

RCW 10.77.200 Release—Procedure. (1) Upon application by the committed or conditionally released person, the secretary shall determine whether or not reasonable grounds exist for release. In making this determination, the secretary may consider the reports filed under RCW 10.77.060, 10.77.110, 10.77.140, and 10.77.160, and other reports and evaluations provided by professionals familiar with the case. If the secretary approves the release he or she then shall authorize the person to petition the court.

(2) In instances in which persons have not made application for release, but the secretary believes, after consideration of the reports filed under RCW 10.77.060, 10.77.110, 10.77.140, and 10.77.160, and other reports and evaluations provided by professionals familiar with the case, that reasonable grounds exist for release, the secretary may petition the court. If the secretary petitions the court for release under this subsection, notice of the petition must be provided to the person who is the subject of the petition and to his or her attorney.

(3) The petition shall be served upon the court and the prosecuting attorney. The court, upon receipt of the petition for release, shall within 45 days order a hearing. Continuance of the hearing date shall only be allowed for good cause shown. The prosecuting attorney shall represent the state, and shall have the right to have the person who is the subject of the petition examined by an expert or professional person of the prosecuting attorney's choice. If the secretary is the petitioner, the attorney general shall represent the secretary. If the person who is the subject of the petition is indigent, and the person so requests, the court shall assist the person in obtaining a qualified expert or professional person to examine him or her. An expert or professional person obtained by an indigent person who was committed to state psychiatric care following acquittal by reason of insanity shall be compensated out of funds of the office of public defense as provided in policies and procedures under chapter 2.70 RCW, in a manner consistent with the rules of professional conduct and the standards for indigent defense. If the person who is the subject of the petition has a developmental disability, the examination shall be performed by a developmental disabilities professional. The hearing shall be before a jury if demanded by either the petitioner or the prosecuting attorney. The burden of proof shall be upon the petitioner to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the person who is the subject of the petition no longer presents, as a result of a mental disease or defect, a substantial danger to other persons, or a substantial likelihood of committing criminal acts jeopardizing public safety or security, unless kept under further control by the court or other persons or institutions. If the person who is the subject of the petition will be transferred to a state correctional institution or facility upon release to serve a sentence for any class A felony, the petitioner must show that the person's mental disease or defect is manageable within a state correctional institution or facility, but must not be required to prove that the person does not present either a substantial danger to other persons, or a substantial likelihood of committing criminal acts jeopardizing public safety or security, if released.

(4) For purposes of this section, a person affected by a mental disease or defect in a state of remission is considered to have a mental disease or defect requiring supervision when the disease may,

with reasonable medical probability, occasionally become active and, when active, render the person a danger to others. Upon a finding that the person who is the subject of the petition has a mental disease or defect in a state of remission under this subsection, the court may deny release, or place or continue such a person on conditional release.

(5) Nothing contained in this chapter shall prohibit the patient from petitioning the court for release or conditional release from the institution in which he or she is committed. The petition shall be served upon the court, the prosecuting attorney, and the secretary. Upon receipt of such petition, the secretary shall develop a recommendation as provided in subsection (1) of this section and provide the secretary's recommendation to all parties and the court. The issue to be determined on such proceeding is whether the patient, as a result of a mental disease or defect, is a substantial danger to other persons, or presents a substantial likelihood of committing criminal acts jeopardizing public safety or security, unless kept under further control by the court or other persons or institutions.

(6) Nothing contained in this chapter shall prohibit the committed person from petitioning for release by writ of habeas corpus. [2023 c 120 § 12; 2013 c 289 § 7; 2010 c 263 § 8; 2000 c 94 § 16; 1998 c 297 § 44; 1993 c 31 § 11; 1989 c 420 § 11; 1983 c 25 § 2; 1974 ex.s. c 198 § 16; 1973 1st ex.s. c 117 § 20.]

Intent—Effective date—2023 c 120: See notes following RCW 2.70.027.

Findings—2013 c 289: See note following RCW 10.77.086.

Effective dates—Severability—Intent—1998 c 297: See notes following RCW 71.05.010.