

### **230.15 Personal liability.**

A person with mental illness and a person legally liable for the person's support remain liable for the support of the person with mental illness as provided in [this section](#). Persons legally liable for the support of a person with mental illness include the spouse of the person, any person bound by contract for support of the person, and, with respect to persons with mental illness under eighteen years of age only, the father and mother of the person. The county auditor, subject to the direction of the board of supervisors, shall enforce the obligation created in [this section](#) as to all sums advanced by the county. The liability to the county incurred by a person with mental illness or a person legally liable for the person's support under [this section](#) is limited to an amount equal to one hundred percent of the cost of care and treatment of the person with mental illness at a state mental health institute for one hundred twenty days of hospitalization. This limit of liability may be reached by payment of the cost of care and treatment of the person with mental illness subsequent to a single admission or multiple admissions to a state mental health institute or, if the person is not discharged as cured, subsequent to a single transfer or multiple transfers to a county care facility pursuant to [section 227.11](#). After reaching this limit of liability, a person with mental illness or a person legally liable for the person's support is liable to the county for the care and treatment of the person with mental illness at a state mental health institute or, if transferred but not discharged as cured, at a county care facility in an amount not in excess of the average minimum cost of the maintenance of an individual who is physically and mentally healthy residing in the individual's own home, which standard shall be established and may from time to time be revised by the department of human services. A lien imposed by [section 230.25](#) shall not exceed the amount of the liability which may be incurred under [this section](#) on account of a person with mental illness.

A substance abuser or chronic substance abuser is legally liable for the total amount of the cost of providing care, maintenance, and treatment for the substance abuser or chronic substance abuser while a voluntary or committed patient. When a portion of the cost is paid by a county, the substance abuser or chronic substance abuser is legally liable to the county for the amount paid. The substance abuser or chronic substance abuser shall assign any claim for reimbursement under any contract of indemnity, by insurance or otherwise, providing for the abuser's care, maintenance, and treatment in a state hospital to the state. Any payments received by the state from or on behalf of a substance abuser or chronic substance abuser shall be in part credited to the county in proportion to the share of the costs paid by the county. Nothing in [this section](#) shall be construed to prevent a relative or other person from voluntarily paying the full actual cost or any portion of the care and treatment of any person with mental illness, substance abuser, or chronic substance abuser as established by the department of human services.

[R60, §1488; C73, §1433; C97, §2297; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §3595; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §230.15; 82 Acts, ch 1260, §114 – 116]

83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159; 86 Acts, ch 1001, §17; 90 Acts, ch 1085, §21; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §60

Referred to in [§230.16](#), [230.25](#), [234.39](#), [331.502](#)