

Subject Public Safety COVID-19 Response

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Date May 5, 2020

Overview

This bill draft contains a variety of public safety and corrections policy provisions that address COVID-19 related issues.

Summary

Section	Description
1	<p>Suspension of driver's license.</p> <p>Prohibits the commissioner from re-suspending a person's driver's license based on the failure to appear in court after receiving a citation for a petty misdemeanor or driving after suspension. Under current law, failure to appear in court in compliance with the terms of a citation is grounds for a license suspension.</p>
2	<p>Commissioner shall suspend.</p> <p>Prohibits the suspension of a person's driver's license following a conviction for driving after suspension or driving after revocation.</p>
3	<p>Failure to pay fine.</p> <p>Forbids suspension of a person's driver's license based solely on the fact that the person failed to pay a traffic ticket, parking fine, or surcharge.</p>
4	<p>Offenses.</p> <p>Reiterates the prohibition on suspending a person's driver's license following a conviction for driving after suspension or driving after revocation.</p>
5	<p>Driver's license suspensions and revocations; reports.</p> <p>Requires the commissioner of public safety to provide an annual report identifying the number of driver's licenses issued, suspended, and revoked each year in each county; the total number of licenses suspended and reinstated in the previous eight years; and the total number of licenses revoked and reinstate in the previous eight years. Also requires the state court administrator to report on the number of charges</p>

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	and convictions for driving after suspension or revocation in the previous eight years and information on the payment of fines for all motor vehicle violations listed on the uniform fine schedule. Both reports are due by February 15.
6	Public access to correctional facility population data. Requires the commissioner of corrections and sheriffs to post daily inmate population numbers for prisons, jails, and juvenile detention centers on publicly accessible websites administered by the agencies.
7	Correctional institutions; occupancy limits of cells. Repeals language that encourages the commissioner of corrections to double bunk inmates as much as possible in the state's custody level 1 to 4 correctional facilities.
8	Motor vehicle charges and conviction data; report. Requires the court administrator to collect, compile, and report data on charges and convictions for driving after suspension or revocation, and payment of fines for violations related to the operation of a motor vehicle.
9	Retroactive license reinstatement. Requires the commissioner of public safety to make an individual's driver's license eligible for reinstatement if that license is suspended based on (1) a conviction for driving after suspension or revocation, (2) the failure to pay a fee or fine, (3) failure to appear on a charge of a misdemeanor or driving after suspension or revocation, or (4) any combination of (1), (2), or (3). Directs the commissioner to send notice by December 1, 2020, to individuals whose licenses are eligible for reinstatement. Requires individuals eligible for reinstatement to pay a \$20 reinstatement fee. Clarifies that suspensions, revocations, or cancellations for any other reason remain in effect.
10	Temporary emergency powers; commissioner of corrections. Subd. 1. Applicability. Limits the duration of the emergency powers granted to the commissioner of corrections under this section. The powers are retroactive to the date of the governor's declaration of a peacetime emergency to respond to COVID-19. The powers expire when the peacetime emergency expires. Subd. 2. Temporary powers granted; limitations. Grants temporary powers to the commissioner to protect the health and welfare of state correctional employees and inmates. The powers may only be used to prepare for or respond to an outbreak of COVID-19. Subd. 3. Expanded authority to grant early conditional release to certain offenders. Grants the commissioner the authority to release certain nonviolent offenders who have 180 days or less in their term of imprisonment. The

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commissioner is directed to give priority for early release to inmates most likely to suffer serious illness or death from COVID-19. Provides additional requirements and guidance on applications, supervised release, and conformance with existing conditional release provisions.

Subd. 4. Reports. Requires the commissioner to report to the legislature within 30 days of the expiration of the peacetime emergency on the timeline about when the powers were exercised and an explanation for why the powers were necessary. Within 180 days of the expiration of the peacetime emergency, the commissioner must submit a second report to the legislature that provides specified aggregate data about the offenders to whom the commissioner granted early release.

11 SARS-CoV-2 testing of public safety specialists.

Directs health care providers to return SARS-CoV-2 test results to public safety specialists as soon as possible. Defines “public safety specialist,” “health care provider,” and “SARS-CoV-2” for purposes of this section.

12 Local match temporarily suspended for youth intervention program grants.

Eliminates the local match requirement for youth intervention program grants made in calendar year 2020 before the governor’s declaration of a peacetime emergency if grant recipients suspended or severely limited programming in response to the peacetime emergency. Requires the Office of Justice Programs to report on the number of grant recipients who either met or were unable to meet the local match requirement in 2020.



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