

What Is the Review Board for the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act (IPTA)?

The **Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act (IPTA)** Review Board is an independent body that reviews cases of involuntary psychiatric admission in Nova Scotia.

If you have been admitted as an involuntary patient, the IPTA Review Board will make sure

- there was evidence to admit you
- your human rights are being respected
- you are not held longer than necessary

The IPTA Review Board will automatically review (“hear”) your case if your admission lasts longer than 60 days. You can also fill out a Form 12 to ask the IPTA Review Board to review your case at any point during your admission. The **Patient Rights Advisory Service (PRAS)**, Nova Scotia Legal Aid (NSLA), or the hospital can help you fill out the form. Once the IPTA Review Board receives your request, they must review your case within 21 days.

The IPTA Review Board is not controlled by the government or hospitals. Its decisions are based on legal and medical expertise.

How does a hearing work?

Your hearing will be held over a Zoom video call. You can also ask for an in-person hearing.

Your hearing will be led by an IPTA Review Board Panel that includes

- one or more lawyers who have experience in mental health and human rights law. One of the lawyer members will lead (or “chair”) the hearing.

- one or more psychiatrists who have expertise and current knowledge about treatments for mental disorders

The members of the panel must not be connected in any way with you or the hospital. This way, their decision will be unbiased – that means it will not favour you or the hospital based on a previous relationship.

Who is at the hearing?

The following people are invited to each hearing:

- you and/or your lawyer. If you cannot afford a lawyer, **NSLA** will represent you for free. You always have the right to have a lawyer represent you.
- your substitute decision maker
- the current treating psychiatrist
- the **PRAS** advisor
- anyone else the review board feels is required to ensure a fair hearing

What happens in a hearing?

At the hearing, the hospital will present the evidence that was used to admit you or is being used to keep you admitted.

You can also collect and present evidence to support your case. **NSLA** and **PRAS** can help you do this.

The IPTA Review Board Panel will listen to the evidence and ask questions to make sure they have all the information they need. After the hearing, the panel will discuss the case among themselves and decide if you should remain in the hospital or can be released.

The panel chair will write their decision in a document, and this document must be given to you and your representative (your lawyer) within 10 days of your hearing.

The hospital must do as the IPTA Review Board says.

If you do not agree with the panel's decision, you can appeal it through the Nova Scotia Court of Appeals. The hospital can also appeal the decision.

How often do hearings happen?

The IPTA Review Board automatically reviews cases to make sure patients are not being held longer than necessary. They hold these automatic reviews

- 60 days after admission
- 180 days after admission
- one year after admission
- one year and 180 days after admission
- two years after admission
- every year after the two-year mark

Hearings can also be requested at any time. The following people can submit a Form 12 to request a hearing:

- you (the patient)
- your substitute decision maker
- a guardian appointed by a court
- a person allowed to give consent under the Medical Consent Act
- a person authorized by the patient
- the Health Authority CEO or the treating psychiatrist
- the provincial minister responsible for the Office of Addictions and Mental Health
- the IPTA Review Board

The IPTA Review Board will consider every application it receives. The IPTA Review Board can refuse an application if there was a recent hearing and no new evidence is being presented.

How to contact the IPTA Review Board

Your PRAS advisor, your lawyer or NSLA representative, or the hospital can help you fill in a Form 12 and submit it to the IPTA Review Board.

Any more questions?

You can contact any member of your care team at the hospital, your **NSLA** representative, or your **PRAS** advisor if you have any questions. Please record their information below for easy reference:

Position	Name	Telephone	Email
Attending Physician			
Assistant			
NSLA Lawyer			
Assistant			
Patient Rights Advisor			
Assistant			