H-3203.1

HOUSE BILL 2694

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Barnard, Connors, Eslick, and Rude

Read first time 01/28/26. Referred to Committee on Community Safety.

AN ACT Relating to prohibiting sexually violent predators from being placed in less restrictive alternatives within 500 feet of, or with a sight line to, certain facilities or schools; and amending RCW 71.09.096.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 71.09.096 and 2025 c 33 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) If the court or jury determines that conditional release to a less restrictive alternative is in the best interest of the person and includes conditions that would adequately protect the community, and the court determines that the minimum conditions set forth in RCW 71.09.092 and in this section are met, the court shall enter judgment and direct a conditional release.

(2) The court shall impose any additional conditions necessary to ensure compliance with treatment and to protect the community. If the court finds that conditions do not exist that will both ensure the person's compliance with treatment and protect the community, then the person shall be remanded to the custody of the department of social and health services for control, care, and treatment in a secure facility as designated in RCW 71.09.060(1).

(3) If the service provider designated by the court to provide inpatient or outpatient treatment or to monitor or supervise any other terms and conditions of a person's placement in a less restrictive alternative is other than the department of social and health services or the department of corrections, then the service provider so designated must agree in writing to provide such treatment, monitoring, or supervision in accord with this section. Any person providing or agreeing to provide treatment, monitoring, or supervision services pursuant to this chapter may be compelled to testify and any privilege with regard to such person's testimony is deemed waived.

(4)(a) Prior to authorizing any release to a less restrictive alternative, the court shall impose such conditions upon the person as are necessary to ensure the safety of the community, which must include, at minimum, the condition that the person will be subject to electronic monitoring that, to the extent feasible, provides real-time tracking, programmable inclusion and exclusion zones, and the ability to provide notifications if the person tampers with the monitoring device or enters an exclusion zone. In imposing conditions, the court must impose a restriction on the proximity of the person's residence to public or private schools providing instruction to kindergarten or any grades one through 12 in accordance with RCW 72.09.340 and to recreational facilities as defined in RCW 36.69.010. Courts shall ((~~require a minimum distance restriction of 500 feet on the proximity of~~)) prohibit the person's residence from having a sight line to any child care facilities ((~~and~~)), public or private schools providing instruction to kindergarten or any grades one through 12, and recreational facilities as defined in RCW 36.69.010, and shall require a minimum distance restriction of 500 feet from such facilities and schools. The court shall order the department of corrections to investigate the less restrictive alternative and, within 60 days of the order to investigate, recommend any additional conditions to the court. These conditions shall be individualized to address the person's specific risk factors and criminogenic needs and may include, but are not limited to, the following: Specification of residence or restrictions on residence including distance restrictions, specification of contact with a reasonable number of individuals upon the person's request who are verified by the department of corrections to be appropriate social contacts, prohibition of contact with potential or

past victims, prohibition of alcohol and other drug use, participation in a specific course of inpatient or outpatient treatment that may include monitoring by the use of polygraph and plethysmograph, monitoring through the use of global positioning system technology, supervision by a department of corrections community corrections officer, a requirement that the person remain within the state unless the person receives prior authorization by the court, and any other conditions that the court determines are in the best interest of the person or others. A copy of the conditions of release shall be given to the person and to any designated service providers.

(b) To the greatest extent possible, the person, person's counsel, prosecuting agency responsible for the initial commitment, treatment provider, supervising community corrections officer, and appropriate clinical staff of the special commitment center shall meet and collaborate to craft individualized, narrowly tailored, and empirically based conditions to present to the court to help facilitate the person's successful transition to the community.

(5)(a) Prior to authorizing release to a less restrictive alternative proposed by the department, the court shall consider whether the person's less restrictive alternative placement is in accordance with fair share principles. To ensure equitable distribution of releases, and prevent the disproportionate grouping of persons subject to less restrictive orders in any one county, or in any one jurisdiction or community within a county, the legislature finds it is appropriate for releases to a less restrictive alternative to occur in a manner that adheres to fair share principles. The legislature recognizes that there may be reasons why the department may not recommend that a person be released to his or her county of commitment, including availability of individualized resources, the person's support needs, or when the court determines that the person's return to his or her county of commitment would be inappropriate considering any court-issued protection orders, victim safety concerns that cannot be addressed through use of global positioning system technology, the unavailability of appropriate treatment or facilities that would adequately protect the community, negative influences on the person, and the location of family or other persons or organizations offering support to the person. If the court authorizes conditional release based on the department's proposal to a county other than the county of commitment, the court

shall enter specific findings regarding its decision and identify whether the release remains in line with fair share principles.

(b)(i) When the department develops a less restrictive alternative placement under this section, it shall attempt to identify a placement satisfying the requirements of RCW 71.09.092 that is aligned with fair share principles. The department shall document its rationale for the recommended placement.

(ii) If the department does not support or recommend conditional release to a less restrictive alternative due to a clinical determination, the department shall document its objection and certify that the department is developing the less restrictive alternative pursuant to a court order and not because of a clinical determination.

(iii) When the department develops or proposes a less restrictive alternative placement under this chapter, it shall be considered a predisposition recommendation.

(iv) In developing, modifying, and enforcing less restrictive alternatives, the department shall be deemed to be performing a quasi-judicial function.

(c) If the committed person is not conditionally released to his or her county of commitment, the department shall provide the law and justice council of the county in which the person is conditionally released with notice and a written explanation, including whether the department remains in compliance with fair share principles regarding releases under this chapter.

(d) For purposes of this section, the person's county of commitment means the county of the court which ordered the person's commitment.

(e) This subsection (5) does not apply to releases to a secure community transition facility under RCW 71.09.250.

(6)(a) When ordered by the court, the department must provide less restrictive alternative treatment that includes, at a minimum:

(i) The services identified in the person's discharge plan as outlined in RCW 71.09.080(4);

(ii) The assignment of a community care coordinator;

(iii) Regular contacts with providers of court-ordered treatment services;

(iv) Community escorts, if needed;

(v) A transition plan that addresses the person's access to continued services upon unconditional discharge;

(vi) Financial support for necessary housing;

(vii) Life skills training and disability accommodations, if needed; and

(viii) Assistance in pursuing benefits, education, and employment.

(b) At the time the department of corrections is ordered to investigate a proposed less restrictive alternative placement, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall assign a social worker to assist the person with discharge planning, pursuing benefits, and coordination of care prior to release.

(i) The social worker shall assist the person with completing applications for benefits prior to the person's release from total confinement.

(ii) To promote continuity of care and the individual's success in the community, the department social worker shall be responsible for initiating a clinical transition of care between the last treating clinician at the special commitment center and the person's designated community treatment provider. This transition between one clinical setting to another shall occur no later than 15 days before an individual's release from the special commitment center.

(iii) If applicable, the social worker shall assist the person with locating any needed disability accommodations in the community and with obtaining resources to help address the person's identified life skills needs prior to release from total confinement.

(7) Any service provider designated to provide inpatient or outpatient treatment shall monthly, or as otherwise directed by the court, submit to the court, to the department of social and health services facility from which the person was released, to the prosecuting agency, and to the supervising community corrections officer, a report stating whether the person is complying with the terms and conditions of the conditional release to a less restrictive alternative.

(8) Each person released to a less restrictive alternative shall have his or her case reviewed by the court that released him or her no later than one year after such release and annually thereafter until the person is unconditionally discharged. Review may occur in a shorter time or more frequently, if the court, in its discretion on its own motion, or on motion of the person, the secretary, or the prosecuting agency so determines. The questions to be determined by

the court are whether the person shall continue to be conditionally released to a less restrictive alternative, and if so, whether a modification to the person's less restrictive alternative order is appropriate to ensure the conditional release remains in the best interest of the person and adequate to protect the victim and the community. The court in making its determination shall be aided by the periodic reports filed pursuant to subsection (7) of this section and the opinions of the secretary and other experts or professional persons.

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