted as follows: The Commissioner of Mental Health and  
21 Addiction Services, three physicians licensed to practice in this state,  
22 two of whom shall be psychiatrists, two attorneys of this state, at least  
23 one of whom shall be in active practice and have at least five years'  
24 experience in the trial of criminal cases, one licensed psychologist with  
25 experience in clinical psychology, one licensed clinical social worker,  
26 [and] one person actively engaged in business who shall have at least  
27 ten years' experience in business management, and two persons with  
28 psychiatric disabilities, at least one of whom shall have received  
29 inpatient services in a psychiatric hospital. Annually, on October first,  
30 the Governor shall appoint a member or members to replace those  
31 whose terms expire for terms of five years each. The board shall elect a  
32 chairman and a secretary, who shall keep full and accurate minutes of  
33 its meetings and preserve the same. The board shall meet at the call of  
34 the chairman at least quarterly. Members of the board shall receive no  
35 compensation for their duties as such but shall be reimbursed for their  
36 actual expenses incurred in the course of their duties. Said board shall  
37 confer with the staff of the hospital and give general consultative and  
38 advisory services on problems and matters relating to its work. On any  
39 matter relating to the work of the hospital, the board may also confer  
40 with the warden or superintendent of the affected Connecticut  
41 correctional institution.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	17a-548(a)
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	17a-565

***Statement of Purpose:***

To allow patients in the maximum security building at Whiting Forensic Hospital to be present during routine searches of personal belongings and to add two members to the hospital's advisory board.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*