

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5576

As of January 30, 2023

Title: An act relating to sexual assault procedures.

Brief Description: Concerning sexual assault procedures.

Sponsors: Senators Dhingra, Kuderer, Lovelett, Nobles, Saldaña, Trudeau, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 1/30/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires jail and prison facilities to collect biological samples before a convicted person required to provide a sample is released from confinement.
- Requires persons required to provide a biological sample who will not be confined in a jail or prison facility, to be administratively booked at a city or county jail facility for the sole purpose of providing a biological sample.
- Requires sentencing courts to create and implement biological sample collection protocols, and to collect biological samples at the time of sentencing.
- Limits the ability of a defendant accused of sex offenses to introduce evidence of a victim's past sexual behavior on a victim's social media account to attack the victim's credibility, or to prove the victim's consent.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

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

Staff: Ryan Giannini (786-7285)

Background: Biological Samples. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) operates and maintains a deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) identification system. The purpose of the system is to aid in criminal investigations, and to identify human remains or missing persons. The Forensic Laboratory Services Bureau of the WSP is responsible for testing biological samples for inclusion in the DNA database.

Biological samples must be collected from any person who has been convicted of a felony, any person who is required to register as a sex offender or kidnapping offender, or any person convicted of the following list of specified misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors:

- assault in the fourth degree where domestic violence was pleaded and proven;
- assault in the fourth degree with sexual motivation;
- communication with a minor for immoral purposes;
- custodial sexual misconduct in the second degree;
- failure to register as a sex or kidnapping person;
- harassment;
- patronizing a prostitute;
- sexual misconduct with a minor in the second degree;
- stalking;
- indecent exposure; and
- violation of a sexual assault protection order.

Collection of Biological Samples. County and city jails are responsible for collecting biological samples for DNA analysis from persons incarcerated in their facilities. The Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) are responsible for collecting biological samples for DNA analysis from persons incarcerated in a state facility. Local police departments and sheriff's offices are responsible for collecting biological samples for DNA analysis from registered sex offenders and kidnapping offenders and convicted persons who do not serve any term of confinement.

Refusal to Provide a Sample. A person who willfully refuses to comply with a legal request for a DNA sample is guilty of the crime of refusal to provide DNA. Refusal to provide DNA is a gross misdemeanor.

Evidence of Victim's Past Sexual History. In a prosecution for a sex offense, evidence of a victim's past sexual behavior is generally inadmissible to attack the credibility of the victim and to prove the victim's consent. When the perpetrator and victim engaged in sexual intercourse with each other in the past, and when the behavior is material to the issue of consent, evidence concerning the past behavior between the perpetrator and the victim may be admissible on the issue of consent to the offense. In a prosecution for the crime of rape, trafficking, or an offense related to commercial sexual abuse of a minor, such evidence is admissible on the issue of consent if certain procedures are followed, except when prohibited in the underlying criminal offense.

Summary of Bill: Collection of Biological Samples. County and city jails, DOC, and DCYF are responsible for collecting biological samples for DNA analysis from persons required to provide a biological sample who are incarcerated in their facilities. If the biological samples are not collected prior to the person's release from confinement, a compliance hearing must be scheduled by the sentencing court within five days of the person's release to ensure that the biological samples have been collected.

A sentencing court is no longer required to order a convicted person required to provide a biological sample, who will not serve a term of confinement, to report to a local police department or sheriff's office to provide a biological sample. Instead, a sentencing court must order a convicted person to be administratively booked at a city or county jail for the sole purpose of providing a biological sample if the convicted person will not serve any term of confinement.

The sentencing court must create and implement a biological sample collection protocol. The sentencing court shall obtain the biological samples at the time of sentencing. If the biological samples are not collected at the time of sentencing, then they must be collected by county and city jails, DOC, DCYF, and local police departments and sheriff's offices. The sentencing court must schedule a compliance hearing within five days of the sentence to ensure that biological samples have been collected.

Evidence of a Victim's Past Sexual History. Inadmissible evidence of a victim's past sexual behavior includes a victim's social media account, including any text, image, video, or picture, which depict sexual content, history, activity, or communications.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2023.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: When courts order the collection of DNA from convicted persons required to provide DNA, there is no mechanism to ensure that collection has occurred. There is a lot of legally owed DNA that is not collected. The process in this bill tries to accommodate rural and urban areas. This bill sets up a system to have DNA collected from incarcerated people at the jail, and ensures that DNA is collected from people not confined in a jail. There will be compliance hearings to ensure the DNA is collected. For those not booked in jail, this ensures the court receives confirmation that the court order has been followed. In some courtrooms, law enforcement or someone else is available to collect lawfully owed DNA. This bill accommodates all courts, and ensures that all legally owed DNA is collected.

OTHER: Courts should have a protocol to ensure that lawfully owed DNA is collected. There are concerns as to who should collect the sample. Language in the bill directing court staff to obtain biological samples should be changed to say that court staff must order a biological sample be obtained. Court staff are not trained to take the sample of a person. The collection of lawfully owed DNA seem reasonable and required in this case. There are some concerns with data collection when it comes to privacy, but this issue may not come into play here.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Manka Dhingra, Prime Sponsor.

OTHER: Eric Pratt, I, America; Melissa Johnson, District & Municipal Court Judges Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.