

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2007 SESSION

CHAPTER 510

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-273 and 16.1-278.7 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the investigation of the social history of juveniles prior to commitment.

[H 2660]

Approved March 19, 2007

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 16.1-273 and 16.1-278.7 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 16.1-273. Court may require investigation of social history and preparation of victim impact statement.

A. When a juvenile and domestic relations district court or circuit court has adjudicated any case involving a child subject to the jurisdiction of the court hereunder, except for a traffic violation, a violation of the game and fish law or a violation of any city ordinance regulating surfing or establishing curfew violations, the court before final disposition thereof may require an investigation, which (i) shall include a drug screening and (ii) may, *and for the purposes of § 16.1-278.7 shall*, include the physical, mental and social conditions, including an assessment of any affiliation with a criminal street gang as defined in § 18.2-46.1, and personality of the child and the facts and circumstances surrounding the violation of law. However, in the case of a juvenile adjudicated delinquent on the basis of an act committed on or after January 1, 2000, which would be a felony if committed by an adult, or a violation under Article 1 (§ 18.2-247 et seq.) or Article 1.1 (§ 18.2-265.1 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2 and such offense would be punishable as a Class 1 or Class 2 misdemeanor if committed by an adult, the court shall order the juvenile to undergo a drug screening. If the drug screening indicates that the juvenile has a substance abuse or dependence problem, an assessment shall be completed by a certified substance abuse counselor as defined in § 54.1-3500 employed by the Department of Juvenile Justice or by a locally operated court services unit or by an individual employed by or currently under contract to such agencies and who is specifically trained to conduct such assessments under the supervision of such counselor.

B. The court also shall, on motion of the attorney for the Commonwealth with the consent of the victim, or may in its discretion, require the preparation of a victim impact statement in accordance with the provisions of § 19.2-299.1 if the court determines that the victim may have suffered significant physical, psychological or economic injury as a result of the violation of law.

§ 16.1-278.7. Commitment to Department of Juvenile Justice.

Only a juvenile who is adjudicated as a delinquent and is ~~eleven~~ 11 years of age or older may be committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice. *Unless previously completed, at the time a court commits a child to the Department of Juvenile Justice the court shall order an investigation pursuant to § 16.1-273 to be completed within 15 days.* No juvenile court or circuit court shall order the commitment of any child jointly to the Department of Juvenile Justice and to a local board of social services or transfer the custody of a child jointly to a court service unit of a juvenile court and to a local board of social services. Any person sentenced and committed to an active term of incarceration in the Department of Corrections who is, at the time of such sentencing, in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice, upon pronouncement of sentence, shall be immediately transferred to the Department of Corrections.