

# Great Changes in the Marchman Act Effective July 1, 2016

By Joseph M. Considine, P.A.

The Florida Legislature has made it easier to get help for a loved one with changes that take effect July 1, 2016. In the past, if someone were floundering in the raging seas of drug addiction or alcoholism there was little one person could do. It took either the family or three friends to get the suffering person into treatment via the Marchman Act. Very difficult to do at times.

So many times, families are in denial that there's a problem and so often well-meaning friends are unwilling to put their names on the dotted line to help commit a friend to a addiction or alcoholism recovery treatment center, even if that friend might be in mortal danger.

**The good news is that the Florida law has been changed and now one unrelated person can file.**

## SUMMARY OF THE CHANGES:

1. The law is changed so that instead of requiring three unrelated individuals to file a Marchman Act petition, **one unrelated individual can now file a petition for treatment**. This makes it easier to get the ball rolling for impaired individuals to receive help.
2. The law makes it clear that the Marchman Act includes people with a **“co-occurring disorder” such as bipolar disorder or a personality disorder**. This is very helpful to families when the loved one suffers with a mental illness and substance abuse is also an issue but perhaps not the prominent issue.
3. Another helpful change is that **the new law increases the initial time for treatment to 90 days** rather than the 60 days it used to provide. That extra month can be a huge option where the impaired person is really struggling.
4. The law makes it clearer that when the impaired individual has the resources to pay for treatment that he or she should pay or to make the necessary arrangements with his or her insurer to pay for it.
5. The law makes it a little more difficult to get an order for treatment when the impaired person has not previously failed at treatment. That is to say, it's easier to get a Marchman Act order if your loved one has already failed. But don't let that stop you, an order can still be gotten, if we can show sufficient evidence. Talk to us. We serve people in Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie counties.

This entry was posted in [Divorce](#) on [June 17, 2016](#) by [Joe Considine](#).