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**SENATE BILL 5561**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Dhingra, Kuderer, Lovelett, Pedersen, Saldaña, Stanford, Van De Wege, and Wellman

AN ACT Relating to the restoration of the right to possess a firearm; amending RCW 9.41.040 and 9.41.047; adding a new section to chapter 9.41 RCW; and providing an effective date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 9.41 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A person who is prohibited from possession of a firearm under RCW 9.41.040 and who has not been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a felony sex offense; a class A felony; a felony offense in which a firearm was used, displayed, or threatened to be used; or a felony offense with a maximum sentence of at least 20 years may petition a superior court to have his or her right to possess a firearm restored if:

(a) The person is not required to file a petition as provided in RCW 9.41.047;

(b) The person has spent three consecutive years, immediately preceding the petition, in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crime if the person was convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity for a nonfelony offense;

(c) The person has spent five consecutive years, immediately preceding the petition, in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crime if the person was convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a class C felony offense;

(d) The person has spent 10 consecutive years, immediately preceding the petition, in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crime if the person was convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a class B felony offense;

(e) The person has no pending charges for any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crime;

(f) The person has completed any and all sentencing conditions for the underlying felony or misdemeanor conviction; and

(g) An extreme risk, domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault protection order has not been issued against the person in the five years immediately preceding the petition.

(2) A person who has been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity for a felony offense in which a firearm was used, displayed, or threatened to be used and who otherwise meets the requirements in subsection (1) of this section may petition a superior court to have his or her right to possess a firearm restored when the person has spent 10 consecutive years, immediately preceding the petition, in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crime. The court may restore the person's right to possess a firearm if the petitioner shows by a preponderance of the evidence that the petitioner is sufficiently rehabilitated to warrant restoration.

(3)(a) A petition for restoration of a person's right to possess a firearm shall be made to:

(i) The superior court that ordered the petitioner's prohibition on possession of a firearm; or

(ii) The superior court in the county in which the petitioner resides.

(b) If a person has multiple convictions in different counties, the person must provide notice to the prosecuting attorney in each county where the convictions occurred.

**Sec.**  RCW 9.41.040 and 2021 c 215 s 72 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) A person, whether an adult or juvenile, is guilty of the crime of unlawful possession of a firearm in the first degree, if the person owns, has in his or her possession, or has in his or her control any firearm after having previously been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity in this state or elsewhere of any serious offense as defined in this chapter.

(b) Unlawful possession of a firearm in the first degree is a class B felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(2)(a) A person, whether an adult or juvenile, is guilty of the crime of unlawful possession of a firearm in the second degree, if the person does not qualify under subsection (1) of this section for the crime of unlawful possession of a firearm in the first degree and the person owns, has in his or her possession, or has in his or her control any firearm:

(i) After having previously been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity in this state or elsewhere of any felony not specifically listed as prohibiting firearm possession under subsection (1) of this section, or any of the following crimes when committed by one family or household member against another or by one intimate partner against another, committed on or after July 1, 1993: Assault in the fourth degree, coercion, stalking, reckless endangerment, criminal trespass in the first degree, or violation of the provisions of a domestic violence protection order or no-contact order restraining the person or excluding the person from a residence (chapter 7.105 RCW, RCW 10.99.040, or any of the former RCW 26.50.060, 26.50.070, and 26.50.130);

(ii) After having previously been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity in this state or elsewhere of harassment when committed by one family or household member against another or by one intimate partner against another, committed on or after June 7, 2018;

(iii) During any period of time that the person is subject to a court order issued under chapter 7.105, 9A.46, 10.99, 26.09, 26.26A, or 26.26B RCW or any of the former chapters 7.90, 7.92, 10.14, and 26.50 RCW that:

(A) Was issued after a hearing for which the person received actual notice, and at which the person had an opportunity to participate, whether the court then issues a full order or reissues a temporary order. If the court enters an agreed order by the parties without a hearing, such an order meets the requirements of this subsection;

(B) Restrains the person from harassing, stalking, or threatening the person protected under the order or child of the person or protected person, or engaging in other conduct that would place the protected person in reasonable fear of bodily injury to the protected person or child; and

(C)(I) Includes a finding that the person represents a credible threat to the physical safety of the protected person or child and by its terms explicitly prohibits the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the protected person or child that would reasonably be expected to cause bodily injury; or

(II) Includes an order under RCW 9.41.800 requiring the person to surrender all firearms and prohibiting the person from accessing, having in his or her custody or control, possessing, purchasing, receiving, or attempting to purchase or receive, firearms;

(iv) After having previously been involuntarily committed based on a mental disorder under RCW 71.05.240, 71.05.320, 71.34.740, 71.34.750, chapter 10.77 RCW, or equivalent statutes of another jurisdiction, unless his or her right to possess a firearm has been restored as provided in RCW 9.41.047;

(v) After dismissal of criminal charges based on incompetency to stand trial under RCW 10.77.088 when the court has made a finding indicating that the defendant has a history of one or more violent acts, unless his or her right to possess a firearm has been restored as provided in RCW 9.41.047;

(vi) If the person is under 18 years of age, except as provided in RCW 9.41.042; and/or

(vii) If the person is free on bond or personal recognizance pending trial, appeal, or sentencing for a serious offense as defined in RCW 9.41.010.

(b) Unlawful possession of a firearm in the second degree is a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(3) ((~~Notwithstanding RCW 9.41.047 or any other provisions of law, as~~)) As used in this chapter, a person has been "convicted," whether in an adult court or adjudicated in a juvenile court, at such time as a plea of guilty has been accepted or a verdict of guilty has been filed, notwithstanding the pendency of any future proceedings including, but not limited to, sentencing or disposition, post-trial or post-fact-finding motions, and appeals. Conviction includes a dismissal entered after a period of probation, suspension, or deferral of sentence, and also includes equivalent dispositions by courts in jurisdictions other than Washington state. A person shall not be precluded from possession of a firearm if the conviction has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, certificate of rehabilitation, or other equivalent procedure based on a finding of the rehabilitation of the person convicted or the conviction or disposition has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, or other equivalent procedure based on a finding of innocence. Where no record of the court's disposition of the charges can be found, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the person was not convicted of the charge.

(4)((~~(a)~~)) Notwithstanding subsection (1) or (2) of this section, a person convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of an offense prohibiting the possession of a firearm under this section other than murder, manslaughter, robbery, rape, indecent liberties, arson, assault, kidnapping, extortion, burglary, or violations with respect to controlled substances under RCW 69.50.401 and 69.50.410, who received a probationary sentence under RCW 9.95.200, and who received a dismissal of the charge under RCW 9.95.240, shall not be precluded from possession of a firearm as a result of the conviction or finding of not guilty by reason of insanity. ((~~Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, if a person is prohibited from possession of a firearm under subsection (1) or (2) of this section and has not previously been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a sex offense prohibiting firearm ownership under subsection (1) or (2) of this section and/or any felony defined under any law as a class A felony or with a maximum sentence of at least 20 years, or both, the individual may petition a court of record to have his or her right to possess a firearm restored:~~

~~(i) Under RCW 9.41.047; and/or~~

~~(ii)(A) If the conviction or finding of not guilty by reason of insanity was for a felony offense, after five or more consecutive years in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity or currently charged with any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crimes, if the individual has no prior felony convictions that prohibit the possession of a firearm counted as part of the offender score under RCW 9.94A.525; or~~

~~(B) If the conviction or finding of not guilty by reason of insanity was for a nonfelony offense, after three or more consecutive years in the community without being convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity or currently charged with any felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor crimes, if the individual has no prior felony convictions that prohibit the possession of a firearm counted as part of the offender score under RCW 9.94A.525 and the individual has completed all conditions of the sentence.~~

~~(b) An individual may petition a court of record to have his or her right to possess a firearm restored under (a) of this subsection only at:~~

~~(i) The court of record that ordered the petitioner's prohibition on possession of a firearm; or~~

~~(ii) The superior court in the county in which the petitioner resides.~~))

(5) In addition to any other penalty provided for by law, if a person under the age of 18 years is found by a court to have possessed a firearm in a vehicle in violation of subsection (1) or (2) of this section or to have committed an offense while armed with a firearm during which offense a motor vehicle served an integral function, the court shall notify the department of licensing within 24 hours and the person's privilege to drive shall be revoked under RCW 46.20.265, unless the offense is the juvenile's first offense in violation of this section and has not committed an offense while armed with a firearm, an unlawful possession of a firearm offense, or an offense in violation of chapter 66.44, 69.52, 69.41, or 69.50 RCW.

(6) Nothing in chapter 129, Laws of 1995 shall ever be construed or interpreted as preventing an offender from being charged and subsequently convicted for the separate felony crimes of theft of a firearm or possession of a stolen firearm, or both, in addition to being charged and subsequently convicted under this section for unlawful possession of a firearm in the first or second degree. Notwithstanding any other law, if the offender is convicted under this section for unlawful possession of a firearm in the first or second degree and for the felony crimes of theft of a firearm or possession of a stolen firearm, or both, then the offender shall serve consecutive sentences for each of the felony crimes of conviction listed in this subsection.

(7) Each firearm unlawfully possessed under this section shall be a separate offense.

(8) A person may petition to restore the right to possess a firearm as provided in section 1 of this act.

**Sec.**  RCW 9.41.047 and 2020 c 302 s 60 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) At the time a person is convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of an offense making the person ineligible to possess a firearm, or at the time a person is committed by court order under RCW 71.05.240, 71.05.320, 71.34.740, 71.34.750, or chapter 10.77 RCW for mental health treatment, or at the time that charges are dismissed based on incompetency to stand trial under RCW 10.77.088 and the court makes a finding that the person has a history of one or more violent acts, the ((~~convicting or committing court, or~~)) court ((~~that dismisses charges,~~)) shall notify the person, orally and in writing, that the person must immediately surrender all firearms and any concealed pistol license and that the person may not possess a firearm unless his or her right to do so is restored by a superior court ((~~of record. For purposes of this section a convicting court includes a court in which a person has been found not guilty by reason of insanity~~)).

(b) The court shall forward within three judicial days after conviction, finding of not guilty by reason of insanity, entry of the commitment order, or dismissal of charges, a copy of the person's driver's license or identicard, or comparable information such as ((~~their~~)) the person's name, address, and date of birth, along with the date of conviction or commitment, or date charges are dismissed, to the department of licensing. When a person is committed by court order under RCW 71.05.240, 71.05.320, 71.34.740, 71.34.750, or chapter 10.77 RCW, for mental health treatment, or when a person's charges are dismissed based on incompetency to stand trial under RCW 10.77.088 and the court makes a finding that the person has a history of one or more violent acts, the court also shall forward, within three judicial days after entry of the commitment order, or dismissal of charges, a copy of the person's driver's license, or comparable information, along with the date of commitment or date charges are dismissed, to the national instant criminal background check system index, denied persons file, created by the federal Brady handgun violence prevention act (P.L. 103-159) and to the Washington state patrol. The petitioning party shall provide the court with the information required. If more than one commitment order is entered under one cause number, only one notification to the department of licensing and the national instant criminal background check system is required.

(2) Upon receipt of the information provided for by subsection (1) of this section, the department of licensing shall determine if the ((~~convicted or committed~~)) person((~~, or the person whose charges are dismissed based on incompetency to stand trial,~~)) has a concealed pistol license. If the person ((~~does have~~)) has a concealed pistol license, the department of licensing shall immediately notify the license-issuing authority which, upon receipt of such notification, shall immediately revoke the license.

(3)(a) A person who is prohibited from possessing a firearm, by reason of having been involuntarily committed for mental health treatment under RCW 71.05.240, 71.05.320, 71.34.740, 71.34.750, chapter 10.77 RCW, or equivalent statutes of another jurisdiction, or by reason of having been detained under RCW 71.05.150 or 71.05.153, or because the person's charges were dismissed based on incompetency to stand trial under RCW 10.77.088 and the court made a finding that the person has a history of one or more violent acts, may, upon discharge, petition the superior court to have his or her right to possess a firearm restored.

(b) The petition must be brought in the superior court that ordered the involuntary commitment or dismissed the charges based on incompetency to stand trial or the superior court of the county in which the petitioner resides.

(c) Except as provided in (d) and (e) of this subsection, the court shall restore the petitioner's right to possess a firearm if the petitioner proves by a preponderance of the evidence that:

(i) The petitioner is no longer required to participate in court-ordered inpatient or outpatient treatment;

(ii) The petitioner has successfully managed the condition related to the commitment or detention or incompetency;

(iii) The petitioner no longer presents a substantial danger to himself or herself, or the public; and

(iv) The symptoms related to the commitment or detention or incompetency are not reasonably likely to recur.

(d) If a preponderance of the evidence in the record supports a finding that the person petitioning the court has engaged in violence and that it is more likely than not that the person will engage in violence after his or her right to possess a firearm is restored, the person shall bear the burden of proving by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that he or she does not present a substantial danger to the safety of others.

(e) If the petitioner seeks restoration after having been detained under RCW 71.05.150 or 71.05.153, the state shall bear the burden of proof to show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the petitioner does not meet the restoration criteria in (c) of this subsection.

(f) When a person's right to possess a firearm has been restored under this subsection, the court shall forward, within three judicial days after entry of the restoration order, notification that the person's right to possess a firearm has been restored to the department of licensing with a copy of the person's driver's license or identicard, or comparable identification such as ((~~their~~)) the person's name, address, and date of birth, the health care authority, and the national instant criminal background check system index, denied persons file. In the case of a person whose right to possess a firearm has been suspended for six months as provided in RCW 71.05.182, the department of licensing shall forward notification of the restoration order to the licensing authority, which, upon receipt of such notification, shall immediately lift the suspension, restoring the license.

(4) No person who has been found not guilty by reason of insanity may petition a court for restoration of the right to possess a firearm unless the person meets the requirements for the restoration of the right to possess a firearm under ((~~RCW 9.41.040(4)~~)) section 1(1) (b) through (g) of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act takes effect July 1, 2022.

**--- END ---**