

## Judge rules Pierce County inmate must take anti-psychotic medication

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A judge on Friday authorized Pierce County jailers to involuntarily medicate a murder suspect they say has become unruly and dangerous.

Superior Court Judge Bryan Chushcoff ruled there was an “important state interest” in ensuring the Elliott Goodin received anti-psychotic medication. The drugs have been shown to help Goodin control his behavior, but efforts to get him to take them voluntarily have failed, said Judy Snow, the jail’s mental health manager.

Chushcoff also authorized corrections officers to forcibly hydrate Goodin should he fail to drink enough water. That was for Goodin’s own good, the judge said, as the medication could harm his health if he isn’t well hydrated.

Goodin, 41, was arrested and charged with second-degree murder in April 2012 for allegedly killing a fellow patient at Western State Hospital.

Snow testified Friday that Goodin’s stay in jail pending trial was relatively unremarkable until earlier this year. Goodin, who has been diagnosed with mental illness, has become aggressive with corrections officers, exhibited sexually inappropriate behavior, threatened to kill another inmate and throw his food, Snow told Chushcoff.

“He’s been extremely hostile and agitated,” she said in advocating for involuntary medication.

Goodin was charged last month with custodial assault for allegedly spitting in the face of a corrections officer, court records show. He’s the subject of a hearing next week to

determine whether he is competent to stand trial in both the murder and custodial assault cases.

Goodin, under questioning from his attorney, Richard Whitehead, testified he neither needed nor wanted to take the anti-psychotic drugs. He said they impair his appetite and give him “the shakes.” He also said he converted to Islam in 2007 and is forbidden from taking anti-psychotic drugs, which he classified as “witchcraft.”

Goodin testified he began behaving aggressively recently because he’s been in solitary confinement since his arrest and the stress was getting to him.

He takes a mood stabilizer, Benadryl and aspirin without complaint, he said.

Chushcoff said he was mindful of Goodin’s religious objections and sympathetic to his fear of side effects. But the judge said Goodin’s behavior was a “substantial problem” that needed to be addressed.

“His concerns are not unreasonable,” Chushcoff said. “But I don’t see it the same way he does.”

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