

# Mental Health Watchdog Offers Baker Act Continuing Education for Professionals

*The virtual course, delivered by an attorney, covers the basic human rights impacted by the mental health law and is designed for mental health professionals.*

CLEARWATER, FL, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Florida's mental health law, commonly referred to as the [Baker Act](#), allows for individuals of all ages to be taken into custody for an involuntary psychiatric examination but it is often misunderstood and misused. [1]

According to the Baker Act Reporting Center, there were more than 210,000 Baker Acts initiated during 2018/2019 across the state with over 37,000 involving children. [2]



Tampa Bay area attorney and former Assistant Public Defender of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Carmen Miller, Esq., was the featured speaker at the seminar on mental health rights.

Headlines such as “6-year-old Florida girl “traumatized” after being involuntarily sent to mental health facility” and “Florida’s flawed Baker Act rips

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*Diane Stein, President CCHR Florida*

thousands of kids from school” are all too frequent and spurred the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights \(CCHR\)](#), a mental health watchdog, to begin offering continuing education on the law. After first receiving approval to host continuing education through the Florida Bar on the Baker Act for attorneys, the move to become a provider through the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling was a logical next step. [3,4]

On a regular basis, CCHR hosts complimentary virtual courses delivered by attorney Carmen Miller, a former assistant public defender in the Thirteenth Circuit in Tampa, with an extensive

background in dealing with Baker Acts. Those in attendance learn the context and intentions of the mental health law as well as the basic human rights impacted by the Baker Act and its unintended consequences.

“The education of those given the power to initiate a Baker Act on the points of the law is vital to the protection of liberty and human rights,” states the president of CCHR Florida, Diane Stein. “If the law itself is understood and applied from the viewpoint of using the least restrictive means possible to help someone in crisis then the potential for abuse is greatly reduced.”

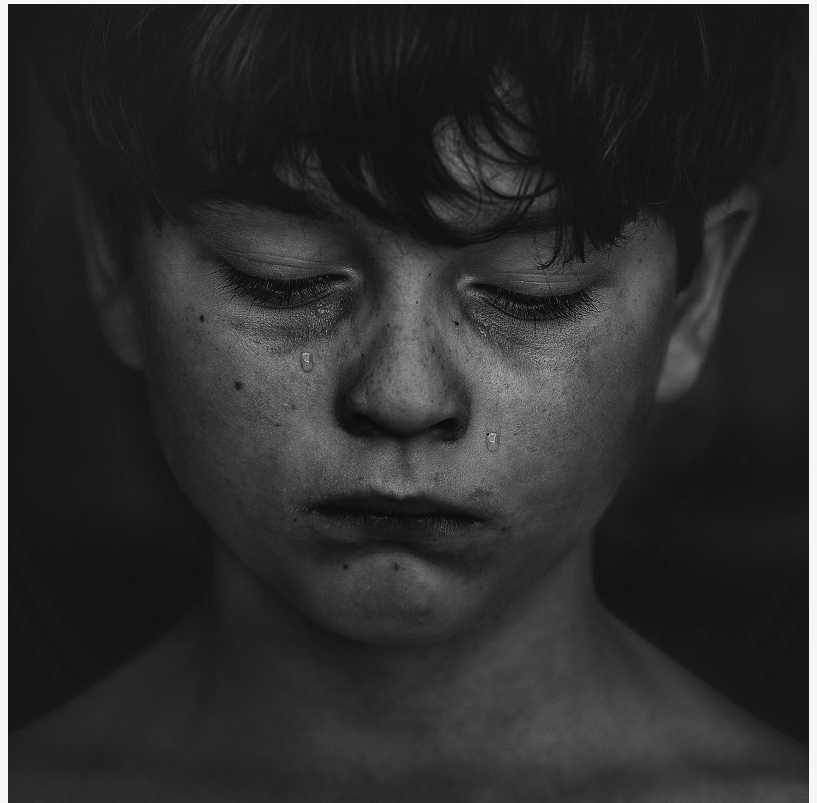
The [virtual continuing education course](#) is designed for Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Marriage Family Therapists and Certified Master Social Workers and offers 3 CE credits upon completion. To learn more or to reserve a spot for this complimentary virtual course, 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. 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:



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.



It was reported during the Baker Act Task Force that an estimated 30% of the children being Baker Acted in Pinellas County alone did not meet the criteria.

[1] WUSF Health News Florida  
COMMITTED  
<https://wfsu.org/committed/> and Baker  
Act Abuse - Media Stories  
<https://www.cchrflorida.org/baker-act-abuse/>

[2] Baker Act Reporting Center  
[https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/baker-act/documents/ba\\_usf\\_annual\\_report\\_2018\\_2019.pdf](https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/baker-act/documents/ba_usf_annual_report_2018_2019.pdf)

[3] Ibid.

[4] CCHR Continuing Education  
Courses  
<https://www.cchrflorida.org/category/continuing-education/>

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As reported by the Baker Act Reporting Center, an astounding 36,078 involuntary psychiatric examinations were initiated on children across the state.



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