

Mental Health Watchdog To Hold Public Seminar In Response To 199,000 Baker Act Abuses

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, US, May 9, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- To help educate the public on the Florida mental health law, also known as the Baker Act, and actions that can be taken to prevent its abuse, the Florida chapter of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), a mental health watchdog organization, will host a complimentary seminar on May 15 at its headquarters. The seminar starts at 6:30 pm at 109 N Fort Harrison Avenue in downtown Clearwater.

The Baker Act legally allows for individuals of all ages, including children, to be taken into custody and sent for involuntary psychiatric examinations, often without parental knowledge or consent. The most recent report shows 199,000 involuntary psychiatric examinations were done in Florida, and more than 32,000 of these were on children, with some being toddlers as young as 2 years old¹.



Diane Stein, President of the Florida Chapter of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) addresses visitors at CCHR Florida headquarters

According to Diane Stein, President of the CCHR Florida, "The misuse of the Baker Act which allows a person's rights and freedoms to be taken away, prompted the Citizens Commission on Human Rights to launch an educational campaign in 2015. Since then we have informed almost 200,000 families, lawmakers, law enforcement and school districts on mental health rights."

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Another report made by the 2017 Children's Baker Act Task Force indicates that a significant number of these involuntary examinations on children did not meet the stated criteria legally required to take an individual into custody².

While the original intention that spurred the Baker Act into existence was to protect the rights of citizens sent for involuntary psychiatric examination, its tenets have been

misunderstood and abused by those given the authority to take adults and children into custody. In some cases, young children have been handcuffed and taken away in a police car as the Miami Herald reported was done to a 7-year old boy in 2018³.

To learn more about the Baker Act or to reserve seats at the seminar, please call 727-442-8820.

About CCHR:

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.

It was [L. Ron Hubbard](#), the founder of Scientology, who brought the terror of psychiatric imprisonment to the notice of the world. In March 1969, he said, "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.'"

For more information visit, www.cchrflorida.org

1. Baker Act Reporting Center

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/samh/publications/The%20Baker%20Act%20-%20FL%20MH%20Act%20-%20FY%2016-17%20Annual%20Report%20-%20Released%20June%202018.pdf>

2. CHILDREN'S BAKER ACT TASK FORCE, MINUTES for FIRST MEETING 7.20.17

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/samh/mentalhealth/task-force-examination-minors/docs/20170720/20170720-minutes.pdf>

3. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/education/article197958454.html>

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