
By: **Senator Grosfeld**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2006

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

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 under
10 certain circumstances; authorizing the court to take certain actions at a certain
11 competency hearing; requiring the court to dismiss a delinquency petition or
12 violation of probation petition under certain circumstances; prohibiting the
13 admission in evidence of certain statements and information elicited while
14 certain services are being provided; establishing a certain presumption; altering
15 a certain provision relating to the adoption of regulations; altering a certain
16 definition; and generally relating to juvenile competency.

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

22 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
23 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
24 Section 3-8A-01(z), 3-8A-17.1, 3-8A-17.8, and 3-8A-17.9
25 Annotated Code of Maryland
26 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

27 BY repealing
28 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
29 Section 3-8A-17.6 and 3-8A-17.7
30 Annotated Code of Maryland

1 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

2 BY adding to

3 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings

4 Section 3-8A-17.6, 3-8A-17.7, 3-8A-17.8, 3-8A-17.9, and 3-8A-17.11

5 Annotated Code of Maryland

6 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

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

9 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

10 3-8A-01.

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

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

16 (1) Familiar with the competency standards contained in this subtitle;
17 and

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

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

24 (2) IS FAMILIAR WITH THE COMPETENCY STANDARDS CONTAINED IN
25 THIS SUBTITLE; AND

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

28 3-8A-17.1.

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

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

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

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

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

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

15 3-8A-17.4.

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

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

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

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

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

27 3-8A-17.5.

28 At a competency hearing, if the court determines that the child is competent, the
29 court shall enter an order stating that the child is competent, lift the stay imposed
30 under § 3-8A-17.1 of this subtitle, and proceed with the delinquency petition or
31 violation of probation petition in accordance with the time periods specified in this
32 subtitle and in the Maryland Rules.

33 [3-8A-17.6.

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

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

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

4 3-8A-17.6.

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

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

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

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

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

19 (I) PLACEMENT IN A FACILITY IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE
20 CHILD OR OTHERS, OR THE CHILD IS LIKELY TO LEAVE THE JURISDICTION OF THE
21 COURT; AND

22 (II) NO LESS RESTRICTIVE ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT IS
23 AVAILABLE THAT WILL PROTECT THE CHILD OR THE COMMUNITY, OR THE CHILD IS
24 LIKELY TO LEAVE THE JURISDICTION OF THE COURT.

25 (D) A CHILD MAY NOT BE:

26 (1) UNLESS THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PLAN
27 DEVELOPED UNDER § 10-706 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE OTHERWISE
28 INDICATES, PROVIDED SERVICES IN ANY GROUP WITH PERSONS WHO ARE AT LEAST
29 18 YEARS OLD;

30 (2) PLACED IN A DETENTION FACILITY; OR

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

33 [3-8A-17.7.

34 (a) Unless the case is dismissed under § 3-8A-17.6 of this subtitle, at a
35 competency hearing, if the court determines that a child is incompetent to proceed in
36 the foreseeable future, the court shall retain jurisdiction of the child for not more than

1 3 years after the date of the order of incompetency if the child is alleged to have
2 committed an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult, and up to 1 year
3 after the date of the order of incompetency if the child is alleged to have committed an
4 act that would be a misdemeanor if committed by an adult or is alleged to have
5 violated probation.

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

8 (1) Shall dismiss the delinquency petition or the violation of probation
9 petition; and

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

12 3-8A-17.7.

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

19 (B) 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, AND HAS A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY, AS DEFINED IN §
22 7-101 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE, THE COURT MAY ORDER THE
23 DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION TO EVALUATE THE CHILD WITHIN
24 30 DAYS TO DETERMINE THE CHILD'S ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES UNDER TITLE 7 OF
25 THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE.

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

29 (1) MAY DISMISS THE DELINQUENCY PETITION OR VIOLATION OF
30 PROBATION PETITION; AND

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

34 3-8A-17.8.

35 (A) IF THE COURT ORDERS THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL
36 HYGIENE TO PROVIDE COMPETENCY ATTAINMENT SERVICES UNDER § 3-8A-17.6 OF
37 THIS SUBTITLE, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE SHALL FILE A
38 WRITTEN REPORT WITH THE COURT, WITH NOTICE TO COUNSEL OF THE SUBMISSION

1 OF THE REPORT, WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER THE COURT ORDER, STATING WHETHER, IN
2 THE OPINION OF THE DEPARTMENT, THE CHILD:

3 (1) HAS ATTAINED COMPETENCY;

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

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

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

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

13 (C) (1) AT THE COMPETENCY HEARING, IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT
14 THE CHILD IS COMPETENT, THE COURT SHALL PROCEED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
15 3-8A-17.5 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

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

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

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

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

31 (3) IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THE CHILD REMAINS
32 INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED AND IS UNLIKELY TO ATTAIN COMPETENCY IN THE
33 FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE COURT SHALL PROCEED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
34 3-8A-17.7 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

35 3-8A-17.9.

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

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

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

5 (II) COMMITTED AN ACT IN VIOLATION OF § 5-133, § 5-134, § 5-138,
6 OR § 5-203 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE OR § 4-203, § 4-204, OR § 4-205 OF THE
7 CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE; OR

8 (2) 6 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FINDING OF INCOMPETENCY IF
9 THE CHILD IS ALLEGED TO HAVE:

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

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

16 [3-8A-17.8.] 3-8A-17.10.

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

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

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

30 3-8A-17.11.

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

33 [3-8A-17.9.] 3-8A-17.12.

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

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