August 20, 2021

TO:  Forensic Review Panel
     DBHDS Facility Directors
     DBHDS Facility Medical Directors
     DBHDS Facility Internal Forensic Privileging Committee Members (IFPCs)
     DBHDS Facility Clinical Directors
     CSB Executive Directors
     CSB Mental Health Directors
     CSB NGRI Coordinators
     Other Interested Individuals

FROM: Alison G. Land, Commissioner


It is my pleasure to inform you that this 2021 revision of the NGRI Manual replaces the 2003 version of this document. The 2021 revision of the NGRI Manual includes modifications to the procedures used by the DBHDS for the clinical and administrative management of individuals who have been committed by the courts of the Commonwealth to the custody of the DBHDS as a result of a judicial finding of Not Guilty Reason of Insanity (NGRI), pursuant to the provisions of *Chapter 11.1 of Title 19.2 of the Code of Virginia*.

The 2021 edition of the Manual includes all of the policy and procedural changes to the current NGRI treatment/management program. I have directed that these program and procedural changes be put into effect on July 1, 2021.
The current NGRI manual, as did its predecessors, outlines the basic procedures for the clinical and administrative management of this consumer group. The DBHDS program for NGRIs represents a comprehensive approach to providing intensive treatment, concomitant with ensuring the safety of the individual and the community.

The 2021 edition of the NGRI manual contains information of relevance to administrators, clinicians, case managers, DBHDS hospital treatment teams and Community Services Boards/Behavioral Health Authorities for providing evaluation, treatment and community placement services to individuals found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity, in a manner that comports with both legal parameters and professional standards of ethical practice.

The Office of Forensic Services of the DBHDS Division of Forensic Services is available to provide information and consultation regarding all aspects of this program. The Office of Forensic Services can be contacted at (804) 786-9084.

Enclosure:
NGRI Manual

cc:
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INTRODUCTION

Individuals who have been found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (herein referred to as insanity acquitted, acquittees, or NGRIs) by Virginia criminal courts require attention for clinical and legal needs as a result of their connection to both the mental health and criminal justice systems. This manual outlines the basic expectations regarding the management of individuals found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity. This information should assist administrators, clinicians, court personnel, treatment team members in state operated mental health facilities, and staff of Community Services Boards/Behavioral Health Authorities in evaluating, treating, and managing individuals found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity in a manner that is consistent with legal mandates and professional standards.

This set of guidelines is based on Chapter 11.1 of Title 19.2 of the Code of Virginia, specifically Sections 19.2-167 through 19.2-182 which describe proceedings on the question of insanity, Sections 19.2-182.2 through 19.2-182.16 which describe the legal process for Virginia's disposition of individuals acquitted by reason of insanity, and Virginia Code Section 19.2-174.1 which describes the information required prior to admission to a mental health facility. The Code of Virginia may be accessed at https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode.

This document revises and replaces previous versions of the NGRI Manual: Guidelines for the Management of Individuals Found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity, which was originally disseminated in 1997 and updated in 2003. Any questions regarding these guidelines should be referred to the Office of Forensic Services at the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services.

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