

441—25.54(229) Advocate responsibilities. The minimum duties of the advocate are outlined in Iowa Code section 229.19. The role of the advocate is to ensure that the rights of the individual are upheld.

25.54(1) The advocate shall be readily accessible to communication from the individual and shall initiate contact within 5 days of the individual's commitment. The advocate shall inform the individual regarding the role of the advocate.

25.54(2) The advocate shall meet the individual in person within 15 days of the individual's commitment. The advocate shall present the county grievance procedure process, in writing, to the individual. The presentation shall include the county grievance procedure and contact information and the contact information for the ombudsman. The advocate shall inform the individual about the mental health crisis services that are available.

25.54(3) The advocate shall review each report submitted to the court and communicate with the individual's medical and treatment team. Advocates shall abide by all federal, state, and local confidentiality laws.

25.54(4) The advocate shall file in a form prescribed by the court as the advocate feels necessary or as required for each individual assigned to the advocate.

25.54(5) The advocate shall maintain an organized confidential and secure file for each individual served. The file shall contain but not be limited to:

- a.* Copies of quarterly reports submitted to the court.
- b.* Copies of correspondence sent to and received from the individual, family members, providers and others.
- c.* Releases of information.
- d.* Case notes describing the date, time and type of contact with the individuals or others and a brief narrative summary of the content or outcome of the contact.
- e.* Documents filed with the court electronically shall be considered as part of the individual's file.

25.54(6) The advocate shall register as provided in Iowa Ct. R. 16.305(1) to participate in the court's electronic document management system and shall submit all documents to be filed with the court electronically. The documents will be stored as electronic records that are retrievable and readable through the electronic document management system.

25.54(7) The advocate, as an employee of the county, shall comply with all county policies and procedures, including but not limited to hiring, supervision, grievance procedures, and training.

25.54(8) All advocate records are the property of the county, which is responsible for the provision of confidential storage, transfer, and destruction of client files, including those maintained on electronic and digital devices, with access limited according to the county's policy on confidentiality as described in subrule 25.55(6).

25.54(9) The advocate may attend the hospitalization hearing of an individual represented by an attorney; however, payment for the advocate's attendance is at the discretion of the county of employment.

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