

CARE Act Quick Guide for Petitioners

What is CARE

The CARE Act allows individuals (“petitioners”) to request court-ordered treatment, services, and housing for certain people (“respondents”) 18+ who have an untreated or undertreated psychotic disorder and meet certain health, safety, and [eligibility criteria](#). Petitions must be filed in the county where the respondent resides, is found, or is facing criminal or civil proceedings. Petitions can be filed in all 58 counties.

Who Can File

(see form [CARE-100](#) for full list)

- First responder (i.e. peace officer, firefighter, paramedic, EMT, or mobile crisis response)
- Hospital director or designee (i.e. social worker)
- CBO director or designee (i.e. case manager)
- Licensed behavioral health professional
- Family members

Petition Process Overview

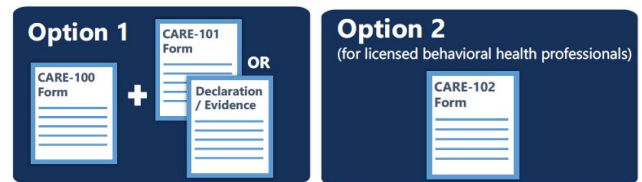
Petitioners fill out the required forms on the Judicial Council website and submit to specified [CARE Court locations](#) in each county.

Option 1: General Petition Process (For Most Petitioners): Use this path if you’re not a licensed behavioral health professional (for example family members, first responders, etc.).

- **Step 1:** Fill out the [CARE-100](#) form. It lets you explain your observations in your own words.
- **Step 2:** You must include *one* of the following to support your petition: [Mental Health Declaration Form \(CARE-101\)](#) or evidence that the respondent was detained for at least two periods of intensive care, with the most recent period within the past 60 days.

Option 2: CARE-102 Form (For Licensed Behavioral Health Professionals): The petition and the declaration from the licensed behavioral health professional are combined into one document.

NOTE: Information on the forms should enable the judge to make an initial determination that the respondent may be eligible and how best to contact and locate them. Once the petition is filed and reviewed, the court will determine if the respondent is (or may be) eligible and schedule an initial appearance. If the court finds them ineligible, it may dismiss the case.



Petitioners or their delegates must attend the initial hearing; however, the petitioner will be replaced by county behavioral health as the substitute petitioner.

Key Technical Assistance Resources

- [CARE Act Resources for Petitioners](#)
- [CARE Act Fact Sheet](#)
- [CARE Act Proceedings Process Flowchart](#)
- **County Behavioral Health:** [Considerations for Petitioning](#) (training video and material)
- **Public Guardians & Conservators:** [Role of Public Guardians & Conservators in Petitioning](#) (training video and material)
- **Hospitals and EDs:** [Role of Hospitals and EDs in Petitioning](#) (training video and material)
- **First Responders:** [First Responders & the CARE Act](#) (training videos and material)
- **Family Members:** [The Petition Process on CARE Act](#) (NAMI video)
- **Behavioral Health and Social Service Providers:** [Role of Behavioral Health and Social Service Providers in Petitioning](#) (training video and material)

Additional Resources

- [CalHHS CARE Act Website](#)
- [Judicial Council CARE Act Website](#)
- [CARE Act Resource Center](#)

Questions?

Reach out to CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov with any questions.