

Court and treatment terms

Common terms

Term	Meaning and next question
Section 35	A Massachusetts civil court process for involuntary commitment related to alcohol or substance use disorder and likelihood of serious harm. Ask the court or counsel about the legal criteria.
Petitioner	The eligible person who asks the court to consider a commitment. Ask the court whether you are eligible to petition.
Respondent	The person who is the subject of the petition. Questions about rights and representation belong with legal counsel or the court.
Civil commitment	A legal process that may require treatment when the legal criteria are met. It differs from voluntarily enrolling in an outpatient program.
Court-ordered treatment	A broader phrase for treatment connected to a court order. The written requirement determines what needs to be clarified.
Substance use evaluation	An assessment of substance use concerns. Ask the referring authority which evaluator and documentation it requires.

Source and more information

[Mass.gov Section 35 process and criteria](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/section-35-process-and-criteria)

Source checked September 15, 2026. Contact the relevant organization to confirm current service details.

For immediate danger, call 911. For emotional crisis support, call or text 988. For Massachusetts care navigation, call or text 833-773-2445.