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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5177**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services, Mental Health & Housing (originally sponsored by Senators O'Ban and Darneille; by request of Department of Social and Health Services)

AN ACT Relating to improving timeliness of competency evaluation and restoration services, by clarifying alternative locations for the provision of competency restoration services and defining time periods of commitment; amending RCW 10.77.086, 10.77.088, and 10.77.220; adding a new section to chapter 10.77 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that there are currently no alternatives to competency restoration provided in the state hospitals. Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the legislature encourages the department of social and health services to develop, on a phased-in basis, alternative locations and increased access to competency restoration services under chapter 10.77 RCW for individuals who do not require in-patient psychiatric hospitalization level services.

**Sec.**  RCW 10.77.086 and 2013 c 289 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) If the defendant is charged with a felony and determined to be incompetent, until he or she has regained the competency necessary to understand the proceedings against him or her and assist in his or her own defense, or has been determined unlikely to regain competency pursuant to RCW 10.77.084(1)(b), but in any event for a period of no longer than ninety days, the court:

(i) Shall commit the defendant to the custody of the secretary who shall place such defendant in an appropriate facility of the department for evaluation and treatment; or

(ii) May alternatively order the defendant to undergo evaluation and treatment at some other facility as determined by the department, or under the guidance and control of a professional person. The facilities may include community mental health providers or other local facilities that contract with the department and are willing and able to provide treatment under this section. During the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, county jails may be used for this purpose if the secretary determines there is an emergent need for beds and documents the justification, including a plan to address the emergency; however, competency restoration patients must be physically separated from other populations at the jail, must interact only with treatment staff and not jail staff, and must be provided as much as possible with a therapeutic environment.

(b) For a defendant whose highest charge is a class C felony, or a class B felony that is not classified as violent under RCW 9.94A.030, the maximum time allowed for the initial period of commitment for competency restoration is forty-five days. The forty-five day period includes only the time the defendant is actually at the facility and is in addition to reasonable time for transport to or from the facility.

(2) On or before expiration of the initial period of commitment under subsection (1) of this section the court shall conduct a hearing, at which it shall determine whether or not the defendant is incompetent.

(3) If the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that a defendant charged with a felony is incompetent, the court shall have the option of extending the order of commitment or alternative treatment for an additional period of ninety days, but the court must at the time of extension set a date for a prompt hearing to determine the defendant's competency before the expiration of the second restoration period. The defendant, the defendant's attorney, or the prosecutor has the right to demand that the hearing be before a jury. No extension shall be ordered for a second or third restoration period as provided in subsection (4) of this section if the defendant's incompetence has been determined by the secretary to be solely the result of a developmental disability which is such that competence is not reasonably likely to be regained during an extension. The ninety-day period includes only the time the defendant is actually at the facility and is in addition to reasonable time for transport to or from the facility.

(4) For persons charged with a felony, at the hearing upon the expiration of the second restoration period or at the end of the first restoration period, in the case of a defendant with a developmental disability, if the jury or court finds that the defendant is incompetent, the charges shall be dismissed without prejudice, and the court shall order the defendant be committed to a state hospital as defined in RCW 72.23.010 for up to seventy-two hours starting from admission to the facility, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, for evaluation for the purpose of filing a civil commitment petition under chapter 71.05 RCW. The criminal charges shall not be dismissed if the court or jury finds that: (a) The defendant (i) is a substantial danger to other persons; or (ii) presents a substantial likelihood of committing criminal acts jeopardizing public safety or security; and (b) there is a substantial probability that the defendant will regain competency within a reasonable period of time. In the event that the court or jury makes such a finding, the court may extend the period of commitment for up to an additional six months. The six-month period includes only the time the defendant is actually at the facility and is in addition to reasonable time for transport to or from the facility.

**Sec.**  RCW 10.77.088 and 2007 c 375 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) If the defendant is charged with a nonfelony crime which is a serious offense as identified in RCW 10.77.092 and found by the court to be not competent, then the court shall order the secretary to place the defendant:

(i) At a secure mental health facility in the custody of the department or an agency designated by the department for mental health treatment and restoration of competency. The agencies may include community mental health providers or other local facilities that contract with the department and are willing and able to provide treatment under this section. During the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, county jails may be used for this purpose if the secretary determines there is an emergent need for beds and documents the justification, including a plan to address the emergency; however, competency restoration patients must be physically separated from other populations at the jail, must interact only with treatment staff and not jail staff, and must be provided as much as possible with a therapeutic environment. The placement shall not exceed fourteen days in addition to any unused time of the evaluation under RCW 10.77.060. The court shall compute this total period and include its computation in the order. The fourteen-day period plus any unused time of the evaluation under RCW 10.77.060 shall be considered to include only the time the defendant is actually at the facility and shall be in addition to reasonable time for transport to or from the facility;

(ii) On conditional release for up to ninety days for mental health treatment and restoration of competency; or

(iii) Any combination of this subsection.

(b)(i) If the proceedings are dismissed under RCW 10.77.084 and the defendant was on conditional release at the time of dismissal, the court shall order the designated mental health professional within that county to evaluate the defendant pursuant to chapter 71.05 RCW. The evaluation may be conducted in any location chosen by the professional.

(ii) If the defendant was in custody and not on conditional release at the time of dismissal, the defendant shall be detained and sent to an evaluation and treatment facility for up to seventy-two hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, for evaluation for purposes of filing a petition under chapter 71.05 RCW. The seventy-two-hour period shall commence upon the next nonholiday weekday following the court order and shall run to the end of the last nonholiday weekday within the seventy-two-hour period.

(2) If the defendant is charged with a nonfelony crime that is not a serious offense as defined in RCW 10.77.092:

The court may stay or dismiss proceedings and detain the defendant for sufficient time to allow the designated mental health professional to evaluate the defendant and consider initial detention proceedings under chapter 71.05 RCW. The court must give notice to all parties at least twenty-four hours before the dismissal of any proceeding under this subsection, and provide an opportunity for a hearing on whether to dismiss the proceedings.

**Sec.**  RCW 10.77.220 and 1982 c 112 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

No person who is criminally insane confined pursuant to this chapter shall be incarcerated in a state correctional institution or facility: PROVIDED, That nothing herein shall prohibit confinement in a mental health facility located wholly within a correctional institution. Confinement of a person who is criminally insane in a county jail or other local facility while awaiting either placement in a treatment program or a court hearing pursuant to this chapter is permitted for no more than seven days.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 10.77 RCW to read as follows:

A new secure facility developed under this chapter for inpatient treatment of defendants ordered to receive competency restoration may not be sited within five hundred feet of the facilities and grounds of a public or private school.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

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