

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1504
By: Johnson, Ann
Youth Health & Safety, Select
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) may assign juveniles committed to its custody to a stay of at least nine months but not more than 24 months and may extend this stay as long as the reason for the extension is documented. While TJJD has a policy to reduce the minimum length of a stay when warranted, it cannot reduce the length of the stay below nine months. Allowing this leeway would be helpful, for example, in cases where a child's rehabilitation program is completed earlier than nine months and the child can be safely released. Additionally, TJJD must provide courts, prosecutors, and probation departments 10 days notice before releasing a juvenile, but it has 30 days to provide the court a copy of the juvenile's reentry and reintegration plan and progress report. H.B. 1504 seeks to provide TJJD greater flexibility in releasing juveniles when they are ready and allow it to streamline the related documentation process by providing for its authority to reduce a child's stay to less than nine months and aligning certain release-related notification requirements.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1504 amends the Family Code to authorize the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) to reduce the period in which a child at sanction level six is required to participate in a highly structured residential program and requires the reason for the reduction to be documented. The bill's provisions do not apply to a child committed to a post-adjudication secure correctional facility operated by or under contract with a juvenile board or local juvenile probation department.

H.B. 1504 amends the Human Resources Code to make certain records and information concerning a child subject to TJJD control available to an individual or entity assisting TJJD in providing transition planning and reentry services to the child. The bill changes the deadline for TJJD to provide the juvenile court with a copy of the child's reentry and reintegration plan and a report concerning the progress the child has made while committed from not later than the 30th day before the release date to not later than the 10th day before the release date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.