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SB-215 Diversion: mental disorders. (2017-2018)

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Senate Bill No. 215

CHAPTER 1005

An act to amend Section 1001.36 of the Penal Code, relating to diversion.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2018. Filed with Secretary of State September 30, 2018.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 215, Beall. Diversion: mental disorders.

Existing law authorizes a court to grant pretrial diversion, for a period no longer than 2 years, to a defendant suffering from a mental disorder, on an accusatory pleading alleging the commission of a misdemeanor or felony offense, in order to allow the defendant to undergo mental health treatment. Existing law conditions eligibility on, among other criteria, a court finding that the defendant's mental disorder played a significant role in the commission of the charged offense. Existing law requires, if the defendant has performed satisfactorily in diversion, that the court dismiss the defendant's criminal charges, with a record filed with the Department of Justice indicating the disposition of the case diverted, that the arrest is deemed never to have occurred, and requires the court to order access to the record of the arrest restricted, except as specified.

This bill would make defendants ineligible for the diversion program for certain offenses, including murder, voluntary manslaughter, and rape. The bill would authorize a court to require the defendant to make a prima facie showing that the defendant will meet the minimum requirements of eligibility for diversion and that the defendant and the offense are suitable for diversion, as specified. The bill would also require the court, upon request, to conduct a hearing to determine whether restitution is owed to any victim as a result of the diverted offense and, if owed, to order its payment during the period of diversion. The bill would provide that a defendant's inability to pay restitution due to indigence or mental disorder would not be grounds for denial of diversion or a finding that the defendant has failed to comply with the terms of diversion. The bill would also make technical changes.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 1001.36 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

1001.36. (a) On an accusatory pleading alleging the commission of a misdemeanor or felony offense, the court may, after considering the positions of the defense and prosecution, grant pretrial diversion to a defendant pursuant to this section if the defendant meets all of the requirements specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b).

(b) (1) Pretrial diversion may be granted pursuant to this section if all of the following criteria are met:

(A) The court is satisfied that the defendant suffers from a mental disorder as identified in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, including, but not limited to, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder, but excluding antisocial personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, and pedophilia. Evidence of the defendant's mental disorder shall be provided by the defense and shall include a recent diagnosis by a qualified mental health expert. In opining that a defendant suffers from a qualifying disorder, the qualified mental health expert may rely on an examination of the defendant, the defendant's medical records, arrest reports, or any other relevant evidence.

(B) The court is satisfied that the defendant's mental disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the charged offense. A court may conclude that a defendant's mental disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the charged offense if, after reviewing any relevant and credible evidence, including, but not limited to, police reports, preliminary hearing transcripts, witness statements, statements by the defendant's mental health treatment provider, medical records, records or reports by qualified medical experts, or evidence that the defendant displayed symptoms consistent with the relevant mental disorder at or near the time of the offense, the court concludes that the defendant's mental disorder substantially contributed to the defendant's involvement in the commission of the offense.

(C) In the opinion of a qualified mental health expert, the defendant's symptoms of the mental disorder motivating the criminal behavior would respond to mental health treatment.

(D) The defendant consents to diversion and waives his or her right to a speedy trial, unless a defendant has been found to be an appropriate candidate for diversion in lieu of commitment pursuant to clause (iv) of subparagraph (B) paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 1370 and, as a result of his or her mental incompetence, cannot consent to diversion or give a knowing and intelligent waiver of his or her right to a speedy trial.

(E) The defendant agrees to comply with treatment as a condition of diversion.

(F) The court is satisfied that the defendant will not pose an unreasonable risk of danger to public safety, as defined in Section 1170.18, if treated in the community. The court may consider the opinions of the district attorney, the defense, or a qualified mental health expert, and may consider the defendant's violence and criminal history, the current charged offense, and any other factors that the court deems appropriate.

(2) A defendant may not be placed into a diversion program, pursuant to this section, for the following current charged offenses:

(A) Murder or voluntary manslaughter.

(B) An offense for which a person, if convicted, would be required to register pursuant to Section 290, except for a violation of Section 314.

(C) Rape.

(D) Lewd or lascivious act on a child under 14 years of age.

(E) Assault with intent to commit rape, sodomy, or oral copulation, in violation of Section 220.

(F) Commission of rape or sexual penetration in concert with another person, in violation of Section 264.1.

(G) Continuous sexual abuse of a child, in violation of Section 288.5.

(H) A violation of subdivision (b) or (c) of Section 11418.

(3) At any stage of the proceedings, the court may require the defendant to make a prima facie showing that the defendant will meet the minimum requirements of eligibility for diversion and that the defendant and the offense are suitable for diversion. The hearing on the prima facie showing shall be informal and may proceed on offers of proof, reliable hearsay, and argument of counsel. If a prima facie showing is not made, the court may summarily deny the request for diversion or grant any other relief as may be deemed appropriate.

(c) As used in this chapter, "pretrial diversion" means the postponement of prosecution, either temporarily or permanently, at any point in the judicial process from the point at which the accused is charged until adjudication, to allow the defendant to undergo mental health treatment, subject to all of the following:

(1) (A) The court is satisfied that the recommended inpatient or outpatient program of mental health treatment will meet the specialized mental health treatment needs of the defendant.

(B) The defendant may be referred to a program of mental health treatment utilizing existing inpatient or outpatient mental health resources. Before approving a proposed treatment program, the court shall consider the request of the defense, the

request of the prosecution, the needs of the defendant, and the interests of the community. The treatment may be procured using private or public funds, and a referral may be made to a county mental health agency, existing collaborative courts, or assisted outpatient treatment only if that entity has agreed to accept responsibility for the treatment of the defendant, and mental health services are provided only to the extent that resources are available and the defendant is eligible for those services.

(2) The provider of the mental health treatment program in which the defendant has been placed shall provide regular reports to the court, the defense, and the prosecutor on the defendant's progress in treatment.

(3) The period during which criminal proceedings against the defendant may be diverted shall be no longer than two years.

(4) Upon request, the court shall conduct a hearing to determine whether restitution, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 1202.4, is owed to any victim as a result of the diverted offense and, if owed, order its payment during the period of diversion. However, a defendant's inability to pay restitution due to indigence or mental disorder shall not be grounds for denial of diversion or a finding that the defendant has failed to comply with the terms of diversion.

(d) If any of the following circumstances exists, the court shall, after notice to the defendant, defense counsel, and the prosecution, hold a hearing to determine whether the criminal proceedings should be reinstated, whether the treatment should be modified, or whether the defendant should be conserved and referred to the conservatorship investigator of the county of commitment to initiate conservatorship proceedings for the defendant pursuant to Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 5350) of Part 1 of Division 5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code:

(1) The defendant is charged with an additional misdemeanor allegedly committed during the pretrial diversion and that reflects the defendant's propensity for violence.

(2) The defendant is charged with an additional felony allegedly committed during the pretrial diversion.

(3) The defendant is engaged in criminal conduct rendering him or her unsuitable for diversion.

(4) Based on the opinion of a qualified mental health expert whom the court may deem appropriate, either of the following circumstances exists:

(A) The defendant is performing unsatisfactorily in the assigned program.

(B) The defendant is gravely disabled, as defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (h) of Section 5008 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. A defendant shall only be conserved and referred to the conservatorship investigator pursuant to this finding.

(e) If the defendant has performed satisfactorily in diversion, at the end of the period of diversion, the court shall dismiss the defendant's criminal charges that were the subject of the criminal proceedings at the time of the initial diversion. A court may conclude that the defendant has performed satisfactorily if the defendant has substantially complied with the requirements of diversion, has avoided significant new violations of law unrelated to the defendant's mental health condition, and has a plan in place for long-term mental health care. If the court dismisses the charges, the clerk of the court shall file a record with the Department of Justice indicating the disposition of the case diverted pursuant to this section. Upon successful completion of diversion, if the court dismisses the charges, the arrest upon which the diversion was based shall be deemed never to have occurred, and the court shall order access to the record of the arrest restricted in accordance with Section 1001.9, except as specified in subdivisions (g) and (h). The defendant who successfully completes diversion may indicate in response to any question concerning his or her prior criminal record that he or she was not arrested or diverted for the offense, except as specified in subdivision (g).

(f) A record pertaining to an arrest resulting in successful completion of diversion, or any record generated as a result of the defendant's application for or participation in diversion, shall not, without the defendant's consent, be used in any way that could result in the denial of any employment, benefit, license, or certificate.

(g) The defendant shall be advised that, regardless of his or her completion of diversion, both of the following apply:

(1) The arrest upon which the diversion was based may be disclosed by the Department of Justice to any peace officer application request and that, notwithstanding subdivision (f), this section does not relieve the defendant of the obligation to disclose the arrest in response to any direct question contained in any questionnaire or application for a position as a peace officer, as defined in Section 830.

(2) An order to seal records pertaining to an arrest made pursuant to this section has no effect on a criminal justice agency's ability to access and use those sealed records and information regarding sealed arrests, as described in Section 851.92.

(h) A finding that the defendant suffers from a mental disorder, any progress reports concerning the defendant's treatment, or any other records related to a mental disorder that were created as a result of participation in, or completion of, diversion pursuant to this section or for use at a hearing on the defendant's eligibility for diversion under this section may not be used in any other proceeding without the defendant's consent, unless that information is relevant evidence that is admissible under the standards described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) of Section 28 of Article I of the California Constitution. However, when determining whether to exercise its discretion to grant diversion under this section, a court may consider previous records of participation in diversion under this section.

(i) The county agency administering the diversion, the defendant's mental health treatment providers, the public guardian or conservator, and the court shall, to the extent not prohibited by federal law, have access to the defendant's medical and psychological records, including progress reports, during the defendant's time in diversion, as needed, for the purpose of providing care and treatment and monitoring treatment for diversion or conservatorship.