

230.15 Personal liability.

1. 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, and any person bound by contract for support of the person. The regional administrator of the person's county of residence, subject to the direction of the region's governing board, shall enforce the obligation created in [this section](#) as to all sums advanced by the regional administrator. The liability to the regional administrator 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 regional administrator 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 be revised by the department. 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.

2. A person with a substance use disorder is legally liable for the total amount of the cost of providing care, maintenance, and treatment for the person with a substance use disorder while a voluntary or committed patient. When a portion of the cost is paid by a county, the person with a substance use disorder is legally liable to the county for the amount paid. The person with a substance use disorder shall assign any claim for reimbursement under any contract of indemnity, by insurance or otherwise, providing for the person's care, maintenance, and treatment in a state mental health institute to the state. Any payments received by the state from or on behalf of a person with a substance use disorder shall be in part credited to the county in proportion to the share of the costs paid by the county.

3. 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 or a substance use disorder as established by the department.

[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](#); [2011 Acts, ch 121, §57, 62](#); [2013 Acts, ch 30, §43](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1137, §9](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §560](#)

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

For future amendments to subsections 1 and 2, effective July 1, 2025, see [2024 Acts, ch 1161, §94, 137](#)