
By: **Delegates Dumais, Anderson, Carter, Gutierrez, Kelley, Kelly, Lee, Mayer, McComas, Menes, Rosenberg, Shank, Shewell, Simmons, Smigiel, Sophocleus, and Zirkin**

Introduced and read first time: February 10, 2006

Assigned to: Judiciary

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 24, 2006

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Juvenile Law - Competency - Services**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the juvenile court to order the Department of Health
4 and Mental Hygiene or a qualified expert to conduct an evaluation of a child's
5 competency to proceed in certain juvenile delinquency hearings; repealing
6 certain provisions relating to a finding of incompetency to proceed; specifying
7 the procedures for a finding of incompetency to proceed; requiring the
8 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to file a certain report under certain
9 circumstances; requiring the court to hold a certain competency hearing and
10 take certain actions under certain circumstances; authorizing the court to take
11 certain actions at a certain competency hearing; requiring the court to dismiss a
12 delinquency petition or violation of probation petition under certain
13 circumstances; prohibiting the admission in evidence of certain statements and
14 information elicited while certain services are being provided; establishing a
15 certain presumption; altering a certain provision relating to the adoption of
16 regulations; altering a certain definition; and generally relating to juvenile
17 competency.

18 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
19 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
20 Section 3-8A-01(a), 3-8A-17.4, and 3-8A-17.5
21 Annotated Code of Maryland
22 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

23 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

1 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
2 Section 3-8A-01(z), 3-8A-17.1, 3-8A-17.8, and 3-8A-17.9
3 Annotated Code of Maryland
4 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

5 BY repealing
6 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
7 Section 3-8A-17.6 and 3-8A-17.7
8 Annotated Code of Maryland
9 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

10 BY adding to
11 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
12 Section 3-8A-17.6, 3-8A-17.7, 3-8A-17.8, 3-8A-17.9, and 3-8A-17.11
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
16 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

18 3-8A-01.

19 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated, unless
20 the context of their use indicates otherwise.

21 (z) "Qualified expert" means [a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist who has
22 expertise in child development, with training in forensic evaluation procedures
23 through formal instruction, professional supervision, or both, and who is:

24 (1) Familiar with the competency standards contained in this subtitle;
25 and

26 (2) Familiar with the treatment, training, and restoration programs for
27 children that are available in this State] A LICENSED CERTIFIED SOCIAL
28 WORKER-CLINICAL, LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST, OR LICENSED PSYCHIATRIST WHO:

29 (1) HAS EXPERTISE IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT, WITH TRAINING IN THE
30 FORENSIC EVALUATION OF CHILDREN, AS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF
31 HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE;

32 (2) IS FAMILIAR WITH THE COMPETENCY STANDARDS CONTAINED IN
33 THIS SUBTITLE; AND

34 (3) IS FAMILIAR WITH THE TREATMENT, TRAINING, AND RESTORATION
35 PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN THIS STATE.

1 3-8A-17.1.

2 (a) (1) At any time after a petition alleging that a child has committed a
3 delinquent act is filed with the court under this subtitle, the court on its own motion,
4 or on motion of the child's counsel or the State's Attorney, shall stay all proceedings
5 and order THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE OR ANY
6 OTHER QUALIFIED EXPERT CONDUCT an evaluation of the child's [mental condition
7 and developmental levels] COMPETENCY TO PROCEED if the court finds that:

8 (i) There is probable cause to believe that the child has committed
9 the delinquent act; and

10 (ii) There is reason to believe that the child may be incompetent to
11 proceed with a waiver hearing under § 3-8A-06 of this subtitle, an adjudicatory
12 hearing under § 3-8A-18 of this subtitle, a disposition hearing under § 3-8A-19 of
13 this subtitle, or a violation of probation hearing.

14 (2) An evaluation ordered under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be
15 performed by a qualified expert.

16 (3) This subsection may not be construed to prohibit the State or the
17 child from calling other expert witnesses to testify at a competency hearing.

18 (b) Any motion questioning the child's competency to proceed, and any
19 subsequent legal pleading relating to the child's competency to proceed, shall be
20 served on the child's counsel, the State's Attorney, the Department of Juvenile
21 Services, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

22 3-8A-17.4.

23 (a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, within 15 days
24 after receipt of a report of a qualified expert, the court shall hold a competency
25 hearing.

26 (2) On good cause shown, the court may extend the time for holding the
27 competency hearing for an additional 15 days.

28 (b) At the competency hearing, the court shall determine, by evidence
29 presented on the record, whether the juvenile is incompetent to proceed.

30 (c) Findings of fact shall be based on the evaluation of the child by the
31 qualified expert.

32 (d) The State shall bear the burden of proving the child's competency beyond a
33 reasonable doubt.

34 3-8A-17.5.

35 At a competency hearing, if the court determines that the child is competent, the
36 court shall enter an order stating that the child is competent, lift the stay imposed

1 under § 3-8A-17.1 of this subtitle, and proceed with the delinquency petition or
2 violation of probation petition in accordance with the time periods specified in this
3 subtitle and in the Maryland Rules.

4 [3-8A-17.6.

5 At a competency hearing, if the court determines that the child is unable to
6 attain competency in the foreseeable future, the court may:

7 (1) Order that proceedings for involuntary admission under Title 10,
8 Subtitle 6, Part III of the Health - General Article be instituted, if appropriate; or

9 (2) Dismiss the delinquency petition or violation of probation petition.]

10 3-8A-17.6.

11 (A) AT A COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE
12 CHILD IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, BUT THAT THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL
13 PROBABILITY THAT THE CHILD MAY BE ABLE TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN THE
14 FORESEEABLE FUTURE AND THAT SERVICES ARE NECESSARY TO ATTAIN
15 COMPETENCY, THE COURT MAY ORDER THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL
16 HYGIENE TO PROVIDE COMPETENCY ATTAINMENT SERVICES FOR THE CHILD FOR AN
17 INITIAL PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 90 DAYS.

18 (B) ANY COMPETENCY ATTAINMENT SERVICES SHALL BE PROVIDED IN THE
19 LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

20 (C) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, THE COURT MAY ORDER A
21 CHILD TO BE PLACED IN A FACILITY FOR CHILDREN IF:

22 (1) THE CHILD IS DETAINED UNDER § 3-8A-15 OF THIS SUBTITLE AT THE
23 TIME OF THE COMPETENCY HEARING; AND

24 (2) THE COURT FINDS AFTER A HEARING ON THE ISSUE THAT:

25 (I) PLACEMENT IN A FACILITY IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE
26 CHILD OR OTHERS, OR THE CHILD IS LIKELY TO LEAVE THE JURISDICTION OF THE
27 COURT; AND

28 (II) NO LESS RESTRICTIVE ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT IS
29 AVAILABLE THAT WILL PROTECT THE CHILD OR THE COMMUNITY OR PREVENT THE
30 CHILD FROM LEAVING THE JURISDICTION OF THE COURT.

31 (D) A CHILD MAY NOT BE:

32 (1) UNLESS THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PLAN
33 DEVELOPED UNDER § 10-706 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE OTHERWISE
34 INDICATES, PROVIDED SERVICES IN ANY GROUP WITH PERSONS WHO ARE AT LEAST
35 18 YEARS OLD;

36 (2) PLACED IN A DETENTION FACILITY; OR

1 (3) PLACED IN A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, EXCEPT IN ACCORDANCE
2 WITH TITLE 10, SUBTITLE 6 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE.

3 [3-8A-17.7.

4 (a) Unless the case is dismissed under § 3-8A-17.6 of this subtitle, at a
5 competency hearing, if the court determines that a child is incompetent to proceed in
6 the foreseeable future, the court shall retain jurisdiction of the child for not more than
7 3 years after the date of the order of incompetency if the child is alleged to have
8 committed an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult, and up to 1 year
9 after the date of the order of incompetency if the child is alleged to have committed an
10 act that would be a misdemeanor if committed by an adult or is alleged to have
11 violated probation.

12 (b) At the end of any period specified in subsection (a) of this section, if the
13 child has not attained competency, the court:

14 (1) Shall dismiss the delinquency petition or the violation of probation
15 petition; and

16 (2) May order that proceedings for involuntary admission under Title 10,
17 Subtitle 6, Part III of the Health - General Article be instituted, if appropriate.]

18 3-8A-17.7.

19 (A) AT A COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE
20 CHILD IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN THE
21 FORESEEABLE FUTURE, HAS A MENTAL DISORDER, AS DEFINED IN § 10-620 OF THE
22 HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE, AND IS A DANGER TO THE LIFE OR SAFETY OF THE
23 CHILD OR OTHERS, THE COURT MAY ORDER A PETITION FOR EMERGENCY
24 EVALUATION UNDER § 10-622 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE.

25 (B) AT A COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE
26 CHILD IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN THE
27 FORESEEABLE FUTURE, AND HAS A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY, AS DEFINED IN §
28 7-101 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE, THE COURT MAY ORDER THE
29 DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION TO EVALUATE THE CHILD WITHIN
30 30 DAYS TO DETERMINE THE CHILD'S ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES UNDER TITLE 7 OF
31 THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE.

32 (C) AT A COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE
33 CHILD IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED AND IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN
34 THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE COURT:

35 (1) MAY DISMISS THE DELINQUENCY PETITION OR VIOLATION OF
36 PROBATION PETITION; AND

37 (2) AFTER THE EXPIRATION OF THE TIME PERIODS FOR DISMISSAL
38 SPECIFIED IN § 3-8A-17.9 OF THIS SUBTITLE, SHALL DISMISS THE DELINQUENCY
39 PETITION OR VIOLATION OF PROBATION PETITION.

1 3-8A-17.8.

2 (A) IF THE COURT ORDERS THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL
3 HYGIENE TO PROVIDE COMPETENCY ATTAINMENT SERVICES UNDER § 3-8A-17.6 OF
4 THIS SUBTITLE, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE SHALL FILE A
5 WRITTEN REPORT WITH THE COURT, WITH NOTICE TO COUNSEL OF THE SUBMISSION
6 OF THE REPORT, WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER THE COURT ORDER, STATING WHETHER, IN
7 THE OPINION OF THE DEPARTMENT, THE CHILD:

8 (1) HAS ATTAINED COMPETENCY;

9 (2) REMAINS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, BUT MAY BE ABLE TO ATTAIN
10 COMPETENCY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE; OR

11 (3) REMAINS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, AND IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN
12 COMPETENCY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

13 (B) (1) THE COURT SHALL HOLD A COMPETENCY HEARING IN ACCORDANCE
14 WITH § 3-8A-17.4 OF THIS SUBTITLE WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE COURT RECEIVES
15 THE REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

16 (2) FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, THE HEARING DATE MAY BE CONTINUED
17 FOR A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME.

18 (C) (1) AT THE COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT
19 THE CHILD IS COMPETENT, THE COURT SHALL PROCEED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
20 3-8A-17.5 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

21 (2) CASE MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF THE CHILD SHALL BE
22 TRANSFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES TO CONTINUE
23 PROCEEDINGS UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

24 (3) (I) SUBJECT TO THE TIME PERIODS FOR DISMISSAL OF THE CASE
25 SPECIFIED IN § 3-8A-17.9 OF THIS SUBTITLE, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE
26 CHILD REMAINS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, BUT MAY BE ABLE TO ATTAIN
27 COMPETENCY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE COURT MAY ORDER THAT
28 SERVICES BE CONTINUED IN INCREMENTS OF NOT MORE THAN 6 MONTHS.

29 (II) WITHIN 6 MONTHS AFTER THE COURT ORDERS ADDITIONAL
30 SERVICES UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE DEPARTMENT OF
31 HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE SHALL FILE A WRITTEN REPORT AS DESCRIBED IN
32 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

33 (III) 1. THE COURT SHALL HOLD A COMPETENCY HEARING IN
34 ACCORDANCE WITH § 3-8A-17.4 OF THIS SUBTITLE WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE
35 COURT RECEIVES THE REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS
36 PARAGRAPH.

37 2. FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, THE HEARING DATE MAY BE
38 CONTINUED FOR A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME.

1 (3) (4) IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE CHILD REMAINS
2 INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED AND IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN THE
3 FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE COURT SHALL PROCEED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
4 3-8A-17.7 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

5 3-8A-17.9.

6 THE COURT SHALL DISMISS THE DELINQUENCY PETITION OR THE VIOLATION
7 OF PROBATION PETITION IF THE CHILD HAS NOT ATTAINED COMPETENCY WITHIN:

8 (1) 18 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FINDING OF INCOMPETENCY IF
9 THE CHILD IS ALLEGED TO HAVE:

10 (I) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SECTION,
11 COMMITTED AN ACT THAT WOULD BE A FELONY IF COMMITTED BY AN ADULT; OR

12 (II) COMMMITTED AN ACT IN VIOLATION OF § 5-133, § 5-134, § 5-138,
13 OR § 5-203 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE OR § 4-203, § 4-204, OR § 4-205 OF THE
14 CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE; OR

15 (2) 6 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FINDING OF INCOMPETENCY IF
16 THE CHILD IS ALLEGED TO HAVE:

17 (I) COMMITTED AN ACT OTHER THAN AN ACT SPECIFIED IN
18 PARAGRAPH (1)(II) OF THIS SECTION THAT WOULD BE A MISDEMEANOR IF
19 COMMITTED BY AN ADULT; OR

20 (II) COMMMITTED AN ACT THAT WOULD BE A FELONY IF COMMITTED
21 BY AN ADULT OVER WHICH THE DISTRICT COURT HAS EXCLUSIVE ORIGINAL
22 JURISDICTION UNDER TITLE 4, SUBTITLE 3 OF THE COURTS ARTICLE.

23 [3-8A-17.8.] 3-8A-17.10.

24 (a) At any time before an adjudication under this subtitle, a hearing on a
25 preliminary motion on another issue, including an objection to the sufficiency of the
26 petition, may be conducted without the child being present if the child's testimony is
27 not required.

28 (b) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, any statement
29 made by the child or information elicited during a competency hearing [or], in
30 connection with the determination of competency, OR WHILE SERVICES ARE BEING
31 PROVIDED under this subtitle, and any report prepared by a qualified expert, may not
32 be admitted in evidence in any proceeding except a proceeding relating to the child's
33 competency to proceed.

34 (2) Paragraph (1) of this subsection does not apply if the counsel for the
35 child introduces the report of the qualified expert, or any part of it, in any hearing
36 other than a competency hearing.

1 3-8A-17.11.

2 IN ANY COMPETENCY HEARING UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, IT IS PRESUMED THAT
3 THE CHILD DID NOT COMMIT THE ACT ALLEGED IN THE PETITION.

4 [3-8A-17.9.] 3-8A-17.12.

5 The [Secretary] SECRETARIES of Health and Mental Hygiene, HUMAN
6 RESOURCES, and [the Secretary of] Juvenile Services, AND THE STATE
7 SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS shall jointly adopt regulations to carry out the
8 provisions of this subtitle relating to competency.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
10 October 1, 2006.