

**RCW 10.77.086 Competency restoration—Procedure in felony**

**charge.** (1) (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, 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, but in any event for a period of no longer than 90 days, the court shall commit the defendant to the custody of the secretary for inpatient competency restoration, or may alternatively order the defendant to receive outpatient competency restoration based on a recommendation from a forensic navigator and input from the parties.

(b) For a defendant who is determined to be incompetent and whose highest charge is a class C felony other than assault in the third degree under RCW 9A.36.031(1) (d) or (f), felony physical control of a vehicle under RCW 46.61.504(6), felony hit and run resulting in injury under RCW 46.52.020(4) (b), a hate crime offense under RCW 9A.36.080, a class C felony with a domestic violence designation, a class C felony sex offense as defined in RCW 9.94A.030, or a class C felony with a sexual motivation allegation, the court shall first consider all available and appropriate alternatives to inpatient competency restoration. The court shall dismiss the proceedings without prejudice upon agreement of the parties if the forensic navigator has found an appropriate and available diversion program willing to accept the defendant.

(2) (a) To be eligible for an order for outpatient competency restoration, a defendant must be clinically appropriate and be willing to:

(i) Adhere to medications or receive prescribed intramuscular medication;

(ii) Abstain from alcohol and unprescribed drugs; and

(iii) Comply with urinalysis or breathalyzer monitoring if needed.

(b) If the court orders inpatient competency restoration, the department shall place the defendant in an appropriate facility of the department for competency restoration.

(c) If the court orders outpatient competency restoration, the court shall modify conditions of release as needed to authorize the department to place the person in approved housing, which may include access to supported housing, affiliated with a contracted outpatient competency restoration program. The department, in conjunction with the health care authority, must establish rules for conditions of participation in the outpatient competency restoration program, which must include the defendant being subject to medication management. The court may order regular urinalysis testing. The outpatient competency restoration program shall monitor the defendant during the defendant's placement in the program and report any noncompliance or significant changes with respect to the defendant to the department and, if applicable, the forensic navigator.

(d) If a defendant fails to comply with the restrictions of the outpatient restoration program such that restoration is no longer appropriate in that setting or the defendant is no longer clinically appropriate for outpatient competency restoration, the director of the outpatient competency restoration program shall notify the authority and the department of the need to terminate the outpatient competency restoration placement and intent to request placement for the defendant in an appropriate facility of the department for inpatient competency restoration. The outpatient competency restoration program

shall coordinate with the authority, the department, and any law enforcement personnel under (d)(i) of this subsection to ensure that the time period between termination and admission into the inpatient facility is as minimal as possible. The time period for inpatient competency restoration shall be reduced by the time period spent in active treatment within the outpatient competency restoration program, excluding time periods in which the defendant was absent from the program and all time from notice of termination of the outpatient competency restoration period through the defendant's admission to the facility. The department shall obtain a placement for the defendant within seven days of the notice of intent to terminate the outpatient competency restoration placement.

(i) The department may authorize a peace officer to detain the defendant into emergency custody for transport to the designated inpatient competency restoration facility. If medical clearance is required by the designated competency restoration facility before admission, the peace officer must transport the defendant to a crisis stabilization unit, evaluation and treatment facility, or emergency department of a local hospital for medical clearance once a bed is available at the designated inpatient competency restoration facility. The signed outpatient competency restoration order of the court shall serve as authority for the detention of the defendant under this subsection. This subsection does not preclude voluntary transportation of the defendant to a facility for inpatient competency restoration or for medical clearance, or authorize admission of the defendant into jail.

(ii) The department shall notify the court and parties of the defendant's admission for inpatient competency restoration before the close of the next judicial day. The court shall schedule a hearing within five days to review the conditions of release of the defendant and anticipated release from treatment and issue appropriate orders.

(e) The court may not issue an order for outpatient competency restoration unless the department certifies that there is an available appropriate outpatient competency restoration program that has adequate space for the person at the time the order is issued or the court places the defendant under the guidance and control of a professional person identified in the court order.

(3) 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 competency restoration period is 45 days if the defendant is referred for inpatient competency restoration, or 90 days if the defendant is referred for outpatient competency restoration, provided that if the outpatient competency restoration placement is terminated and the defendant is subsequently admitted to an inpatient facility, the period of inpatient treatment during the first competency restoration period under this subsection shall not exceed 45 days.

(4) When any defendant whose highest charge is a class C felony other than assault in the third degree under RCW 9A.36.031(1) (d) or (f), felony physical control of a vehicle under RCW 46.61.504(6), felony hit and run resulting in injury under RCW 46.52.020(4)(b), a hate crime offense under RCW 9A.36.080, a class C felony with a domestic violence designation, a class C felony sex offense as defined in RCW 9.94A.030, or a class C felony with a sexual motivation allegation is admitted for inpatient competency restoration with an accompanying court order for involuntary medication under RCW 10.77.092, and the defendant is found not competent to stand trial

following that period of competency restoration, the court shall dismiss the charges pursuant to subsection (7) of this section.

(5) If the court determines or the parties agree before the initial competency restoration period or at any subsequent stage of the proceedings that the defendant is unlikely to regain competency, the court may dismiss the charges without prejudice without ordering the defendant to undergo an initial or further period of competency restoration treatment, in which case the court shall order that the defendant be referred for evaluation for civil commitment in the manner provided in subsection (7) of this section.

(6) On or before expiration of the initial competency restoration period the court shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the defendant is now competent to stand trial. If the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant is incompetent to stand trial, the court may order an extension of the competency restoration period for an additional period of 90 days, but the court must at the same time set a date for a new hearing to determine the defendant's competency to stand trial before the expiration of this second restoration period. The defendant, the defendant's attorney, and the prosecutor have the right to demand that the hearing be before a jury. No extension shall be ordered for a second or third competency restoration period if the defendant is ineligible for a subsequent competency restoration period under subsection (4) of this section or the defendant's incompetence has been determined by the secretary to be solely the result of an intellectual or developmental disability, dementia, or traumatic brain injury which is such that competence is not reasonably likely to be regained during an extension.

(7) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, at the hearing upon the expiration of the second competency restoration period, or at the end of the first competency restoration period if the defendant is ineligible for a second or third competency restoration period under subsection (3) or (6) of this section, if the jury or court finds that the defendant is incompetent to stand trial, the court shall dismiss the charges without prejudice and order the defendant to be committed to the department for placement in a facility operated or contracted by the department for up to 120 hours if the defendant has not undergone competency restoration services or has engaged in outpatient competency restoration services, and up to 72 hours if the defendant engaged in inpatient competency restoration services 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. If at the time the order to dismiss the charges without prejudice is entered by the court the defendant is already in a facility operated or contracted by the department, the 72-hour or 120-hour period shall instead begin upon department receipt of the court order.

(b) The court shall not dismiss the charges if the defendant is eligible for a second or third competency restoration period under subsection (6) of this section and the court or jury finds that: (i) The defendant (A) is a substantial danger to other persons; or (B) presents a substantial likelihood of committing criminal acts jeopardizing public safety or security; and (ii) there is a substantial probability that the defendant will regain competency within a reasonable period of time. If the court or jury makes such a finding, the court may extend the period of commitment for up to an additional six months.

(8) Any period of competency restoration treatment under this section includes only the time the defendant is actually at the facility or is actively participating in an outpatient competency restoration program and is in addition to reasonable time for transport to or from the facility. [2023 c 453 § 8; (2023 c 453 § 7 expired July 23, 2023); 2023 c 433 § 18; 2022 c 288 § 4; 2019 c 326 § 4; 2015 1st sp.s. c 7 § 5; 2013 c 289 § 2; 2012 c 256 § 6; 2007 c 375 § 4.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2023 c 433 § 18 and by 2023 c 453 § 8, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Contingent expiration date—2023 c 453 § 7:** "Section 7 of this act expires when section 8 of this act takes effect." [2023 c 453 § 30.]

**Effective date—2023 c 453 §§ 7 and 9:** See note following RCW 10.77.088.

**Findings—2023 c 453:** See note following RCW 10.77.060.

**Intent—2019 c 326:** See note following RCW 10.77.074.

**Finding—2015 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 10.77.075.

**Effective dates—2015 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 10.77.075.

**Findings—2013 c 289:** "The legislature finds that persons with a mental illness or developmental disability are more likely to be victimized by crime than to be perpetrators of crime. The legislature further finds that there are a small number of individuals who commit repeated violent acts against others while suffering from the effects of a mental illness and/or developmental disability that both contributes to their criminal behaviors and renders them legally incompetent to be held accountable for those behaviors. The legislature further finds that the primary statutory mechanisms designed to protect the public from violent behavior, either criminal commitment to a corrections institution, or long-term commitment as not guilty by reason of insanity, are unavailable due to the legal incompetence of these individuals to stand trial. The legislature further finds that the existing civil system of short-term commitments under the Washington's involuntary treatment act is insufficient to protect the public from these violent acts. Finally, the legislature finds that changes to the involuntary treatment act to account for this small number of individuals is necessary in order to serve Washington's compelling interest in public safety and to provide for the proper care of these individuals." [2013 c 289 § 1.]

**Purpose—Effective date—2012 c 256:** See notes following RCW 10.77.068.

**Findings—Purpose—Construction—Severability—2007 c 375:** See notes following RCW 10.31.110.

**Captions not law—2007 c 375:** See note following RCW 10.77.084.