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SENATE BILL NO. 654

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee for Courts of Justice
on February 16, 2024)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Williams Graves)

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-349 and 19.2-354 of the Code of Virginia, relating to fines, costs, forfeitures, penalties, and restitution; collection fees; assessment against incarcerated defendant; deferred payment agreement.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 19.2-349 and 19.2-354 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-349. Responsibility for collections; clerks to report unsatisfied fines, etc.; duty of attorneys for Commonwealth; duties of Department of Taxation.

A. The clerk of the circuit court and district court of every county and city shall submit to the judge of his court, the Department of Taxation, the State Compensation Board, and the attorney for the Commonwealth of his county or city a monthly report of all fines, costs, forfeitures, and penalties ~~which~~ *that* are delinquent more than ~~90~~ 180 days, including court-ordered restitution of a sum certain, imposed in his court for a violation of state law or a local ordinance ~~which that~~ remain unsatisfied, including those ~~which that~~ are delinquent in installment payments. The monthly report shall include the social security number or driver's license number of the defendant, if known, and such other information as the Department of Taxation and the Compensation Board deem appropriate. The Executive Secretary shall make the report required by this subsection on behalf of those clerks who participate in the Supreme Court's automated information system.

B. The clerk of the circuit court and district court of every county and city shall submit quarterly to the attorney for the Commonwealth of his county or city and any probation agency that serves such county or city:

1. A list of all defendants with an outstanding balance of restitution ordered by the court served by such clerk. Such report shall include the defendant's name, case number, total amount of restitution ordered, amount of restitution remaining due, and last date of payment; and

2. A list of all accounts where more than ~~90~~ 180 days have passed since an account was sent to collections and no payments have been made toward fines, costs, forfeitures, penalties, or restitution. For accounts where restitution is owed, such report shall include the defendant's name, case number, and total amount of restitution and restitution interest due.

C. It shall be the duty of the attorney for the Commonwealth to cause proper proceedings to be instituted for the collection and satisfaction of all fines, costs, forfeitures, penalties, and restitution. The attorney for the Commonwealth shall determine whether it would be impractical or uneconomical for such service to be rendered by the office of the attorney for the Commonwealth. If the defendant does not enter into an installment payment agreement under § 19.2-354, the attorney for the Commonwealth and the clerk may agree to a process by which collection activity may be commenced ~~90~~ 180 days after judgment.

If the attorney for the Commonwealth does not undertake collection, he shall contract with (i) private attorneys or private collection agencies, (ii) enter into an agreement with a local governing body, (iii) enter into an agreement with the county or city treasurer, or (iv) use the services of the Department of Taxation, upon such terms and conditions as may be established by guidelines promulgated by the Office of the Attorney General, the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court with the Department of Taxation and the Compensation Board. If the attorney for the Commonwealth undertakes collection, he shall follow the procedures established by the Department of Taxation and the Compensation Board. Such guidelines shall not supersede contracts between attorneys for the Commonwealth and private attorneys and collection agencies when active collection efforts are being undertaken. As part of such contract, private attorneys or collection agencies shall be given access to the social security number of the defendant in order to assist in the collection effort. Any such private attorney shall be subject to the penalties and provisions of § 18.2-186.3.

The fees of any private attorneys or collection agencies shall be paid on a contingency fee basis out of the proceeds of the amounts collected. However, in no event shall such attorney or collection agency receive a fee for amounts collected by the Department of Taxation under the Setoff Debt Collection Act (§ 58.1-520 et seq.). A local treasurer undertaking collection pursuant to an agreement with the attorney for the Commonwealth may collect the administrative fee authorized by § 58.1-3958.

D. The Department of Taxation and the State Compensation Board shall be responsible for the collection of any judgment which remains unsatisfied or does not meet the conditions of § 19.2-354. Persons owing such unsatisfied judgments or failing to comply with installment payment agreements

60 under § 19.2-354 shall be subject to the delinquent tax collection provisions of Title 58.1. The
61 Department of Taxation and the State Compensation Board shall establish procedures to be followed by
62 clerks of courts, attorneys for the Commonwealth, other state agencies and any private attorneys or
63 collection agents and may employ private attorneys or collection agencies, or engage other state agencies
64 to collect the judgment. The Department of Taxation and the Commonwealth shall be entitled to deduct
65 a fee for services from amounts collected for violations of local ordinances.

66 The Department of Taxation and the State Compensation Board shall annually report to the Governor
67 and the General Assembly the total of fines, costs, forfeitures, and penalties assessed, collected, and
68 unpaid and those which remain unsatisfied or do not meet the conditions of § 19.2-354 by each circuit
69 and district court. The report shall include the procedures established by the Department of Taxation and
70 the State Compensation Board pursuant to this section and a plan for increasing the collection of unpaid
71 fines, costs, forfeitures, and penalties. The Auditor of Public Accounts shall annually report to the
72 Governor, the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court, and the General Assembly as to the adherence
73 of clerks of courts, attorneys for the Commonwealth, and other state agencies to the procedures
74 established by the Department of Taxation and the State Compensation Board.

75 The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court shall annually report to the Governor,
76 the General Assembly, the Chairmen of the House Committee for Courts of Justice and Senate
77 Committee on the Judiciary, and the Virginia State Crime Commission on the total of restitution
78 assessed, collected, and unpaid for each circuit and district court and the total of restitution collected and
79 deposited into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund pursuant to subsection I of § 19.2-305.1 by each
80 circuit and district court.

81 E. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any orders of restitution docketed in the name of
82 the victim or when it is ordered that an assignment of the judgment for restitution to the victim be
83 docketed.

84 **§ 19.2-354. Authority of court to order payment of fine, costs, forfeitures, penalties or**
85 **restitution in installments or upon other terms and conditions; community work in lieu of**
86 **payment.**

87 A. Any defendant convicted of a traffic infraction or a violation of any criminal law of the
88 Commonwealth or of any political subdivision thereof, or found not innocent in the case of a juvenile,
89 who is sentenced to pay a fine, restitution, forfeiture, or penalty may pay such fine, restitution,
90 forfeiture, or penalty and any costs that the defendant may be required to pay in deferred payments or
91 installments. The court assessing the fine, restitution, forfeiture, or penalty and costs shall authorize the
92 clerk to establish and approve individual deferred or installment payment agreements. If the defendant
93 owes court-ordered restitution and enters into a deferred or installment payment agreement, any moneys
94 collected pursuant to such agreement shall be used first to satisfy such restitution order and any
95 collection costs associated with restitution prior to being used to satisfy any other fine, forfeiture,
96 penalty, or cost owed, unless an order for restitution is docketed in the name of the victim or it is
97 ordered that an assignment of the judgment to the victim be docketed. Any payment agreement
98 authorized under this section shall be consistent with the provisions of § 19.2-354.1. The requirements
99 set forth in § 19.2-354.1 shall be posted in the clerk's office and on the court's website, if a website is
100 available. As a condition of every such agreement, a defendant who enters into an installment or
101 deferred payment agreement shall promptly inform the court of any change of mailing address during
102 the term of the agreement. If the defendant is unable to make payment within 90 days of sentencing, the
103 court may assess a one-time fee not to exceed \$10 to cover the costs of management of the defendant's
104 account until such account is paid in full. This one-time fee shall not apply to cases in which costs are
105 assessed pursuant to § 17.1-275.1, 17.1-275.2, 17.1-275.3, 17.1-275.4, 17.1-275.7, 17.1-275.8, or
106 17.1-275.9. Installment or deferred payment agreements shall include terms for payment if the defendant
107 participates in a program as provided in subsection B or C. The court, if such sum or sums are not paid
108 in full by the date ordered, shall proceed in accordance with § 19.2-358.

109 B. When a person sentenced to the Department of Corrections or a local correctional facility owes
110 any fines, costs, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, he shall be required as a condition of participating
111 in any work release, home/electronic incarceration, or nonconsecutive days program as set forth in
112 § 53.1-60, 53.1-131, 53.1-131.1, or 53.1-131.2 to either make full payment or make payments in
113 accordance with his installment or deferred payment agreement while participating in such program. If,
114 after the person has an installment or deferred payment agreement, the person fails to pay as ordered,
115 his participation in the program may be terminated until all fines, costs, forfeitures, restitution, and
116 penalties are satisfied. The Director of the Department of Corrections and any sheriff or other
117 administrative head of any local correctional facility shall withhold such ordered payments from any
118 amounts due to such person. Distribution of the moneys collected shall be made in the following order
119 of priority to:

120 1. Meet the obligation of any judicial or administrative order to provide support and such funds shall
121 be disbursed according to the terms of such order;

- 122 2. Pay any restitution as ordered by the court;
123 3. Pay any fines or costs as ordered by the court;
124 4. Pay travel and other such expenses made necessary by his work release employment or
125 participation in an education or rehabilitative program, including the sums specified in § 53.1-150; and
126 5. Defray the offender's keep.

127 The balance shall be credited to the offender's account or sent to his family in an amount the
128 offender so chooses.

129 The State Board of Local and Regional Jails shall promulgate regulations governing the receipt of
130 wages paid to persons sentenced to local correctional facilities participating in such programs, the
131 withholding of payments, and the disbursement of appropriate funds. The Director of the Department of
132 Corrections shall prescribe rules governing the receipt of wages paid to persons sentenced to state
133 correctional facilities participating in such programs, the withholding of payments, and the disbursement
134 of appropriate funds.

135 C. The court shall establish a program and may provide an option to any person upon whom a fine
136 and costs have been imposed to discharge all or part of the fine or costs by earning credits for the
137 performance of community service work (i) before or after imprisonment or (ii) in accordance with the
138 provisions of § 19.2-316.4, 53.1-59, 53.1-60, 53.1-128, 53.1-129, or 53.1-131 during imprisonment. The
139 program shall specify the rate at which credits are earned and provide for the manner of applying earned
140 credits against the fine or costs. The court assessing the fine or costs against a person shall inform such
141 person of the availability of earning credit toward discharge of the fine or costs through the performance
142 of community service work under this program and provide such person with written notice of terms
143 and conditions of this program. The court shall have such other authority as is reasonably necessary for
144 or incidental to carrying out this program.

145 D. When the court has authorized deferred payment or installment payments, the clerk shall give
146 notice to the defendant that upon his failure to pay as ordered he may be fined or imprisoned pursuant
147 to § 19.2-358.

148 E. The failure of the defendant to enter into a deferred payment or installment payment agreement
149 with the court or the failure of the defendant to make payments as ordered by the agreement shall allow
150 the Tax Commissioner to act in accordance with § 19.2-349 to collect all fines, costs, forfeitures, and
151 penalties.

152 *F. For any defendant sentenced to an active term of incarceration and ordered to pay any fine, cost,*
153 *forfeiture, or penalty related to the charge that such defendant is incarcerated for, or any other charge*
154 *for which such defendant was sentenced on the same day, the court shall enter such defendant into a*
155 *deferred payment agreement, as defined in § 19.2-354.1, for such fines, costs, forfeitures, or penalties.*
156 *The due date for such deferred payment agreement shall be set no earlier than the defendant's*
157 *scheduled release from incarceration on the charge for which such defendant received the longest*
158 *period of active incarceration.*

159 **2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2025.**