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HOUSE BILL NO. 232

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled December 28, 2013

A BILL to amend and reenact § 19.2-303.5 of the Code of Virginia, relating to immediate sanction probation program; expansion.

Patron—Bell, Robert B.

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 19.2-303.5 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 19.2-303.5. Immediate sanction probation programs.**

There may be established in the Commonwealth up to ~~two~~ *four* immediate sanction probation programs in accordance with the following provisions:

1. As a condition of a sentence suspended pursuant to § 19.2-303, a court may order a defendant convicted of a crime, other than a violent crime as defined in subsection C of § 17.1-805, to participate in an immediate sanction probation program.

2. If a participating offender fails to comply with any term or condition of his probation and the alleged probation violation is not that the offender committed a new crime or infraction, (i) his probation officer shall immediately issue a noncompliance letter pursuant to § 53.1-149 authorizing his arrest at any location in the Commonwealth and (ii) his probation violation hearing shall take priority on the court's docket. The probation officer may, in any event, exercise any other lawful authority he may have with respect to the offender.

3. When a participating offender is arrested pursuant to subdivision 2, the court shall conduct an immediate sanction hearing unless (i) the alleged probation violation is that the offender committed a new crime or infraction; (ii) the alleged probation violation is that the offender absconded for more than seven days; or (iii) the offender, attorney for the Commonwealth, or the court objects to such immediate sanction hearing. If the court conducts an immediate sanction hearing, it shall proceed pursuant to subdivision 4. Otherwise, the court shall proceed pursuant to § 19.2-306.

4. At the immediate sanction hearing, the court shall receive the noncompliance letter, which shall be admissible as evidence, and may receive other evidence. If the court finds good cause to believe that the offender has violated the terms or conditions of his probation, it may (i) revoke no more than 30 days of the previously suspended sentence and (ii) continue or modify any existing terms and conditions of probation. If the court does not modify the terms and conditions of probation or remove the defendant from the program, the previously ordered terms and conditions of probation shall continue to apply. The court may remove the offender from the immediate sanction probation program at any time.

5. The provisions of this section shall expire on July 1, ~~2012~~ *2016*.

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