

§ 122C-14. (This article has a contingent effective date – see note) Local Consumer Advocate; duties.

(a) The State Consumer Advocate shall establish a Local MH/DD/SA Consumer Advocacy Program in locations in the State to be designated by the Secretary. In determining where to locate the Local Consumer Advocacy Programs, the Secretary shall ensure reasonable consumer accessibility to the Local Consumer Advocates. Local Consumer Advocates shall administer the Local Consumer Advocacy Programs. The State Consumer Advocate shall appoint a Local Consumer Advocate for each of the Local Consumer Advocacy Programs. The State Consumer Advocate shall supervise the Local Consumer Advocates.

(b) Pursuant to policies and procedures established by the State Consumer Advocate, the Local Consumer Advocate shall:

- (1) Assist consumers and their families with information, referral, and advocacy in obtaining appropriate services.
- (2) Assist consumers and their families in understanding their rights and remedies available to them from the public service system.
- (3) Serve as a liaison between consumers and their families and facility personnel and administration.
- (4) Promote the development of consumer and citizen involvement in addressing issues relating to MH/DD/SA.
- (5) Visit the State, area authority, or county program facilities to review and evaluate the quality of care provided to consumers and submit findings to the State Consumer Advocate.
- (6) Work with providers and consumers and their families or advocates to resolve issues of common concern.
- (7) Participate in regular Local Consumer Advocate training established by the State Consumer Advocate.
- (8) Report regularly to area authorities and county programs, county and area authority boards, and boards of county commissioners about the Local Consumer Advocate's activities, including the findings made pursuant to subdivision (5) of this subsection.
- (9) Provide training and technical assistance to counties, area authority boards, and providers concerning responding to consumers, evaluating quality of care, and determining availability of services and access to resources.
- (10) Coordinate activities with local human rights committees based on procedures developed by the State Consumer Advocate.
- (11) Provide information to the public on MH/DD/SA issues.
- (12) Perform any other related duties as directed by the State Consumer Advocate. (2001-437, s. 2; 2002-126, s. 10.30; 2003-284, s. 10.10; 2005-276, s. 10.27.)