

# Mental Health Watchdog Helps Hundreds in Fight for Human Rights

*CCHR has helped more than 900 men, women and children who were being unjustly held under the mental health law in a campaign to protect human rights.*

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, December 5, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida chapter of the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR), a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the eradication of abuses committed under the guise of mental health, has helped more than 900 men, women and children who were being unjustly held under the mental health law.

Known as the [Baker Act](#), the mental health law in Florida allows for individuals to be sent against their will for involuntary examination and held for up to 72 hours. While efforts have been made to protect the rights of individuals over the years, the fact remains that the number of people being sent for [involuntary psychiatric examination](#) continues to climb and a significant percentage of them do not meet the legal criteria to be taken into custody.

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*Diane Stein, President CCHR Florida*

“We receive over 140 calls every month on Baker Acts and way to often what is reported to us indicates that the criteria for an involuntary psychiatric examination was never met,” said the president of CCHR Florida, Diane Stein. “In fact, an analysis of 100 calls we received involving children revealed that around 70% did not meet the criteria for a Baker Act.”



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater

For many years law enforcement, schools and the media have reported the overuse and misuse of the Baker Act and while there have been some legislative amendments enacted to better protect children, the changes that have been made are not adequate. [2]

According to the Baker Act Reporting Center, in the 16 years from 2001 to 2017, involuntary psychiatric examinations more than doubled and in order to help address this situation, and violations of rights under the mental health law, the Florida chapter of CCHR operates a Psychiatric Abuse Hotline so that individuals who need help have someone they can call. [1]

In addition to the hotline, CCHR also works with the victims of Baker Act abuse to file complaints with the applicable agencies and officials to ensure that these abuses are investigated and those responsible are held accountable. Just since 2015, CCHR has filed over 700 complaints

concerning abuse within the Florida mental health system that have resulted in multiple investigations and sanctions against offending psychiatrists and facilities.

"Too often people who seek help are instead taken into custody and held against their will for involuntary psychiatric examination. CCHR is here to expose this abuse, help those who have been unjustly incarcerated and ultimately change the mental health law to protect people from rights violations," said Diane Stein.

About CCHR: CCHR has produced seven award-winning documentaries, with 7 million DVDs in 18 languages reaching 120 million people exposing drugging in the military, the irreparable harm of electric shock and the labeling and drugging of children. Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: "Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the 'free world' tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of 'mental health,'" he wrote in March 1969. For more information visit [www.cchrflorida.org](http://www.cchrflorida.org)

#### SOURCES:

[1] Baker Act Reporting Center  
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[2]  
<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/features/education/os-ucf-mental-health-finals-20151204-story.html> ;  
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The Florida chapter of CCHR is a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the protection of children.



Restoring Human Rights and Dignity in the Field of Mental Health

<http://www.miamiherald.com/latest-news/article1940689.html> ;  
<http://jacksonville.com/opinion/editorials/2015-11-06/story/floridas-baker-act-overused-inefficient-and-inadequate>

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