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SENATE BILL NO. 460

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 9, 2024

A *BILL to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-338 and 16.1-339 of the Code of Virginia, relating to parental admission of minors for inpatient treatment.*

Patron—Marsden

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 16.1-338 and 16.1-339 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 16.1-338. Parental admission of minors younger than 14 and nonobjecting minors 14 years of age or older.

A. A minor younger than 14 years of age may be admitted to a willing mental health facility for inpatient treatment *related to mental illness or substance abuse* upon application and with the consent of a parent. A minor 14 years of age or older may be admitted to a willing mental health facility for inpatient treatment *related to mental illness or substance abuse* upon the joint application and consent of the minor and the minor's parent.

B. Admission of a minor under this section shall be approved by a qualified evaluator who has conducted a personal examination of the minor within 48 hours after admission and has made the following written findings:

1. The minor appears to have a mental illness, *which may include substance abuse*, serious enough to warrant inpatient treatment and is reasonably likely to benefit from the treatment; and

2. The minor has been provided with a clinically appropriate explanation of the nature and purpose of the treatment; and

3. If the minor is 14 years of age or older, that he has been provided with an explanation of his rights under this Act as they would apply if he were to object to admission, and that he has consented to admission; and

4. All available modalities of treatment less restrictive than inpatient treatment have been considered and no less restrictive alternative is available that would offer comparable benefits to the minor.

If admission is sought to a state hospital, the community services board serving the area in which the minor resides shall provide, in lieu of the examination required by this section, a preadmission screening report conducted by an employee or designee of the community services board and shall ensure that the necessary written findings have been made before approving the admission. A copy of the written findings of the evaluation or preadmission screening report required by this section shall be provided to the consenting parent and the parent shall have the opportunity to discuss the findings with the qualified evaluator or employee or designee of the community services board.

C. Within 10 days after the admission of a minor under this section, the director of the facility or the director's designee shall ensure that an individualized plan of treatment has been prepared by the provider responsible for the minor's treatment and has been explained to the parent consenting to the admission and to the minor. The minor shall be involved in the preparation of the plan to the maximum feasible extent consistent with his ability to understand and participate, and the minor's family shall be involved to the maximum extent consistent with the minor's treatment needs. The plan shall include a preliminary plan for placement and aftercare upon completion of inpatient treatment and shall include specific behavioral and emotional goals against which the success of treatment may be measured. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the minor and to his parents.

D. If the parent who consented to a minor's admission under this section revokes his consent at any time, or if a minor 14 or older objects at any time to further treatment, the minor shall be discharged within 48 hours to the custody of such consenting parent unless the minor's continued hospitalization is authorized pursuant to § 16.1-339, 16.1-340.1, or 16.1-345. If the 48-hour time period expires on a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday or day on which the court is lawfully closed, the 48 hours shall extend to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday or day on which the court is lawfully closed. If a minor 14 or older objects to further treatment, the mental health facility shall (i) immediately notify the consenting parent of the minor's objections and (ii) provide to the consenting parent a summary, prepared by the Office of the Attorney General, of the procedures for requesting continued treatment of the minor pursuant to § 16.1-339, 16.1-340.1, or 16.1-345.

E. Inpatient treatment of a minor hospitalized under this section may not exceed 90 consecutive days unless it has been authorized by appropriate hospital medical personnel, based upon their written

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59 findings that the criteria set forth in subsection B of this section continue to be met, after such persons
60 have examined the minor and interviewed the consenting parent and reviewed reports submitted by
61 members of the facility staff familiar with the minor's condition.

62 F. Any minor admitted under this section while younger than 14 and his consenting parent shall be
63 informed orally and in writing by the director of the facility for inpatient treatment within 10 days of his
64 fourteenth birthday that continued voluntary treatment under the authority of this section requires his
65 consent.

66 G. Any minor 14 years of age or older who joins in an application and consents to admission
67 pursuant to subsection A, shall, in addition to his parent, have the right to access his health information.
68 The concurrent authorization of both the parent and the minor shall be required to disclose such minor's
69 health information.

70 H. A minor who has been hospitalized while properly detained by a juvenile and domestic relations
71 district court or circuit court shall be returned to the detention home, shelter care, or other facility
72 approved by the Department of Juvenile Justice by the sheriff serving the jurisdiction where the minor
73 was detained within 24 hours following completion of a period of inpatient treatment, unless the court
74 having jurisdiction over the case orders that the minor be released from custody.

75 **§ 16.1-339. Parental admission of an objecting minor 14 years of age or older.**

76 A. A minor 14 years of age or older who (i) objects to admission or (ii) is incapable of making an
77 informed decision may be admitted to a willing facility for up to 120 hours, pending the review required
78 by subsections B and C, upon the application of a parent. If admission is sought to a state hospital, the
79 community services board serving the area in which the minor resides shall provide the preadmission
80 screening report required by subsection B of § 16.1-338 and shall ensure that the necessary written
81 findings, except the minor's consent, have been made before approving the admission. *A temporary*
82 *detention order under § 16.1-340.1 shall not be required for a minor to be admitted to a willing facility*
83 *upon the application of a parent pursuant to this section.*

84 B. A minor admitted under this section shall be examined within 24 hours of his admission by a
85 qualified evaluator designated by the community services board serving the area where the facility is
86 located. If the 24-hour time period expires on a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or day on which the
87 court is lawfully closed, the 24 hours shall extend to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, legal
88 holiday, or day on which the court is lawfully closed. The evaluator shall prepare a report that shall
89 include written findings as to whether:

90 1. The minor appears to have a mental illness, *which may include substance abuse*, serious enough to
91 warrant inpatient treatment and is reasonably likely to benefit from the treatment;

92 2. The minor has been provided with a clinically appropriate explanation of the nature and purpose
93 of the treatment; and

94 3. All available modalities of treatment less restrictive than inpatient treatment have been considered
95 and no less restrictive alternative is available that would offer comparable benefits to the minor.

96 The qualified evaluator shall submit his report to the juvenile and domestic relations district court for
97 the jurisdiction in which the facility is located.

98 C. Upon admission of a minor under this section, the facility shall file a petition for judicial approval
99 no sooner than 24 hours and no later than 120 hours after admission with the juvenile and domestic
100 relations district court for the jurisdiction in which the facility is located. To the extent available, the
101 petition shall contain the information required by § 16.1-339.1. A copy of this petition shall be
102 delivered to the minor's consenting parent. Upon receipt of the petition and of the evaluator's report
103 submitted pursuant to subsection B, the judge shall appoint a guardian ad litem for the minor and
104 counsel to represent the minor, unless it has been determined that the minor has retained counsel. A
105 copy of the evaluator's report shall be provided to the minor's counsel and guardian ad litem. The court
106 and the guardian ad litem shall review the petition and evaluator's report and shall ascertain the views of
107 the minor, the minor's consenting parent, the evaluator, and the attending psychiatrist. The court shall
108 conduct its review in such place and manner, including the facility, as it deems to be in the best
109 interests of the minor. Based upon its review and the recommendations of the guardian ad litem, the
110 court shall order one of the following dispositions:

111 1. If the court finds that the minor does not meet the criteria for admission specified in subsection B,
112 the court shall issue an order directing the facility to release the minor into the custody of the parent
113 who consented to the minor's admission. However, nothing herein shall be deemed to affect the terms
114 and provisions of any valid court order of custody affecting the minor.

115 2. If the court finds that the minor meets the criteria for admission specified in subsection B, the
116 court shall issue an order authorizing continued hospitalization of the minor for up to 90 days on the
117 basis of the parent's consent.

118 Within 10 days after the admission of a minor under this section, the director of the facility or the
119 director's designee shall ensure that an individualized plan of treatment has been prepared by the
120 provider responsible for the minor's treatment and has been explained to the parent consenting to the

admission and to the minor. A copy of the plan shall also be provided to the guardian ad litem and to counsel for the minor. The minor shall be involved in the preparation of the plan to the maximum feasible extent consistent with his ability to understand and participate, and the minor's family shall be involved to the maximum extent consistent with the minor's treatment needs. The plan shall include a preliminary plan for placement and aftercare upon completion of inpatient treatment and shall include specific behavioral and emotional goals against which the success of treatment may be measured.

3. If the court determines that the available information is insufficient to permit an informed determination regarding whether the minor meets the criteria specified in subsection B, the court shall schedule a commitment hearing that shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures specified in §§ 16.1-341 through 16.1-345. The minor may be detained in the hospital for up to 120 additional hours pending the holding of the commitment hearing.

D. A minor admitted under this section who rescinds his objection may be retained in the hospital pursuant to § 16.1-338.

E. If the parent who consented to a minor's admission under this section revokes his consent at any time, the minor shall be released within 48 hours to the parent's custody unless the minor's continued hospitalization is authorized pursuant to § 16.1-340.1 or 16.1-345. If the 48-hour time period expires on a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or day on which the court is lawfully closed, the 48 hours shall extend to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or day on which the court is lawfully closed.

F. A minor who has been hospitalized while properly detained by a juvenile and domestic relations district court or circuit court shall be returned to the detention home, shelter care, or other facility approved by the Department of Juvenile Justice by the sheriff serving the jurisdiction where the minor was detained within 24 hours following completion of a period of inpatient treatment, unless the court having jurisdiction over the case orders that the minor be released from custody.