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H.937

An act relating to miscellaneous judiciary procedures

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. chapter 7 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 7. ATTORNEY GENERAL

* * *

Subchapter 3. Profits from Crime

§ 171. DEFINITION

As used in this subchapter, “profits from crimes” means:

(1) any property obtained through or income generated from the commission of a crime in which the defendant was convicted;

(2) any property obtained by or income generated from the sale, conversion, or exchange of proceeds of a crime, including any gain realized by such sale, conversion, or exchange;

(3) any property that the defendant obtained or any income generated as a result of having committed the crime, including any assets obtained through the use of unique knowledge acquired during the commission of or in preparation for the commission of the crime, as well as any property obtained or income generated from the sale, conversion, or exchange of such property and any gain realized by such sale, conversion, or exchange; and

1 (4) any property that the defendant obtained or any income generated
2 from the sale of tangible property the value of which is increased by the
3 notoriety gained from the conviction of an offense by the person accused or
4 convicted of the crime.

5 § 172. NOTICE OF PROFITS FROM A CRIME

6 (a) Every person, firm, corporation, partnership, association, or other legal
7 entity that knowingly contracts for, pays, or agrees to pay any profits from a
8 crime, as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5351(8), to a person charged with or
9 convicted of that crime shall give written notice to the Attorney General of the
10 payment or obligation to pay as soon as is practicable after discovering that the
11 payment is or will be a profit from a crime.

12 (b) The Attorney General, upon receipt of notice of a contract, agreement
13 to pay, or payment of profits of the crime shall send written notice of the
14 existence of such profits to all known victims of the crime at their last known
15 addresses.

16 § 173. ACTIONS TO RECOVER PROFITS FROM A CRIME

17 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including any statute of
18 limitations, any crime victim shall have the right to bring a civil action in a
19 court of competent jurisdiction to recover money damages from a person
20 convicted of that crime, or the legal representative of that convicted person,
21 within three years after the discovery of any profits from the crime. Any

1 damages awarded in such action shall be recoverable only up to the value of
2 the profits of the crime. This section shall not limit the right of a victim to
3 proceed or recover under another cause of action.

4 (b) The Attorney General may, within three years after the discovery of any
5 profits from the crime, bring a civil action on behalf of the State to enforce the
6 subrogation rights described in 13 V.S.A. § 5357.

7 (c) If the full value of any profits from the crime has not yet been claimed
8 by either the victim of the crime or the victim's representative, the Attorney
9 General, or both, within three years after the discovery of such profits, then the
10 State may bring a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover
11 the costs incurred by providing the defendant with counsel, if any, and other
12 costs reasonably incurred or to be incurred in the incarceration of the
13 defendant.

14 (d) Upon the filing of an action pursuant to subsection (a) of this section,
15 the victim shall deliver a copy of the summons and complaint to the Attorney
16 General. Upon receipt of a copy of the summons and complaint, the Attorney
17 General shall send written notice of the alleged existence of profits from the
18 crime to all other known victims at their last known addresses.

19 (e) To avoid the wasting of assets identified in the complaint as newly
20 discovered profits of the crime, the Attorney General, acting on behalf of the

1 plaintiff and all other victims, shall have the right to apply for all remedies that
2 are also otherwise available to the victim.

3 Sec. 2. 7 V.S.A. § 656 is amended to read:

4 § 656. PERSON 12 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND UNDER 21 YEARS
5 OF AGE MISREPRESENTING AGE, PROCURING, POSSESSING,
6 OR CONSUMING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES; IMPAIRED
7 DRIVING; POSSESSION OF CANNABIS; CIVIL VIOLATION

8 * * *

9 (b) Prohibited conduct; offenses.

10 (1) Prohibited conduct. A person 12 years of age or older and under 21
11 years of age shall not:

12 (A) Falsely represent the person's age for the purpose of procuring or
13 attempting to procure malt or vinous beverages, ready-to-drink spirits
14 beverages, spirits, or fortified wines from any licensee, State liquor agency, or
15 other person or persons.

16 (B) Possess malt or vinous beverages, ready-to-drink spirits
17 beverages, spirits, or fortified wines for the purpose of consumption by the
18 person or other minors, except in the regular performance of duties as an
19 employee of a licensee licensed to sell alcoholic liquor.

1 (C) Knowingly and unlawfully possess one ounce or less of cannabis
2 or five grams or less of hashish or two mature cannabis plants or fewer or four
3 immature cannabis plants or fewer.

4 (D) Consume malt or vinous beverages, ready-to-drink spirits
5 beverages, spirits, or fortified wines. A violation of this subdivision may be
6 prosecuted in a jurisdiction where the person has consumed malt or vinous
7 beverages, ready-to-drink spirits beverages, spirits, or fortified wines or in a
8 jurisdiction where the indicators of consumption are observed.

9 (E) Operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control on a
10 highway of a vehicle when the person's blood alcohol concentration is 0.02 or
11 more.

12 (2) Procurement, possession, or consumption penalties. A person who
13 knowingly violates any of subdivisions (1)(A)–(D) of this subsection commits
14 a civil violation and shall be referred to the Court Diversion Program for the
15 purpose of enrollment in the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program. A
16 person who fails to complete the program successfully commits a civil
17 violation under the jurisdiction of the Judicial Bureau and shall be subject to
18 the following:

19 (A) a civil penalty of \$300.00 and suspension of the person's
20 operator's license and privilege to operate a motor vehicle for a period of 30

1 days, for a first offense and shall be automatically reinstated after the 30-day
2 period; and

3 (B) a civil penalty of not more than \$600.00 and suspension of the
4 person's operator's license and privilege to operate a motor vehicle for a
5 period of 90 days, for a second or subsequent offense and shall be
6 automatically reinstated after the 90-day period.

7 * * *

8 Sec. 3. 7 V.S.A. § 1005 is amended to read:

9 § 1005. PERSONS 12 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND UNDER 21
10 YEARS OF AGE; POSSESSION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS;
11 MISREPRESENTING AGE OR PURCHASING TOBACCO
12 PRODUCTS; PENALTY

13 (a)(1) A person 12 years of age or older and under 21 years of age shall not
14 possess, purchase, or attempt to purchase tobacco products, tobacco
15 substitutes, or tobacco paraphernalia unless:

16 (A) the person is an employee of a holder of a tobacco license and is
17 in possession of tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco
18 paraphernalia to effect a sale in the course of employment; or

19 (B) the person is in possession of tobacco products or tobacco
20 paraphernalia in connection with Indigenous cultural tobacco practices.

1 (2) A person 12 years of age or older and under 21 years of age shall not
2 misrepresent ~~his or her~~ the person's age to purchase or attempt to purchase
3 tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco paraphernalia.

4 (b) A person who possesses tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or
5 tobacco paraphernalia in violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be
6 subject to having the tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco
7 paraphernalia immediately confiscated and shall be further subject to a civil
8 penalty of \$25.00. An action under this subsection shall be brought in the
9 same manner as a traffic violation pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 24.

10 (c) A person 12 years of age or older and under 21 years of age who
11 misrepresents the person's age by presenting false identification to purchase
12 tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco paraphernalia shall be subject
13 to a civil penalty of not more than \$50.00 or provide up to 10 hours of
14 community service, or both.

15 Sec. 4. 12 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

16 § 5. DISSEMINATION OF ELECTRONIC CASE RECORDS

17 (a) The Court shall not permit public access via the internet to ~~criminal,~~
18 family, or probate case records. ~~The Court may permit criminal justice~~
19 ~~agencies, as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a, internet access to criminal case~~
20 ~~records for criminal justice purposes, as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a.~~

1 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Court shall provide
2 licensed Vermont attorneys in good standing with access via the internet,
3 through the Judiciary's public portal website or otherwise, to nonconfidential
4 ~~criminal~~, family, and probate case records.

5 (c) Procedures governing public access via the internet to criminal case
6 records shall be set forth in rules promulgated by the Court.

7 (d) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the Court from providing
8 electronic access to:

9 (1) court schedules of the Superior Court ~~or opinions of the Criminal~~
10 ~~Division of the Superior Court;~~

11 (2) State agencies in accordance with data dissemination contracts
12 entered into under Rule 12 of the Vermont Rules for Public Access to Court
13 Records; or

14 (3) decisions, recordings of oral arguments, briefs, and printed cases of
15 the Supreme Court.

16 Sec. 5. 12 V.S.A. § 506 is amended to read:

17 § 506. JUDGMENTS

18 (a) Actions on judgments and actions for the renewal or revival of
19 judgments shall be brought in the Civil Division of the Superior Court by filing
20 a new and independent action on the judgment within eight years after the
21 rendition of the judgment, and not after.

1 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Family Division of
2 the Superior Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction over actions on judgments
3 issued by the Family Division.

4 (1) Renewal of a Family Division judgment for money or property shall
5 be initiated specifically by a motion to renew in the county that issued the
6 underlying judgment within eight years after the rendition of the judgment or
7 when the last payment or action required is due, whichever occurs last, except
8 that orders awarding or conveying real estate shall not be subject to a statutory
9 limitation. A motion to renew a Family Division judgment for money or
10 property shall be served upon all respondent parties in the manner prescribed
11 for the filing of a new action for divorce or parentage. A judgment issued by
12 the Family Division pursuant to a motion to renew such a judgment shall
13 restart the eight-year limitation on actions on judgments.

14 (2) The filing of a motion to renew shall toll the statute of limitations
15 until the court rules upon the motion.

16 (3) Any of the following shall restart the statutory limitation in
17 subdivision (1) of this subsection:

18 (A) a written, signed acknowledgement of the debt, action, or
19 obligation ordered in the judgment;

20 (B) any payment made by an obligor on a Family Division judgment,
21 including by wage withholding;

1 (C) any affirmation action taken by an obligor toward compliance
2 with the provisions of a Family Division judgment; or

3 (D) any payment made by a third party on behalf of the obligor
4 specifically toward the Family Division judgment.

5 (4) All property or money judgments issued by the Family Division
6 shall bear the following statement: “RENEWAL OF A FAMILY DIVISION
7 JUDGMENT FOR MONEY OR PROPERTY SHALL BE INITIATED BY
8 MOTION TO RENEW WITHIN EIGHT YEARS AFTER RENDITION OF
9 THE JUDGMENT OR WHEN THE LAST PAYMENT OR ACTION
10 REQUIRED IS DUE, WHICHEVER OCCURS LAST, OR IT CANNOT BE
11 ENFORCED.”

12 Sec. 6. 12 V.S.A. § 2683 is amended to read:

13 § 2683. EXECUTIONS ON JUDGMENTS OF ~~DISTRICT~~ SUPERIOR
14 COURTS; TIME

15 Executions issued upon a judgment rendered by a ~~District Court~~ Superior
16 Court shall be made returnable within 60 days from the date thereof. Such
17 executions may be issued so long as the judgment remains unsatisfied, but not
18 after eight years from the date of rendition of the judgment.

1 Sec. 7. 12 V.S.A. § 4601 is amended to read:

2 § 4601. ~~APPEALS IN FORECLOSURE ACTIONS~~

3 ~~When a judgment is for the foreclosure of a mortgage, permission of the~~
4 ~~court shall be required for review. [Repealed.]~~

5 Sec. 8. 12 V.S.A. § 5131 is amended to read:

6 § 5131. DEFINITIONS

7 As used in this chapter:

8 (1)(A) “Course of conduct” means:

9 (i) two or more acts over a period of time, however short, in which
10 a person follows, monitors, surveils, threatens, or makes threats about another
11 person, or interferes with another person’s property; or

12 (ii) use of any electronic, digital, or precise geolocation device or
13 software or application to surveil a specific person or a specific person’s
14 internet or wireless activity continuously for 12 hours or more or on two or
15 more occasions over a period of time, however short, without authorization.

16 (B) This definition shall apply to acts conducted by the person
17 directly or indirectly, and by any action, method, device, or means.

18 Constitutionally protected activity is not included within the meaning of
19 “course of conduct.”

1 (C) As used in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1);

2 (i) threaten shall not be construed to require an express or overt
3 threat; and

4 (ii) course of conduct shall not be construed to require that the two
5 or more acts occur on separate calendar days.

6 * * *

7 (6) “Stalk” means to engage purposefully in a course of conduct directed
8 at a specific person that the person engaging in the conduct knows or should
9 know would cause a reasonable person to:

10 (A) fear for the person’s safety or the safety of a family member; or

11 (B) suffer substantial emotional distress as evidenced by:

12 (i) a fear of unlawful sexual conduct, unlawful restraint, bodily
13 injury, or death; or

14 (ii) significant modifications in the person’s actions or routines,
15 including moving from an established residence, changes to established daily
16 routes to and from work that cause a serious disruption in the person’s life,
17 changes to the person’s employment or work schedule, or the loss of a job or
18 time from work.

19 * * *

20 Sec. 9. 13 V.S.A. § 1061 is amended to read:

21 § 1061. DEFINITIONS

1 As used in this subchapter:

2 (1)(A) “Course of conduct” means two or more acts over a period of
3 time, however short, in which a person follows, monitors, surveils, threatens,
4 or makes threats about another person, or interferes with another person’s
5 property. This definition shall apply to acts conducted by the person directly
6 or indirectly, and by any action, method, device, or means. Constitutionally
7 protected activity is not included within the meaning of “course of conduct.”

8 (B) As used in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1);

9 (i) threaten shall not be construed to require an express or overt
10 threat; and

11 (ii) course of conduct shall not be construed to require that the two
12 or more acts occur on separate calendar days.

13 (2) “Emotional distress” means significant mental suffering or distress
14 that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional
15 treatment or counseling.

16 (3) “Reasonable person” means a reasonable person in the victim’s
17 circumstances.

18 (4) “Stalk” means to engage purposefully in a course of conduct directed
19 at a specific person that the person engaging in the conduct knows or should
20 know would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety
21 of another or would cause a reasonable person substantial emotional distress.

1 Sec. 10. 13 V.S.A. § 2631 is amended to read:

2 § 2631. DEFINITIONS

3 As used in this ~~section~~ subchapter:

4 * * *

5 Sec. 11. 13 V.S.A. § 5314 is amended to read:

6 § 5314. INFORMATION FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

7 (a) Information to all victims. After initial contact between a victim and a
8 law enforcement agency responsible for investigating a crime, the agency shall
9 promptly give in writing to the victim:

10 (1) an explanation of the victim's rights under this chapter and chapter
11 167 of this title;

12 (2) information concerning the availability of:

13 (A) assistance to victims, including medical, housing, counseling,
14 and emergency services;

15 (B) compensation for victims under chapter 167 of this title, and the
16 name, street address, and telephone number of the Center for Crime Victim
17 Services;

18 (C) protection for the victim, including protective court orders; and

19 (D) access by the victim and the defendant to records related to the
20 case which are public under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 3
21 (access to public records); and

1 ~~or income generated from the sale, conversion, or exchange of such property~~
2 ~~and any gain realized by such sale, conversion, or exchange; and~~

3 ~~(D) any property defendant obtained or any income generated from~~
4 ~~the sale of tangible property the value of which is increased by the notoriety~~
5 ~~gained from the conviction of an offense by the person accused or convicted of~~
6 ~~the crime. [Repealed.]~~

7 Sec. 13. 13 V.S.A. § 5352 is amended to read:

8 § 5352. VICTIMS COMPENSATION BOARD

9 (a) The Victims Compensation Board is established for the purpose of
10 awarding compensation to victims of crimes and to their dependents. The
11 Board shall consist of five members appointed by the Governor as follows:
12 one ~~physician~~ health care provider as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9402 licensed to
13 practice in this State, one attorney admitted to practice in this State, one
14 individual who is a crime victim, and two public members. Each member shall
15 serve for a term of three years. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner
16 as the original appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

17 * * *

18 Sec. 14. 13 V.S.A. § 5358a(d) is amended to read:

19 (d) Meetings of the Victims Compensation Board relating to victims
20 compensation or offender restitution shall not be subject to the Vermont Open
21 Meeting Law, 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 2. Annually, the Board shall

1 hold an open meeting to present information and data concerning the victims
2 compensation and offender restitution programs, including aggregate
3 information on cases, pecuniary loss, expense reimbursement, restitution
4 orders, ~~profits from crimes~~, and nonidentifying information on the amounts of
5 compensation awarded to victims.

6 Sec. 15. 13 V.S.A. § 5363 is amended to read:

7 § 5363. CRIME VICTIMS' RESTITUTION SPECIAL FUND

8 * * *

9 (e) If the Restitution Unit collects in excess of ~~\$10,000.00~~ \$5,000.00 from
10 an offender, the amount in excess of ~~\$10,000.00~~ \$5,000.00 shall first be paid to
11 that offender's victims until the victims have received the full amount of
12 restitution ordered. Any excess remaining after the victims have received the
13 full amount of restitution ordered shall be divided between the Victims
14 Compensation Fund and the Crime Victims Special Restitution Fund in
15 proportion to the amount which each paid.

16 (f)(1) In no event shall the amount of restitution advanced to the victims of
17 a single crime spree during a single fiscal year under this title exceed five
18 percent of the balance of the Fund at the end of the prior fiscal year. If this
19 section applies, an advance payment to a victim shall be reduced by the same
20 percentage that the Restitution Unit reduces the total amount advanced to all
21 victims in connection with the crime spree. Unless otherwise ordered by the

1 court, the Restitution Unit shall determine the offenders and crimes
2 encompassed within a crime spree.

3 (2) A victim whose advance payment is reduced pursuant to this
4 subsection shall be entitled to receive additional advance payments during
5 subsequent fiscal years until the restitution order has been satisfied or the
6 ~~\$10,000.00~~ \$5,000.00 cap has been reached, whichever occurs first.

7 * * *

8 Sec. 16. 13 V.S.A. § 5421 is amended to read:

9 § 5421. ~~NOTICE OF PROFITS FROM A CRIME~~

10 (a) ~~Every person, firm, corporation, partnership, association, or other legal~~
11 ~~entity that knowingly contracts for, pays, or agrees to pay any profits from a~~
12 ~~crime, as defined in subdivision 5351(8) of this title, to a person charged with~~
13 ~~or convicted of that crime shall give written notice to the Attorney General of~~
14 ~~the payment or obligation to pay as soon as is practicable after discovering that~~
15 ~~the payment is or will be a profit from a crime.~~

16 (b) ~~The Attorney General, upon receipt of notice of a contract, agreement to~~
17 ~~pay, or payment of profits of the crime shall send written notice of the~~
18 ~~existence of such profits to all known victims of the crime at their last known~~
19 ~~addresses. [Repealed.]~~

1 Sec. 17. 13 V.S.A. § 5422 is amended to read:

2 § 5422. ~~ACTIONS TO RECOVER PROFITS FROM A CRIME~~

3 (a) ~~Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including any statute of~~
4 ~~limitations, any crime victim shall have the right to bring a civil action in a~~
5 ~~court of competent jurisdiction to recover money damages from a person~~
6 ~~convicted of that crime, or the legal representative of that convicted person,~~
7 ~~within three years of the discovery of any profits from the crime. Any damages~~
8 ~~awarded in such action shall be recoverable only up to the value of the profits~~
9 ~~of the crime. This section shall not limit the right of a victim to proceed or~~
10 ~~recover under another cause of action.~~

11 (b) ~~The Attorney General may, within three years of the discovery of any~~
12 ~~profits from the crime, bring a civil action on behalf of the State to enforce the~~
13 ~~subrogation rights described in section 5357 of this title.~~

14 (c) ~~If the full value of any profits from the crime has not yet been claimed~~
15 ~~by either the victim of the crime or the victim's representative, the Attorney~~
16 ~~General, or both, within three years of the discovery of such profits, then the~~
17 ~~State may bring a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover~~
18 ~~the costs incurred by providing the defendant with counsel, if any, and other~~
19 ~~costs reasonably incurred or to be incurred in the incarceration of the~~
20 ~~defendant.~~

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Sec. 19. 13 V.S.A. § 7554c is amended to read:

§ 7554c. PRETRIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS; NEEDS SCREENINGS

(a)(1) The objective of a pretrial needs screening is to obtain a preliminary indication of whether a person has a substantial substance abuse or mental health issue that would warrant a subsequent court order for a more detailed clinical assessment.

* * *

(e)(1) Information obtained from the person during the risk assessment or needs screening shall be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and, except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, only may be used for determining bail, conditions of release, and appropriate programming for the person in the pending case. The information a pretrial services coordinator may report is limited to whether a risk assessment indicates risk of nonappearance, whether further substance use assessment or treatment is indicated, whether mental health assessment or treatment is indicated, whether a person participated in a clinical assessment, and whether further engagement with pretrial services is recommended, unless the person provides written permission to release additional information. Information related to the present offense directly or indirectly derived from the risk assessment, needs screening, or other conversation with the pretrial

1 services coordinator shall not be used against the person in the person's
2 criminal or juvenile case for any purpose, including impeachment or cross-
3 examination. However, the fact of participation or nonparticipation in risk
4 assessment or needs screening may be used in subsequent proceedings. The
5 immunity provisions of this subsection apply only to the use and derivative use
6 of information gained as a proximate result of the risk assessment, needs
7 screening, or other conversation with the pretrial services coordinator.

8 (2) The person shall retain all of ~~his or her~~ the person's due process
9 rights throughout the risk assessment and needs screening process and may
10 release ~~his or her~~ the person's records at ~~his or her~~ the person's discretion.

11 (3) All records of information obtained during risk assessment or needs
12 screening shall be stored in a manner making them accessible only to the
13 Director of Pretrial Services and pretrial service coordinators for a period of
14 ~~three~~ two years, after which the records shall be maintained as required by
15 3 V.S.A. §§ 117 and 218 and any other State law. The Director of Pretrial
16 Services shall be responsible for the destruction of records when ordered by
17 the court.

18 * * *

19 Sec. 20. REPEALS; SPENDTHRIFT GUARDIANSHIPS

20 14 V.S.A. §§ 2681 (spendthrift, defined), 2684 (spendthrift; hearing;
21 notice), 2685 (decree; appeal), 2687 (expense of resisting application), 2690

1 (guardian to give notice that ward's contracts and transfers will be void), 2691
2 (spouse to support and have custody), 2692 (extent of guardian's control), and
3 2693 (married woman may be guardian) are repealed.

4 Sec. 21. 14A V.S.A. § 505 is amended to read:

5 § 505. CREDITOR'S CLAIM AGAINST SETTLOR

6 * * *

7 (c)(1) Property held by spouses as tenants by the entirety that is conveyed
8 to the spouses' jointly or separately held revocable or irrevocable trusts, and
9 any proceeds of the sale or disposition of the property, shall be immune from
10 the claims of the spouses' separate creditors to the same extent as the property
11 would have been if it had remained held by the spouses as tenants by the
12 entirety if the following apply:

13 * * *

14 (3) Except as otherwise provided in this title, on April 24, 2025:

15 (A) notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this subsection (c) applies to all
16 trusts created before, on, or after April 24, 2025, and to property held by
17 spouses as tenants by the entirety that is conveyed before, on, or after April 24,
18 2025; and

19 (B) this subsection (c) applies to all judicial proceedings concerning
20 trusts commenced on or after April 24, 2025.

1 (b) On receipt of the documents required by subsection (a) of this section,
2 the Family Division of the Superior Court shall:

3 ~~(1) send the certified copy of the determination to the Court~~
4 ~~Administrator who shall file it as a foreign judgment; and~~

5 ~~(2) serve notice upon the persons named pursuant to subdivision (a)(3) of~~
6 this section and provide them with an opportunity to contest the registration in
7 accordance with this section.

8 (c) The notice required by ~~subdivision (b)(2)~~ subsection (b) of this section
9 shall state that:

10 (1) a registered determination is enforceable as of the date of the
11 registration in the same manner as a determination issued by a Vermont court;

12 (2) a hearing to contest the validity of the registered determination must
13 be requested within 20 days after service of notice; and

14 (3) failure to contest the registration will result in confirmation of the
15 child custody determination and preclude further contest of that determination
16 with respect to any matter that could have been asserted.

17 * * *

18 Sec. 24. 18 V.S.A. § 4230f is amended to read:

19 § 4230f. DISPENSING CANNABIS TO A PERSON UNDER 21 YEARS
20 OF AGE; CRIMINAL OFFENSE

21 * * *

1 (e)(1) Subsections (a)–(d) of this section shall not apply to a person under
2 21 years of age who dispenses cannabis to a person under 21 years of age or
3 who knowingly enables the consumption of cannabis by a person under 21
4 years of age.

5 (2) A person who is 18, 19, or 20 years of age who knowingly dispenses
6 cannabis to a person who is 18, 19, or 20 years of age commits a civil violation
7 and shall be referred to the Court Diversion Program for the purpose of
8 enrollment in the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program in accordance
9 with the provisions of ~~section 4230b of this title~~ 7 V.S.A. § 656 and shall be
10 subject to the penalties in ~~that section~~ 7 V.S.A. § 656(b)(2) for failure to
11 complete the program successfully.

12 * * *

13 Sec. 25. 18 V.S.A. § 4234 is amended to read:

14 § 4234. DEPRESSANT, STIMULANT, AND NARCOTIC DRUGS

15 * * *

16 (c) Possession of buprenorphine by a person under 21 years of age.

17 (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a person
18 under 21 years of age who knowingly and unlawfully possesses 224
19 milligrams or less of buprenorphine commits a civil violation and shall be
20 subject to the provisions of ~~section 4230b of this title~~ 7 V.S.A. § 656.

1 Sec. 27. RETROACTIVE APPLICATION

2 Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. 26 of this act shall apply retroactively
3 to an estate whenever created, except that it shall not affect a suit begun or
4 pending as of July 1, 2026.

5 Sec. 28. 28 V.S.A. § 304 is amended to read:

6 § 304. ASSIGNMENT OF LEASE TO BE BY DEED

7 The assignment of a lease of lands, if the lease is for a longer term than one
8 year, shall be by deed, signed, ~~sealed, witnessed,~~ acknowledged, and recorded
9 as provided for deeds in this chapter. An assignment otherwise executed shall
10 be void as against all persons but the assignor, ~~his or her~~ the assignor's heirs,
11 or ~~his or her~~ the assignor's devisees.

12 Sec. 29. 27 V.S.A. § 1101 is amended to read:

13 § 1101. FINDER TO GIVE NOTICE

14 A person who finds money or goods, to the value of ~~\$3.00~~ \$50.00 or more,
15 or takes up a stray beast, the owner of which is not known, shall, within six
16 days thereafter, make two notices, describing such money, goods, or beast,
17 with the natural or artificial marks, with the time and place of finding or taking
18 up the same, and post them in two public places in the town in which such
19 property was found.

1 Sec. 30. 33 V.S.A. § 6936(c) is amended to read:

2 (c) In addition to the information required under subsection 6935(b) of this
3 title, every order issued under this section shall state upon its face a date, time,
4 and place when the defendant may appear to petition the court for modification
5 or discharge of the order. When service of the temporary order cannot be
6 made before the scheduled hearing, the court shall continue the hearing and
7 extend the terms of any temporary order upon request of the plaintiff for such
8 additional time as it deems necessary to achieve service on the defendant. The
9 defendant's opportunity to contest shall be scheduled as soon as reasonably
10 possible, but in no event later than ~~40~~ 14 days from the date of issuance of the
11 order.

12 Sec. 31. FINDINGS

13 The General Assembly finds:

14 (1) The pilot accountability court in Chittenden County, which was
15 referred to as the Pilot Accountability Court, was a project proposed by the
16 Governor and implemented by the Judiciary in collaboration with the
17 Chittenden County State's Attorney, the Department of State's Attorneys and
18 Sheriffs, the Chittenden County Public Defender's Office, the Agency of
19 Human Services, the Chittenden County Sheriff's Office, and the Department
20 of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management.

1 (2) The docket helped clear a backlog of repeat offender criminal cases
2 involving individuals with five or more open charges, many of whom were
3 unhoused and struggling with substance use issues or mental health challenges.
4 The docket brought together judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and human
5 services staff to resolve cases faster and connect individuals to the services
6 they needed.

7 (3) The docket achieved a clearance rate of approximately 300 percent
8 or roughly three times the Judiciary’s typical clearance rate.

9 (4) More importantly, repeat offenders were held accountable to the
10 court for complying with conditions of release, complying with orders to
11 connect with service providers, and appearing for scheduled court proceedings.

12 (5) Each county that determines that employing a rapid accountability
13 docket modeled on the pilot in Chittenden County that takes into account the
14 unique needs and resources of the county should have the opportunity to
15 operate such a docket.

16 Sec. 32. RAPID ACCOUNTABILITY DOCKET; PURPOSE

17 The goals of a rapid accountability docket include:

18 (1) Accelerating court proceedings of repeat-offender cases by ensuring:

19 (A) consistent and timely availability of judicial resources, including
20 judge and courtroom time;

1 (B) dedicated prosecutorial and defense resources;

2 (C) the availability of resources of the Department of Corrections and
3 the Agency of Human Services; and

4 (D) sufficient transport services to detained individuals, as needed, to
5 ensure that defendants attend scheduled court hearings.

6 (2) Connecting individuals with treatment, housing, and social services
7 to appropriately address the circumstances that may contribute to recidivism.

8 (3) Reducing the number of pending criminal cases that involve
9 individuals with multiple dockets by providing targeted resources to improve
10 the overall efficiency of the criminal justice system and utilize the known
11 deterrent effects of consequences close in time to the alleged offense.

12 (4) Improving accountability for individuals with multiple pending legal
13 cases by providing immediate follow-up and a court schedule that is responsive
14 to their needs.

15 (5) Improving collaboration among the courts, law enforcement,
16 prosecutors, and social workers to provide faster resolution of repeat offender
17 cases.

18 Sec. 33. COUNTY DEPLOYMENT STRATEGY

19 The Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs,
20 in consultation the Defender General and the Secretary of Human Services or
21 designee, shall recommend to the Chief Superior Judge the counties identified

1 as appropriate for the rapid accountability docket and the order in which the
2 counties shall implement the docket. At least 30 days before a rapid
3 accountability docket starts in a county, the State's Attorney in each respective
4 county shall convene stakeholders in the county to assess needs and resources
5 within the county to develop a plan to implement the docket in accordance
6 with the goals identified in Sec. 32 of this act.

7 Sec. 34. DEDICATED COURT SPACE AND JUDICIARY STAFF

8 (a) The Chief Superior Court Judge shall assign a sitting or retired judge to
9 each rapid accountability docket, and the Court Administrator shall provide a
10 dedicated courtroom, court staff, and court security to implement the plan for
11 the respective county.

12 (b) Each operating period shall last up to 90 days but may be shorter if the
13 goals of the rapid accountability docket are met, as determined by the Judiciary
14 in consultation with the State's Attorney and the public defender. Each docket
15 shall give priority to defendants with five or more pending cases, but the
16 State's Attorney or public defender may request to include defendants with
17 fewer than five pending cases where faster action would serve the interests of
18 justice.

19 Sec. 35. DEDICATED PROSECUTOR AND LEAD PUBLIC DEFENDER

20 (a) The Governor, in consultation with the respective county State's
21 Attorney and the Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys

1 and Sheriffs, may appoint a special prosecutor to serve a rapid accountability
2 docket, or the State's Attorney of the respective county may appoint a
3 designated deputy State's Attorney to serve a rapid accountability docket.

4 (b) The Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys and
5 Sheriffs and the State's Attorney shall dedicate victim advocates and
6 administrative staff sufficient to implement the plan for the respective county.

7 (c) The Defender General shall identify a lead public defender for each
8 county rapid accountability docket and coverage sufficient to implement the
9 plan for the respective county.

10 Sec. 36. EXECUTIVE BRANCH RESOURCES

11 (a) The Governor shall dedicate resources from the Department of Public
12 Safety (DPS), Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of
13 Corrections (DOC), Department of Mental Health, and Agency of Human
14 Services sufficient to implement the plan for the respective county.

15 (1) DOC shall assign a liaison to each operating docket.

16 (2) The Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs and the State's
17 Attorney, local law enforcement, DMV, DPS, and DOC shall, in collaboration
18 with each county sheriff's office, ensure timely transport of incarcerated
19 defendants to hearings.

20 (3) The Secretary of Human Services shall assign staff to each docket to
21 address complex needs, including defendants dealing with:

1 (A) substance use or mental health challenges;

2 (B) homelessness or unstable housing; and

3 (C) trauma or child welfare history.

4 (b) The Governor, in consultation with the Secretary of Human Services,
5 the Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs,
6 and the Chief Prevention Officer, may designate a rapid accountability docket
7 coordinator to assist with the deployment of resources.

8 (c) The Administration shall coordinate Executive Branch resources to
9 track and report data as required by Sec. 37 of this act. The Secretary of
10 Administration shall ensure that information is maintained and distributed to
11 evaluate the programmatic efficiency and dispositional outcomes.

12 Sec. 37. DATA COLLECTION

13 For each rapid accountability docket, the Secretary of Administration shall
14 track and report:

15 (1) the number of defendants served;

16 (2) the number of cases resolved and types of outcomes;

17 (3) the number of defendants connected to services and types of
18 services;

19 (4) the number of times each defendant appeared in court for the docket;

20 (5) the number of probation or furlough violations of the defendants
21 sentenced through the docket within six and 12 months; and

1 (6) the number of defendants charged with a new offense within six and
2 12 months and the types of offenses.

3 Sec. 38. REPORTING

4 (a) The Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, the Defender
5 General, the Agency of Human Services, and the Judiciary shall appear at the
6 August 2026 meeting of the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee to
7 report progress on the implementation of the rapid accountability dockets.

8 (b) On or before December 1, 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall
9 submit a written report regarding the implementation of the rapid
10 accountability dockets to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary and
11 the Governor.

12 Sec. 39. CONTINGENCY FUNDING

13 The duty to implement Secs. 32–37 of this act is contingent upon the
14 availability of funds appropriated in fiscal year 2027 and 2025 Acts and
15 Resolves No. 27, Sec. B.1100(a)(3) as amended by 2026 Acts and Resolves
16 No. 74, Sec. 51.

17 Sec. 40. REPEAL

18 Secs. 31–39 of this act shall be repealed on July 1, 2028.

19 Sec. 41. EFFECTIVE DATES

20 This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 4 shall take effect on
21 July 1, 2027.