

It is the intent of Sections 4, 5 and 6 that a husband may be liable for the support of a wife while an inmate of any such institution, a wife for a husband, a father or mother, or both for a son or daughter, and a son or daughter, or both, for a father or mother.

(c) It is the intent of Sections 4, 5 and 6 that a husband may be liable for the support of a wife while she is an inmate of any such institution; a wife, for a husband; a father or mother, or both, for a son or daughter; and a son or daughter, or both, for a father or mother.

(d) In case the property or estate, or any property right, of any person committed to any of the said institutions as aforesaid is or are sufficient for his or her maintenance or support, in whole or in part, while in such institution, then the Department of Mental Hygiene [County Commissioners or the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be,] shall have power to institute and prosecute all proper proceedings, to subject the same thereto, and all payments made as a result of such proceedings shall be accounted for and paid as hereinbefore provided.

(e) Upon the death of any person committed to any of the said institutions as aforesaid, [the County Commissioners or the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be,] the Department of Mental Hygiene shall be entitled to make claim against the estate of any such person for his or her maintenance and support while in such institution, or for the balance due therefor if part has been paid. Such claim shall constitute a preferred claim against the estate of any such person, and all claims arising hereunder against the relatives and other persons legally chargeable with the maintenance and support of such inmates, shall constitute preferred claims against the estate of the person committed. All such claims may be waived by the [County Commissioners or the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be,] the Department of Mental Hygiene, in [their] its discretion, if in [their] its judgment the enforcement of the same will result in hardship to others, dependent upon those against whom such claims exist. All payments received as a result of the enforcement of such claims shall be accounted for and paid as hereinbefore provided.

(f) References in this section and elsewhere in this Article to the several counties or to boards of county commissioners or county councils, in relation to payments for care in State institutions under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Mental Hygiene, shall in each instance be taken and construed to include also a reference to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

6. The [County Commissioners or the Department of Welfare, as the case may be] Department of Mental Hygiene shall have full power and authority, in the case of all persons heretofore committed to any institution under the provisions of the preceding sections of this Article and still confined therein, to exercise all of the powers conferred upon [them] it by Section 5 of this Article with respect to persons hereafter to be so committed, to the end that payment for the future maintenance and support of such persons while in such institutions may be required, made, collected, and accounted for as in the case of persons hereafter to be committed under the provisions of said Section 4. *The Department is authorized and em-*