
Public Safety Committee

HB 2334

Brief Description: Concerning drug offender sentencing.

Sponsors: Representatives Davis, Macri, Wylie, Goodman and Appleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies eligibility criteria for the Drug Offender Sentencing Alternative (DOSA).
- Changes the responsibility for completing, and the content of, certain court-requested DOSA eligibility assessments.
- Provides that a person ordered to participate in the residential substance use disorder treatment-based DOSA may be initially confined in a county facility in order to facilitate direct transfer to a residential treatment facility.
- Makes changes to credit for time served on community custody prior to DOSA revocation.
- Requires the Department of Corrections to report on the effectiveness of the DOSA program every five years.
- Makes miscellaneous other changes to the statutes governing the DOSA.

Hearing Date: 1/20/20

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Sentencing Alternatives.

When a person is convicted of a felony offense, a sentencing court is generally required to impose a term of confinement based on a standard range provided in statute. In some circumstances, sentencing courts have discretion to order sentencing alternatives. Sentencing alternatives generally result in a person serving a shorter term of confinement, and sometimes

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

serving no term of confinement. Instead, the person may be required to participate in certain programs or treatment, or to submit to a form of partial confinement.

Drug Offender Sentencing Alternative.

The Drug Offender Sentencing Alternative, or "DOSA," either reduces or eliminates incarceration time in exchange for the offender participating in supervision and treatment.

Eligibility.

A person convicted of a felony is eligible for a DOSA if certain criteria are met, including that:

- the current conviction is for an offense that is not a felony impaired driving offense, a violent offense, or a sex offense, and the violation does not involve a firearm or deadly weapon sentence enhancement;
- the offender has no current or prior convictions for a sex offense at any time, and no violent offense within the 10 years before conviction of the current offense;
- if the offense is a violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act (a drug violation), it involved only a small quantity of the particular controlled substance as determined by the judge;
- the offender is not subject to a federal immigration deportation detainer or order;
- the end of the standard sentence range for the current offense is greater than one year; and
- the offender has not received a DOSA more than once in the prior 10 years before the current offense.

In determining eligibility, the court may order the Department of Corrections (DOC) to complete either a risk assessment report or a substance use disorder screening report, or both. At a minimum, the examination must address:

- whether the offender suffers from a drug addiction, and whether the addiction is such that there is a probability that criminal behavior will occur in the future;
- whether effective treatment for the offender's addiction is available from a provider that has been licensed or certified by the Department of Health; and
- whether the offender and the community will benefit from the use of the alternative.

The examination report must contain: a proposed monitoring plan, including any requirements regarding living conditions, lifestyle requirements, and monitoring by family members and others; and recommended crime-related prohibitions and affirmative conditions.

If the court determines that the offender is eligible for the alternative, it must waive imposition of the standard-range sentence and impose a sentence consisting of either a prison-based alternative or a residential substance use disorder treatment-based alternative.

Prison-Based Alternative.

Under the prison-based alternative, the offender is sentenced to a term of incarceration equal to one-half the midpoint of the standard range or 12 months, whichever is greater, and one-half the midpoint of the standard range as a term of community custody. The incarceration and community custody terms must include substance abuse treatment. The treatment services in the DOC must be designed by the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse of the Department of Social and Health Services, in cooperation with the DOC.

Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment-Based Alternative.

Under the residential substance use disorder treatment-based alternative, the offender is sentenced to a term of community custody equal to one-half the midpoint of the standard sentence range or two years, whichever is greater, conditioned on the offender entering and remaining in residential substance use disorder treatment for a period set by the court between three and six months. The term of community custody must also include a condition to participate in treatment.

The residential substance use disorder treatment-based alternative is only available if the midpoint of the standard range sentence is 24 months or less.

Enforcement.

The court may bring an offender serving a DOSA back to court at any time to monitor progress or determine whether there have been violations of the conditions of sentence. If conditions have been violated or there is unsatisfactory progress in treatment, the court may modify the conditions of community custody or impose other sanctions, including ordering the person to serve a term of total confinement within the standard range for the offense.

An offender who is terminated from the DOSA and is ordered to serve a term of total confinement receives credit for any time previously served under the DOSA. However, in serving a term of community custody imposed upon termination from the DOSA, the offender does not receive credit for time served in community custody prior to termination.

Summary of Bill:

Various changes are made to the provisions governing the DOSA.

Eligibility.

The offense history disqualifying a person from participating in the DOSA is modified. Persons with a current offense involving a sentencing enhancement for certain impaired driving felonies committed with a child in the car are not eligible for the DOSA. A current or prior sex offense conviction disqualifies a person from the DOSA only if the offense is one for which there is a current duty or a possible future duty to register as a sex offender. The window of disqualification for an offense history involving a violent offense within the 10 years prior to the current conviction is narrowed to seven years when the prior offense was Robbery in the second degree that did not involve a firearm and was not plead down from Robbery in the first degree.

The requirement that the standard range sentence for the current offense must be greater than one year in order to participate in the DOSA is removed; however, in order to impose a prison-based DOSA, the high end of the standard sentence range for the current offense must be greater than one year.

Prison-Based Alternative.

Substance use disorder treatment during the community custody portion of a prison-based DOSA must be in a program approved and licensed by the Department of Health, rather than the Department of Social and Health Services.

Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment-Based Alternative.

The maximum standard range sentence for eligibility for the residential substance use disorder treatment-based alternative is increased. A person may participate in the residential program if the midpoint of his or her standard range sentence is 26 months or less, rather than 24 months or less.

The Department of Health, rather than the Department of Corrections, may be ordered by the court to perform an examination of the offender. The requirement to include a proposed monitoring plan and recommended crime-related prohibitions and affirmative conditions is removed. Terminology referring to "drug addiction" is changed to "substance use disorder."

Residential substance use disorder treatment may be for a term of up to six months, rather than three to six months. Treatment completion and continued care must be delivered in accordance with the American Society of Addiction Medicine criteria. The sentence may include an indeterminate term of confinement of no more than 30 days in a county facility in order to facilitate direct transfer to a residential substance use disorder treatment facility.

Enforcement.

When a total confinement sentence is imposed following a violation of conditions or failure to make satisfactory progress in treatment, the credit for any time previously served in community custody on the DOSA is limited to 50 percent.

Reporting.

Every five years, the DOC must submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature analyzing the effectiveness of the DOSA in reducing recidivism among various offender populations. The first report is due November 1, 2022, and every five years thereafter. The DOC must coordinate with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy and the Caseload Forecast Council in guiding its data-tracking efforts and preparing the report.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 15, 2020.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2021.