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SENATE BILL NO. 216

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee for Courts of Justice
on February 21, 2008)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Edwards)

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 18.2-308.1:3, 19.2-169.2, 37.2-814, and 37.2-819 of the Code of Virginia, relating to temporary detention orders; voluntary and mandatory mental health treatment; purchase of firearms; reporting to Central Criminal Records Exchange.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 18.2-308.1:3, 19.2-169.2, 37.2-814, and 37.2-819 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-308.1:3. Purchase, possession or transportation of firearm by persons involuntarily admitted or ordered to outpatient treatment; penalty.

A. It shall be unlawful for any person involuntarily ~~committed~~ admitted to a facility or ordered to mandatory outpatient treatment pursuant to § 19.2-169.2, involuntarily admitted to a facility or ordered to mandatory outpatient treatment as the result of a commitment hearing pursuant to Article 5 (§ 37.2-814 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 37.2, or who was the subject of a temporary detention order pursuant to § 37.2-809 and subsequently agreed to voluntary admission pursuant to § 37.2-805 to purchase, possess or transport a firearm during the period of such person's commitment. A violation of this subsection shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

B. Any person prohibited from purchasing, possessing or transporting firearms under this section may, at any time following his release from ~~commitment~~ involuntary admission to a facility, his release from an order of mandatory outpatient treatment, or his release from voluntary admission pursuant to § 37.2-805 following the issuance of a temporary detention order, petition the ~~circuit~~ general district court in the city or county in which he resides to restore his right to purchase, possess or transport a firearm. ~~The court may, in its discretion and for good cause shown, If the court determines that the circumstances regarding the disabilities referred to in subsection A and the person's criminal history, treatment record, and reputation are such that the person will not likely act in a manner dangerous to public safety and that granting the relief would not be contrary to the public interest, the court shall grant the petition. Any person denied relief by the general district court may petition the circuit court for a de novo review of the denial. Upon a grant of relief in any court, the court shall enter a written order granting the petition, in which event the provisions of subsection A shall no longer apply. The clerk of court shall certify and forward forthwith to the Central Criminal Records Exchange, on a form provided by the Exchange, a copy of any such order.~~

§ 19.2-169.2. Disposition when defendant found incompetent.

A. Upon finding pursuant to subsection E of § 19.2-169.1 that the defendant, including a juvenile transferred pursuant to § 16.1-269.1, is incompetent, the court shall order that the defendant receive treatment to restore his competency on an outpatient basis or, if the court specifically finds that the defendant requires inpatient hospital treatment, at a hospital designated by the Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services as appropriate for treatment of persons under criminal charge. Any reports submitted pursuant to subsection D of § 19.2-169.1 shall be made available to the director of the community services board or behavioral health authority or his designee or to the director of the treating inpatient facility or his designee.

B. If, at any time after the defendant is ordered to undergo treatment under subsection A of this section, the director of the community services board or behavioral health authority or his designee or the director of the treating inpatient facility or his designee believes the defendant's competency is restored, the director or his designee shall immediately send a report to the court as prescribed in subsection D of § 19.2-169.1. The court shall make a ruling on the defendant's competency according to the procedures specified in subsection E of § 19.2-169.1.

C. The clerk of court shall certify and forward forthwith to the Central Criminal Records Exchange, on a form provided by the Exchange, a copy of an order for treatment issued pursuant to subsection A.

§ 37.2-814. Commitment hearing for involuntary admission; written explanation; right to counsel; rights of petitioner.

A. The commitment hearing for involuntary admission shall be held within 48 hours of the execution of the temporary detention order as provided for in § 37.2-809; however, if the 48-hour period herein specified terminates on a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or day on which the court is lawfully closed, the person may be detained, as herein provided, until the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or day on which the court is lawfully closed.

B. At the commencement of the commitment hearing, the district court judge or special justice shall

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60 inform the person whose involuntary admission is being sought of his right to apply for voluntary
61 admission and treatment as provided for in § 37.2-805 and shall afford the person an opportunity for
62 voluntary admission. *The district court judge or special justice shall advise the person whose*
63 *involuntary admission is being sought that if the person chooses to be voluntarily admitted pursuant to*
64 *§ 37.2-805, such person will be prohibited from possessing or purchasing a firearm pursuant to*
65 *§ 18.2-308:1.3. The judge or special justice shall ascertain if the person is then willing and capable of*
66 *seeking voluntary admission and treatment. If the judge or special justice finds that the person is capable*
67 *and willingly accepts voluntary admission and treatment, the judge or special justice shall require him to*
68 *accept voluntary admission for a minimum period of treatment not to exceed 72 hours. After such*
69 *minimum period of treatment, the person shall give the hospital 48 hours' notice prior to leaving the*
70 *hospital. During this notice period, the person shall not be discharged except as provided in § 37.2-837,*
71 *37.2-838, or 37.2-840. The person shall be subject to the transportation provisions as provided in*
72 *§ 37.2-829 and the requirement for preadmission screening by a community services board or behavioral*
73 *health authority as provided in § 37.2-805.*

74 C. If a person is incapable of accepting or unwilling to accept voluntary admission and treatment, the
75 judge or special justice shall inform the person of his right to a commitment hearing and right to
76 counsel. The judge or special justice shall ascertain if the person whose admission is sought is
77 represented by counsel, and, if he is not represented by counsel, the judge or special justice shall
78 appoint an attorney to represent him. However, if the person requests an opportunity to employ counsel,
79 the judge or special justice shall give him a reasonable opportunity to employ counsel at his own
80 expense.

81 D. A written explanation of the involuntary admission process and the statutory protections
82 associated with the process shall be given to the person, and its contents shall be explained by an
83 attorney prior to the commitment hearing. The written explanation shall describe, at a minimum, the
84 person's rights to (i) retain private counsel or be represented by a court-appointed attorney, (ii) present
85 any defenses including independent evaluation and expert testimony or the testimony of other witnesses,
86 (iii) be present during the hearing and testify, (iv) appeal any order for involuntary admission to the
87 circuit court, and (v) have a jury trial on appeal. The judge or special justice shall ascertain whether the
88 person whose involuntary admission is sought has been given the written explanation required herein.

89 E. To the extent possible, during or before the commitment hearing, the attorney for the person
90 whose involuntary admission is sought shall interview his client, the petitioner, the examiner described
91 in § 37.2-815, the community services board or behavioral health authority staff, and any other material
92 witnesses. He also shall examine all relevant diagnostic and other reports, present evidence and
93 witnesses, if any, on his client's behalf, and otherwise actively represent his client in the proceedings. A
94 health care provider shall disclose or make available all such reports, treatment information, and records
95 concerning his client to the attorney, upon request. The role of the attorney shall be to represent the
96 wishes of his client, to the extent possible.

97 F. The petitioner shall be given adequate notice of the place, date, and time of the commitment
98 hearing. The petitioner shall be entitled to retain counsel at his own expense, to be present during the
99 hearing, and to testify and present evidence. The petitioner shall be encouraged but shall not be required
100 to testify at the hearing, and the person whose involuntary admission is sought shall not be released
101 solely on the basis of the petitioner's failure to attend or testify during the hearing.

102 § 37.2-819. Order of involuntary admission or involuntary outpatient treatment forwarded to CCRE;
103 certain voluntary admissions forwarded to CCRE; firearm background check.

104 ~~The A. Upon receipt of any order from a commitment hearing issued pursuant to this chapter for~~
105 ~~involuntary admission to a facility or for mandatory outpatient treatment, the clerk of court shall, prior~~
106 ~~to the close of that business day, certify and forward forthwith to the Central Criminal Records~~
107 ~~Exchange, on a form provided by the Exchange, a copy of any the order for involuntary admission to a~~
108 ~~facility. The copy of the form and the order shall be kept confidential in a separate file and used only to~~
109 ~~determine a person's eligibility to possess, purchase, or transfer a firearm.~~

110 ~~B. The clerk of court shall also, prior to the close of that business day, forward upon receipt to the~~
111 ~~Central Criminal Records Exchange, on a form provided by the Exchange, certification of any person~~
112 ~~who has been the subject of a temporary detention order pursuant to § 37.2-809, and who, after being~~
113 ~~advised by the judge or special justice that he will be prohibited from possessing a firearm pursuant to~~
114 ~~§ 18.2-308:1.3, subsequently agreed to voluntary admission pursuant to § 37.2-805.~~

115 ~~C. The copy of the forms and orders sent to the Central Criminal Records Exchange pursuant to~~
116 ~~subsection A, and the forms and certifications sent to the Central Criminal Records Exchange regarding~~
117 ~~voluntary admission pursuant to subsection B, shall be kept confidential in a separate file and used only~~
118 ~~to determine a person's eligibility to possess, purchase, or transfer a firearm. No medical records shall~~
119 ~~be forwarded to the Central Criminal Records Exchange with any form, order, or certification required~~
120 ~~by subsection A or B. The Department of State Police shall forward only a person's eligibility to~~
121 ~~possess, purchase, or transfer a firearm to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.~~