

**No. 153. An act relating to jurisdiction over delinquency proceedings by the Family Division of the Superior Court.**

(H.95)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 5280 is added to read:

§ 5280. COMMENCEMENT OF YOUTHFUL OFFENDER

PROCEEDINGS IN THE FAMILY DIVISION

(a) A proceeding under this subchapter shall be commenced by:

(1) the filing of a youthful offender petition by a State's Attorney; or

(2) transfer to the Family Court of a proceeding from the Criminal

Division of the Superior Court as provided in section 5281 of this title.

(b) A State's Attorney may commence a proceeding in the Family Division of the Superior Court concerning a child who is alleged to have committed an offense after attaining 16 years of age, but not 22 years of age that could otherwise be filed in the Criminal Division.

(c) If a State's Attorney files a petition under subdivision (a)(1) of this section, the case shall proceed as provided under subsection 5281(b) of this title.

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 5281 is amended to read:

§ 5281. MOTION IN CRIMINAL DIVISION OF SUPERIOR COURT

(a) A motion may be filed in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court requesting that a defendant under ~~18~~ 22 years of age in a criminal proceeding who had attained ~~the age of 10~~ 12 years of age but not ~~the age of 18~~ 22 years of

age at the time the offense is alleged to have been committed be treated as a youthful offender. The motion may be filed by the State's Attorney, the defendant, or the Court on its own motion.

(b) Upon the filing of a motion under this section ~~and the entering of a conditional plea of guilty by the youth, the Criminal Division shall enter an order deferring the sentence and transferring the case to~~ or the filing of a youthful offender petition pursuant to section 5280 of this title, the Family Division ~~for~~ shall hold a hearing ~~on the motion~~ pursuant to section 5283 of this title. Copies of all records relating to the case shall be forwarded to the Family Division. Conditions of release and any Department of Corrections supervision or custody shall remain in effect until the Family Division ~~approves the motion~~ accepts the case for treatment as a youthful offender and orders conditions of juvenile probation pursuant to section 5284 of this title, or the case is otherwise concluded.

(c) ~~A plea of guilty entered by the youth pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be conditional upon the Family Division granting the motion for youthful offender status.~~

~~(d)~~(1) If the Family Division ~~denies the motion~~ rejects the case for youthful offender treatment pursuant to subsection 5284 of this title, the case shall be ~~returned~~ transferred to the Criminal Division, ~~and the youth shall be permitted to withdraw the plea.~~ The conditions of release imposed by the Criminal Division shall remain in effect, and the case shall proceed as though the motion

for youthful offender treatment or youthful offender petition had not been ~~made~~ filed.

(2) Subject to Rule 11 of the Vermont Rules of Criminal Procedure and Rule 410 of the Vermont Rules of Evidence, the Family Division's denial of the motion for youthful offender treatment and any information related to the youthful offender proceeding shall be inadmissible against the youth for any purpose in the subsequent Criminal Division proceeding.

(d) If the Family Division accepts the case for youthful offender treatment, the case shall proceed to a confidential merits hearing or admission pursuant to sections 5227–5229 of this title. If the youth is adjudicated, the Court will create a criminal case reflecting the charge and conviction.

Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 5282 is amended to read:

§ 5282. REPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT

(a) Within 30 days after the case is transferred to the Family Division or a youthful offender petition is filed in the Family Division, unless the Court extends the period for good cause shown, the Department shall file a report with the Family Division of the Superior Court.

(b) A report filed pursuant to this section shall include the following elements:

(1) a recommendation as to whether youthful offender status is appropriate for the youth;

(2) a disposition case plan including proposed services and proposed conditions of juvenile probation in the event youthful offender status is approved and the youth is adjudicated;

(3) a description of the services that may be available for the youth when he or she reaches 18 years of age.

(c) A report filed pursuant to this section is privileged and shall not be disclosed to any person other than the Department, the Court, the State's Attorney, the youth, the youth's attorney, the youth's guardian ad litem, the Department of Corrections, or any other person when the Court determines that the best interests of the youth would make such a disclosure desirable or helpful.

Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 5283 is amended to read:

§ 5283. HEARING IN FAMILY DIVISION

(a) Timeline. A hearing on the motion for youthful offender status shall be held no later than 35 days after the transfer of the case from the Criminal Division or filing of a youthful offender petition in the Family Division.

(b) Notice. Notice of the hearing shall be provided to the State's Attorney; the youth; the youth's parent, guardian, or custodian; the Department; and the Department of Corrections.

(c) Hearing procedure.

(1) If the motion is contested, all parties shall have the right to present evidence and examine witnesses. Hearsay may be admitted and may be relied

on to the extent of its probative value. If reports are admitted, the parties shall be afforded an opportunity to examine those persons making the reports, but sources of confidential information need not be disclosed.

(2) Hearings under subsection 5284(a) of this title shall be open to the public. All other youthful offender proceedings shall be confidential.

(d) The burden of proof shall be on the moving party to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that a child should be granted youthful offender status. If the Court makes the motion, the burden shall be on the youth.

(e) Further hearing. On its own motion or the motion of a party, the Court may schedule a further hearing to obtain reports or other information necessary for the appropriate disposition of the case.

Sec. 5. 33 V.S.A. § 5284 is amended to read:

§ 5284. YOUTHFUL OFFENDER DETERMINATION AND DISPOSITION  
ORDER

(a) In a hearing on a motion for youthful offender status, the Court shall first consider whether public safety will be protected by treating the youth as a youthful offender. If the Court finds that public safety will not be protected by treating the youth as a youthful offender, the Court shall deny the motion and ~~return~~ transfer the case to the Criminal Division of the Superior Court pursuant to subsection 5281(d) of this title. If the Court finds that public safety will be protected by treating the youth as a youthful offender, the Court shall proceed to make a determination under subsection (b) of this section.

(b)(1) The Court shall deny the motion if the Court finds that:

(A) the youth is not amenable to treatment or rehabilitation as a youthful offender; or

(B) there are insufficient services in the juvenile court system and the Department to meet the youth's treatment and rehabilitation needs.

(2) The Court shall grant the motion if the Court finds that:

(A) the youth is amenable to treatment or rehabilitation as a youthful offender; and

(B) there are sufficient services in the juvenile court system and the Department to meet the youth's treatment and rehabilitation needs.

(c) If the Court approves the motion for youthful offender treatment after an adjudication pursuant to subsection 5281(d) of this title, the Court:

(1) shall approve a disposition case plan and impose conditions of juvenile probation on the youth; and

(2) may transfer legal custody of the youth to a parent, relative, person with a significant relationship with the youth, or Commissioner, provided that any transfer of custody shall expire on the youth's 18th birthday.

(d) The Department shall be responsible for supervision of and providing services to the youth until he or she reaches ~~the age of 18~~ years of age. A lead case manager shall be designated who shall have final decision-making authority over the case plan and the provision of services to the youth. The

youth shall be eligible for appropriate community-based programming and services provided by the Department.

(e) The youth shall not be permitted to withdraw his or her plea of guilty after youthful offender status is approved except to correct manifest injustice pursuant to Rule 32(d) of the Vermont Rules of Criminal Procedure.

\* \* \* Effective January 1, 2018 \* \* \*

Sec. 6. 33 V.S.A. § 5103 is amended to read:

§ 5103. JURISDICTION

(a) The Family Division of the Superior Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all proceedings concerning a child who is or who is alleged to be a delinquent child or a child in need of care or supervision brought under the authority of the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters, except as otherwise provided in such chapters.

(b) Orders issued under the authority of the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters shall take precedence over orders in other Family Division proceedings and any order of another court of this State, to the extent they are inconsistent. This section shall not apply to child support orders in a divorce, parentage, or relief from abuse proceedings until a child support order has been issued in the juvenile proceeding.

(c)(1) Except as otherwise provided by this title and by subdivision (2) of this subsection, jurisdiction over a child shall not be extended beyond the child's 18th birthday.

(2)(A) Jurisdiction over a child who has been adjudicated delinquent may be extended until six months beyond the child's ~~18th~~ 19th birthday if ~~the offense for which the child has been adjudicated delinquent is a nonviolent misdemeanor and~~ the child was 16 or 17 years old when he or she committed the offense.

(B) In no case shall custody of a child ~~aged~~ 18 years of age or older be retained by or transferred to the Commissioner for Children and Families.

(C) Jurisdiction over a child in need of care or supervision shall not be extended beyond the child's 18th birthday.

~~(D) As used in this subdivision, "nonviolent misdemeanor" means a misdemeanor offense which is not a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7), an offense involving sexual exploitation of children in violation of 13 V.S.A. chapter 64, or an offense involving violation of a protection order in violation of 13 V.S.A. § 1030.~~

(d) The Court may terminate its jurisdiction over a child prior to the child's 18th birthday by order of the Court. If the child is not subject to another juvenile proceeding, jurisdiction shall terminate automatically in the following circumstances:

(1) upon the discharge of a child from juvenile probation, providing the child is not in the legal custody of the Commissioner;

(2) upon an order of the Court transferring legal custody to a parent, guardian, or custodian without conditions or protective supervision;

(3) upon the adoption of a child following a termination of parental rights proceeding.

Sec. 7. 33 V.S.A. § 5201 is amended to read:

§ 5201. COMMENCEMENT OF DELINQUENCY PROCEEDINGS

(a) Proceedings under this chapter shall be commenced by:

(1) transfer to the Court of a proceeding from another court as provided in section 5203 of this title; or

(2) the filing of a delinquency petition by a State's Attorney.

(b) If the proceeding is commenced by transfer from another court, no petition need be filed; however, the State's Attorney shall provide to the Court the name and address of the child's custodial parent, guardian, or custodian and the name and address of any noncustodial parent if known.

(c) Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed an act specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title after attaining 14 years of age, but not 18 years of age, shall originate in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, provided that jurisdiction may be transferred in accordance with this chapter.

(d) Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed a misdemeanor offense before attaining ~~17~~ 18 years of age shall originate in the Family Division of the Superior Court.

(e) Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed a felony offense other than those specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title

before attaining ~~17~~ 18 years of age shall originate in the Family Division of the Superior Court provided that jurisdiction may be transferred in accordance with this chapter.

\* \* \*

Sec. 8. 33 V.S.A. § 5203 is amended to read:

§ 5203. TRANSFER FROM OTHER COURTS

(a) If it appears to a Criminal Division of the Superior Court that the defendant was under ~~17~~ 18 years of age at the time the offense charged was alleged to have been committed and the offense charged is a misdemeanor, that Court shall forthwith transfer the case to the Family Division of the Superior Court under the authority of this chapter.

(b) If it appears to a Criminal Division of the Superior Court that the defendant was under ~~17~~ 18 years of age at the time a felony offense not listed in subsection 5204(a) of this title was alleged to have been committed, that Court shall forthwith transfer the proceeding to the Family Division of the Superior Court under the authority of this chapter, and the minor shall thereupon be considered to be subject to this chapter as a child charged with a delinquent act.

(c) If it appears to the State's Attorney that the defendant was ~~16~~ under 18 years of age at the time the felony offense charged was alleged to have been committed and the felony charged is not an offense specified in subsection

5204(a) of this title, the State's Attorney shall file charges in the Family Division of the Superior Court.

\* \* \*

\* \* \* Effective January 1, 2017 \* \* \*

Sec. 9. 33 V.S.A. § 5201 is amended to read:

§ 5201. COMMENCEMENT OF DELINQUENCY PROCEEDINGS

(a) Proceedings under this chapter shall be commenced by:

(1) transfer to the Court of a proceeding from another court as provided in section 5203 of this title; or

(2) the filing of a delinquency petition by a State's Attorney.

(b) If the proceeding is commenced by transfer from another court, no petition need be filed; however, the State's Attorney shall provide to the Court the name and address of the child's custodial parent, guardian, or custodian and the name and address of any noncustodial parent if known.

(c) ~~Consistent with applicable provisions of Title 4, any~~ Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed an act specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title after attaining ~~the age of 14~~ 14 years of age, but not ~~the age of 18~~ 18 years of age, shall originate in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, provided that jurisdiction may be transferred in accordance with this chapter.

(d) Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed a misdemeanor offense before attaining 17 years of age shall originate in the Family Division of the Superior Court.

(e) Any proceeding concerning a child who is alleged to have committed a felony offense other than those specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title before attaining 17 years of age shall originate in the Family Division of the Superior Court provided that jurisdiction may be transferred in accordance with this chapter.

(f) If the State requests that custody of the child be transferred to the Department, a temporary care hearing shall be held as provided in subchapter 3 of this chapter.

~~(e)~~(g) A petition may be withdrawn by the State's Attorney at any time prior to the hearing thereon, in which event the child shall be returned to the custodial parent, guardian, or custodian, the proceedings under this chapter terminated, and all files and documents relating thereto sealed under section 5119 of this title.

Sec. 10. 33 V.S.A. § 5203 is amended to read:

§ 5203. TRANSFER FROM OTHER COURTS

(a) If it appears to a Criminal Division of the Superior Court that the defendant was under ~~the age of 16~~ 17 years of age at the time the offense charged was alleged to have been committed and the offense charged is ~~not~~ one of those specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title a misdemeanor, that

Court shall forthwith transfer the case to the Family Division of the Superior Court under the authority of this chapter.

(b) If it appears to a Criminal Division of the Superior Court that the defendant was ~~over the age of 16 years and under the age of 18~~ 17 years of age at the time ~~the a felony offense charged~~ not specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title was alleged to have been committed, ~~or that the defendant had attained the age of 14 but not the age of 16 at the time an offense specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title was alleged to have been committed,~~ that Court ~~may~~ shall forthwith transfer the proceeding to the Family Division of the Superior Court under the authority of this chapter, and the minor shall thereupon be considered to be subject to this chapter as a child charged with a delinquent act.

(c) If it appears to the State's Attorney that the defendant was ~~over the age of 16 years of age and under the age of 18~~ at the time the ~~offense~~ felony charged was alleged to have been committed and the ~~offense~~ felony charged is not an offense specified in subsection 5204(a) of this title, the State's Attorney ~~may~~ shall file charges in the Family ~~or Criminal~~ Division of the Superior Court. ~~If charges in such a matter are filed in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, the Criminal Division of the Superior Court may forthwith transfer the proceeding to the Family Division of the Superior Court under the authority of this chapter, and the person shall thereupon be considered to be subject to this chapter as a child charged with a delinquent act.~~

(d) ~~Any such~~ A transfer under this section shall include a transfer and delivery of a copy of the accusatory pleading and other papers, documents, and transcripts of testimony relating to the case. Upon any such transfer, that court shall order that the defendant be taken forthwith to a place of detention designated by the Family Division of the Superior Court or to that court itself, or shall release the child to the custody of his or her parent or guardian or other person legally responsible for the child, to be brought before the Family Division of the Superior Court at a time designated by that court. The Family Division of the Superior Court shall then proceed as provided in this chapter as if a petition alleging delinquency had been filed with the Court under section 5223 of this title on the effective date of such transfer.

(e) Motions to transfer a case to the Family Division of the Superior Court for youthful offender treatment shall be made under section 5281 of this title.

Sec. 11. 33 V.S.A. § 5204 is amended to read:

§ 5204. TRANSFER FROM FAMILY DIVISION OF THE SUPERIOR  
COURT

(a) After a petition has been filed alleging delinquency, upon motion of the State's Attorney and after hearing, the Family Division of the Superior Court may transfer jurisdiction of the proceeding to the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, if the child had attained 16 years of age but not 18 years of age at the time the act was alleged to have occurred and the delinquent act set forth in the petition ~~was not one of those specified in subdivisions (1) (12) of this~~

~~subsection~~ is a felony not specified in subdivisions (1)–(12) of this subsection  
or if the child had attained 12 years of age but not 14 years of age at the time  
the act was alleged to have occurred, and if the delinquent act set forth in the  
petition was any of the following:

- (1) arson causing death as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 501;
- (2) assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon as defined in  
13 V.S.A. § 608(b);
- (3) assault and robbery causing bodily injury as defined in 13 V.S.A.  
§ 608(c);
- (4) aggravated assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1024;
- (5) murder as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2301;
- (6) manslaughter as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2304;
- (7) kidnapping as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2405;
- (8) unlawful restraint as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2406 or 2407;
- (9) maiming as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2701;
- (10) sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3252(a)(1) or (a)(2);
- (11) aggravated sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3253; or
- (12) burglary into an occupied dwelling as defined in 13 V.S.A.  
§ 1201(c).

\* \* \*

(i) If a juvenile 16 years of age or older has been prosecuted as an adult for  
an offense not listed in subsection (a) of this section and is not convicted of a

felony, but is convicted of a lesser included misdemeanor, jurisdiction shall be transferred to the Family Division of the Superior Court for disposition. A conviction under this subsection shall be considered an adjudication of delinquency and not a conviction of a crime, and the entire matter shall be treated as if it had remained in the Family Division throughout. In case of an acquittal for a matter specified in this subsection and in case of a transfer to the Family Division under this subsection, the court shall order the sealing of all applicable files and records of the court, and such order shall be carried out as provided in subsection 5119(e) of this title.

(j) The record of a hearing conducted under subsection (c) of this section and any related files shall be open to inspection only by persons specified in subsections 5117(b) and (c) of this title in accordance with section 5119 of this title and by the attorney for the child.

\* \* \* Effective July 1, 2016 \* \* \*

Sec. 12. 33 V.S.A. § 5204 is amended to read:

§ 5204. TRANSFER FROM FAMILY DIVISION OF THE SUPERIOR  
COURT

(a) After a petition has been filed alleging delinquency, upon motion of the State's Attorney and after hearing, the Family Division of the Superior Court may transfer jurisdiction of the proceeding to the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, if the child had attained ~~the age of 16~~ years of age but not ~~the age of 18~~ years of age at the time the act was alleged to have occurred and the

delinquent act set forth in the petition was not one of those specified in subdivisions (1)-(12) of this subsection or if the child had attained ~~the age of~~ 10 12 years of age but not ~~the age of~~ 14 years of age at the time the act was alleged to have occurred, and if the delinquent act set forth in the petition was any of the following:

- (1) arson causing death as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 501;
- (2) assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 608(b);
- (3) assault and robbery causing bodily injury as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 608(c);
- (4) aggravated assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1024;
- (5) murder as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2301;
- (6) manslaughter as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2304;
- (7) kidnapping as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2405;
- (8) unlawful restraint as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2406 or 2407;
- (9) maiming as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2701;
- (10) sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3252(a)(1) or (a)(2);
- (11) aggravated sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3253; or
- (12) burglary into an occupied dwelling as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1201(c).

(b) The State's Attorney of the county where the juvenile petition is pending may move in the Family Division of the Superior Court for an order

transferring jurisdiction under subsection (a) of this section at any time prior to adjudication on the merits. The filing of the motion to transfer jurisdiction shall automatically stay the time for the hearing provided for in section 5225 of this title, which stay shall remain in effect until such time as the Family Division of the Superior Court may deny the motion to transfer jurisdiction.

(c) Upon the filing of a motion to transfer jurisdiction under subsection (b) of this section, the Family Division of the Superior Court shall conduct a hearing in accordance with procedures specified in subchapter 2 of this chapter to determine whether:

(1) there is probable cause to believe that the child committed ~~an act~~ listed in subsection (a) of this section the charged offense; and

(2) public safety and the interests of the community would not be served by treatment of the child under the provisions of law relating to the Family Division of the Superior Court and delinquent children.

\* \* \*

(g) The order granting or denying transfer of jurisdiction shall ~~not~~ constitute a final ~~judgment or~~ order within the meaning of Rules 3 and 4 of the Vermont Rules of Appellate Procedure.

(h) If a person who has not attained ~~the age of~~ 16 years of age at the time of the alleged offense has been prosecuted as an adult and is not convicted of one of the acts listed in subsection (a) of this section but is convicted only of one or more lesser offenses, jurisdiction shall be transferred to the Family Division of

the Superior Court for disposition. A conviction under this subsection shall be considered an adjudication of delinquency and not a conviction of crime, and the entire matter shall be treated as if it had remained in the Family Division throughout. In case of an acquittal for a matter specified in this subsection and in case of a transfer to the Family Division under this subsection, the Court shall order the sealing of all applicable files and records of the Court, and such order shall be carried out as provided in subsection 5119(e) of this title.

\* \* \*

Sec. 13. 33 V.S.A. § 5106 is amended to read:

§ 5106. POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER

Subject to the limitations of the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters or those imposed by the Court, and in addition to any other powers granted to the Commissioner under the laws of this State, the Commissioner has the following authority with respect to a child who is or may be the subject of a petition brought under the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters:

(1) To undertake assessments and make reports and recommendations to the Court as authorized by the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters.

(2) To investigate complaints and allegations that a child is in need of care or supervision for the purpose of considering the commencement of proceedings under the juvenile judicial proceedings chapters.

(3) To supervise and assist a child who is placed under the Commissioner's supervision or in the Commissioner's legal custody by order

of the Court, and to administer sanctions in accordance with graduated sanctions established by policy and that are consistent with the juvenile probation certificate.

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Sec. 14. 33 V.S.A. § 5225 is amended to read:

§ 5225. PRELIMINARY HEARING; RISK ASSESSMENT

(a) A preliminary hearing shall be held at the time and date specified on the citation or as otherwise ordered by the Court. If a child is taken into custody prior to the preliminary hearing, the preliminary hearing shall be at the time of the temporary care hearing.

(b) Prior to the preliminary hearing, the child shall be afforded an opportunity to undergo a risk and needs screening, which shall be conducted by the Department or by a community provider that has contracted with the Department to provide risk and need screenings for children alleged to have committed delinquent acts. If the child participates in such a screening, the Department or the community provider shall report the risk level result of the screening to the State's Attorney. In lieu of filing a charge, the State's Attorney may refer a child directly to a youth-appropriate community-based provider that has been approved by the Department, which may include a community justice center or a balanced and restorative justice program. Referral to a community-based provider pursuant to this subsection shall not require the State's Attorney to file a charge. If the community-based provider

does not accept the case or if the child fails to complete the program in a manner deemed satisfactory and timely by the provider, the child's case shall return to the State's Attorney for charging consideration. If a charge is brought in the Family Division, the risk level result shall be provided to the child's attorney. Except on agreement of the parties, the results shall not be provided to the Court until after a merits finding has been made.

(c) Counsel for the child shall be assigned prior to the preliminary hearing.

(d) At the preliminary hearing, the Court shall appoint a guardian ad litem for the child. The guardian ad litem may be the child's parent, guardian, or custodian. On its own motion or motion by the child's attorney, the Court may appoint a guardian ad litem other than a parent, guardian or custodian.

(e) At the preliminary hearing, a denial shall be entered to the allegations of the petition, unless the juvenile, after adequate consultation with the guardian ad litem and counsel, enters an admission. If the juvenile enters an admission, the disposition case plan required by section 5230 of this title may be waived and the Court may proceed directly to disposition, provided that the juvenile, the custodial parent, the State's Attorney, the guardian ad litem, and the Department agree.

(f) The Court may order the child to abide by conditions of release pending a merits or disposition hearing.

Sec. 15. 33 V.S.A. § 5285 is amended to read:

§ 5285. MODIFICATION OR REVOCATION OF DISPOSITION

(a) If it appears that the youth has violated the terms of juvenile probation ordered by the Court pursuant to subdivision 5284(c)(1) of this title, a motion for modification or revocation of youthful offender status may be filed in the Family Division of the Superior Court. The Court shall set the motion for hearing as soon as practicable. The hearing may be joined with a hearing on a violation of conditions of probation under section 5265 of this title. A supervising juvenile or adult probation officer may detain in an adult facility a youthful offender who has attained ~~the age of 18~~ years of age for violating conditions of probation.

(b) A hearing under this section shall be held in accordance with section 5268 of this title.

(c) If the Court finds after the hearing that the youth has violated the terms of his or her probation, the Court may:

(1) maintain the youth's status as a youthful offender, with modified conditions of juvenile probation if the Court deems it appropriate;

(2) revoke the youth's status as a youthful offender status and return the case to the Criminal Division for sentencing; or

(3) transfer supervision of the youth to the Department of Corrections with all of the powers and authority of the Department and the Commissioner under Title 28, including graduated sanctions and electronic monitoring.

(d) If a youth's status as a youthful offender is revoked and the case is returned to the Criminal Division under subdivision (c)(2) of this section, the Court shall hold a sentencing hearing and impose sentence. When determining an appropriate sentence, the Court may take into consideration the youth's degree of progress toward rehabilitation while on youthful offender status. The Criminal Division shall have access to all Family Division records of the proceeding.

Sec. 16. 28 V.S.A. § 1101 is amended to read:

§ 1101. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER  
REGARDING JUVENILE SERVICES

The Commissioner is charged with the following powers and responsibilities regarding the administration of juvenile services:

(1) to provide appropriate, separate facilities for the custody and treatment of ~~children~~ offenders under 25 years of age committed to his or her custody in accordance with the laws of the State;

\* \* \*

Sec. 17. 33 V.S.A. § 5206 is added to read:

§ 5206. CITATION OF 16- AND 17-YEAR-OLDS

(a)(1) If a child was over 16 years of age and under 18 years of age at the time the offense was alleged to have been committed and the offense is not specified in subsection (b) of this section, law enforcement shall cite the child to the Family Division of the Superior Court.

(2) If, after the child is cited to the Family Division, the State's Attorney chooses to file the charge in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court, the State's Attorney shall state in the information the reason why filing in the Criminal Division is in the interest of justice.

(b) Offenses for which a law enforcement officer is not required to cite a child to the Family Division of the Superior Court shall include:

(1) 23 V.S.A. §§ 674 (driving while license suspended or revoked); 1128 (accidents—duty to stop); and 1133 (eluding a police officer).

(2) Fish and wildlife offenses that are not minor violations as defined by 10 V.S.A. § 4572.

(3) A listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301.

(4) An offense listed in subsection 5204(a) of this title.

Sec. 18. 13 V.S.A. § 7554 is amended to read:

§ 7554. RELEASE PRIOR TO TRIAL

\* \* \*

(j) Any juvenile between 14 and 16 years of age who is charged with a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title shall appear before a judicial officer and be ordered released pending trial in accordance with this section within 24 hours of the juvenile's arrest.

Sec. 19. 4 V.S.A. § 33 is amended to read:

§ 33. JURISDICTION; FAMILY DIVISION

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Family Division shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and dispose of the following proceedings filed or pending on or after October 1, 1990:

\* \* \*

(b) The Family Division has jurisdiction to hear and dispose of proceedings involving misdemeanor motor vehicle offenses filed or pending on or after July 1, 2016, pursuant to 33 V.S.A. §§ 5201, 5203, and 5280. The Family Division of the Superior Court shall forward a record of any conviction for violation of a law related to motor vehicle traffic control, other than a parking violation, to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1709.

Sec. 20. 33 V.S.A. § 5102 is amended to read:

§ 5102. DEFINITIONS AND PROVISIONS OF GENERAL APPLICATION

\* \* \*

(28) “Victim” shall have the same meaning as in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(4).

(29) “Youth” shall mean a person who is the subject of a motion for youthful offender status or who has been granted youthful offender status.

Sec. 21. 33 V.S.A. § 5234 is amended to read:

§ 5234. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS IN DELINQUENCY PROCEEDINGS  
INVOLVING A LISTED CRIME

(a) The victim in a delinquency proceeding involving a listed crime shall have the following rights:

(1) To be notified by the prosecutor's office in a timely manner of the following:

(A) when a delinquency petition has been filed, the name of the child and any conditions of release initially ordered for the child or modified by the Court that are related to the victim or a member of the victim's family or current household;

(B) his or her rights as provided by law, information regarding how a case proceeds through a delinquency proceeding, the confidential nature of delinquency proceedings, and that it is unlawful to disclose confidential information concerning the proceedings to another person;

(C) when a predispositional or dispositional court proceeding is scheduled to take place and when a court proceeding of which he or she has been notified will not take place as scheduled; and

~~(2)(D) To be notified by the prosecutor's office as to whether~~  
delinquency has been found and disposition has occurred, ~~including~~ and any conditions ~~or~~ of release or conditions of probation that are related to the victim

or a member of the victim's family or current household and any restitution relevant to the victim, when ordered.

(2) To file with the Court a written or recorded statement of the impact of the delinquent act on the victim and the need for restitution.

(3) To attend the disposition hearing and to present a victim's victim impact statement at the disposition hearing in accordance with subsection 5233(b) of this title, including testimony in support of his or her claim for restitution pursuant to section 5235 of this title, and to be notified as to the disposition pursuant to subsection 5233(d) of this title, including probation. The court shall consider the victim's statement when ordering disposition. The victim shall not be personally present at any portion of the disposition hearing except to present a victim impact statement or to testify in support of his or her claim for restitution unless the court finds that the victim's presence is necessary in the interest of justice.

(4) Upon request, to be notified by the agency having custody of the delinquent child before he or she is discharged from a secure or staff-secured residential facility. The name of the facility shall not be disclosed. An agency's inability to give notification shall not preclude the release. However, in such an event, the agency shall take reasonable steps to give notification of the release as soon thereafter as practicable. Notification efforts shall be deemed reasonable if the agency attempts to contact the victim at the address or telephone number provided to the agency in the request for notification.

(5) ~~To obtain the name of the child in accordance with sections 5226 and 5233 of this title.~~ To have the Court take his or her views into consideration in the Court's disposition order. If the victim is not present, the Court shall consider whether the victim has expressed, either orally or in writing, views regarding disposition and shall take those views into account when ordering disposition.

(6) ~~To be notified by the Court of the victim's rights under this section.~~  
[Repealed.]

(b) The prosecutor's office shall keep the victim informed and consult with the victim through the delinquency proceedings.

Sec. 22. 33 V.S.A. § 5234a is added to read:

§ 5234a. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS IN DELINQUENCY PROCEEDINGS

INVOLVING A NONLISTED CRIME

(a) The victim in a delinquency proceeding involving an offense that is not a listed crime shall have the following rights:

(1) To be notified by the prosecutor's office in a timely manner of the following:

(A) his or her rights as provided by law, information regarding how a delinquency proceeding is adjudicated, the confidential nature of juvenile proceedings, and that it is unlawful to disclose confidential information concerning the proceedings;

(B) when a delinquency petition is filed;

(C) the child's name and the conditions of release ordered for the child or modified by the Court if the conditions relate to the victim or a member of the victim's family or current household; and

(D) when a dispositional court proceeding is scheduled to take place and when a court proceeding of which he or she has been notified will not take place as scheduled.

(2) That delinquency has been found and disposition has occurred, and any conditions of release or conditions of probation that are related to the victim or a member of the victim's family or current household and any restitution ordered.

(3) To file with the Court a written or recorded statement of the impact of the delinquent act on the victim and any need for restitution.

(4) To attend the disposition hearing for the sole purpose of presenting to the Court a victim impact statement, including testimony in support of his or her claim for restitution pursuant to section 5235 of this title. The victim shall not be personally present at any portion of the disposition hearing except to present a victim impact statement or to testify in support of his or her claim for restitution unless the Court finds that the victim's presence is necessary in the interest of justice.

(5) To have the Court take his or her views into consideration in the Court's disposition order. If the victim is not present, the Court shall consider whether the victim has expressed, either orally or in writing, views regarding

disposition and shall take those views into account when ordering disposition.

The Court shall order that the victim be notified as to the identity of the child upon disposition if the Court finds that release of the child's identity to the victim is in the best interests of both the child and the victim and serves the interests of justice.

(b) The prosecutor's office shall keep the victim informed and consult with the victim through the delinquency proceedings.

Sec. 23. 14 V.S.A. § 2666 is amended to read:

§ 2666. MODIFICATION; TERMINATION

\* \* \*

(b) Where the permanent guardianship is terminated by the ~~probate division of the superior court~~ Probate Division of the Superior Court order or the death of the permanent guardian, the custody and guardianship of the child shall not revert to the parent, but to the ~~commissioner for children and families~~ Commissioner for Children and Families as if the child had been abandoned.

(1) Upon the death of the permanent guardian or when the permanent guardianship is otherwise terminated by order of the Probate Division, the Probate Division shall issue an order placing the child in the custody of the Commissioner and shall immediately notify the Department for Children and Families, the State's Attorney, and the Family Division.

(2) The order transferring the child's legal custody to the Commissioner shall have the same legal effect as a similar order issued by the Family Division under the authority of 33 V.S.A. chapters 51–53.

(3) After the Probate Division issues the order transferring legal custody of the child, the State shall commence proceedings under the authority of 33 V.S.A. chapters 51–53 as if the child were abandoned.

\* \* \*

Sec. 24. 14 V.S.A. § 2667 is amended to read:

§ 2667. ORDER FOR VISITATION, CONTACT, OR INFORMATION;

IMMEDIATE HARM TO THE MINOR

(a) ~~The probate division of the superior court~~ Probate Division of the Superior Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear any action to enforce, modify, or terminate the initial order issued by the ~~family division of the superior court~~ Family Division of the Superior Court for visitation, contact, or information.

(b) Upon a showing by affidavit of immediate harm to the child, the ~~probate division of the superior court~~ Probate Division of the Superior Court may temporarily stay the order of visitation or contact on an ex parte basis until a hearing can be held, or stay the order of permanent guardianship and ~~assign parental rights and responsibilities~~ transfer legal custody of the child to the commissioner for children and families Commissioner for Children and Families.

(1) The order transferring the child's legal custody to the Commissioner shall have the same legal effect as a similar order issued by the Family Division under the authority of 33 V.S.A. chapters 51–53.

(2) The Probate Division shall then immediately notify the Department for Children and Families, the State's Attorney, and the Family Division when it has issued an order transferring the child's legal custody to the Commissioner, and nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the State from commencing proceedings under 33 V.S.A. chapters 51–53.

\* \* \*

Sec. 25. 33 V.S.A. § 5223 is amended to read:

§ 5223. FILING OF PETITION

(a) When notice to the child is provided by citation, the State's Attorney shall file the petition and supporting affidavit at least 10 business days prior to the date for the preliminary hearing specified in the citation.

(b) The Court shall send or deliver a copy of the petition and affidavit to the Commissioner after a finding of probable cause. A copy of the petition and affidavit shall be made available at the State's Attorney's office to all persons required to receive notice, including the noncustodial parent, as soon as possible after the petition is filed and at least five business days prior to the date set for the preliminary hearing.

Sec. 26. 33 V.S.A. § 5229 is amended to read:

§ 5229. MERITS ADJUDICATION

\* \* \*

(g) If, based on the child's admission or the evidence presented, the Court finds beyond a reasonable doubt that the child has committed a delinquent act, the Court shall order the Department to prepare a disposition case plan ~~within 28 days of the merits adjudication and shall set the matter for a~~ not later than seven business days before the disposition hearing. In no event, shall a disposition hearing be held later than 35 days after a finding that a child is delinquent.

(h) The Court may proceed directly to disposition providing that the child, the custodial parent, the State's Attorney, and the Department agree.

Sec. 27. 33 V.S.A. § 5230 is amended to read:

§ 5230. DISPOSITION CASE PLAN

(a) Filing of case plan. ~~The~~ Following the finding by the Court that a child is delinquent, the Department shall file a disposition case plan ~~no~~ not later than ~~28 days from the date of the finding by the Court that a child is delinquent~~ seven business days before the scheduled disposition hearing. The disposition case plan shall not be used or referred to as evidence prior to a finding that a child is delinquent.

\* \* \*

Sec. 28. 33 V.S.A. § 5315 is amended to read:

§ 5315. MERITS ADJUDICATION

\* \* \*

(f) If the Court finds that the allegations made in the petition have not been established, the Court shall dismiss the petition and vacate any temporary orders in connection with this proceeding. A dismissal pursuant to this subsection is a final order subject to appeal.

(g) If the Court finds that the allegations made in the petition have been established based on the stipulation of the parties or on the evidence if the merits are contested, the Court shall order the Department to prepare a disposition case plan ~~within 28 days of the merits hearing and shall set the matter for a~~ not later than seven business days before a scheduled disposition hearing. An adjudication pursuant to this subsection is not a final order subject to appeal separate from the resulting disposition order.

\* \* \*

Sec. 29. 33 V.S.A. § 5315a is added to read:

§ 5315a. MERITS STIPULATION

(a) At any time after the filing of the CHINS petition and prior to an order of adjudication on the merits, the court may approve a written stipulation to the merits of the petition and any or all elements of the disposition plan, including the permanency goal, placement, visitation, or services.

(b) The court may approve a written stipulation if:

(1) the parties to the petition, as defined in subdivision 5102(22) of this title, agree to the terms of the stipulation; and

(2) the court determines that:

(A) the agreement between the parties is voluntary;

(B) the parties to the agreement understand the nature of the allegation; and

(C) the parties to the agreement understand the rights waived if the court approves of and issues an order based upon the stipulation.

Sec. 30. 33 V.S.A. § 5316 is amended to read:

§ 5316. DISPOSITION CASE PLAN

(a) ~~The~~ Following a finding by the court that a child is in need of care or supervision, the Department shall file a disposition case plan ordered pursuant to subsection 5315(g) of this title ~~no not~~ later than 28 days from the date of the finding by the Court that a child is in need of care or supervision seven business days before the scheduled disposition hearing.

\* \* \*

Sec. 31. 15 V.S.A. § 1103 is amended to read:

§ 1103. REQUESTS FOR RELIEF

(a) Any family or household member may seek relief from abuse by another family or household member on behalf of ~~him~~ him- or herself or his or her children by filing a complaint under this chapter. A minor 16 years of age

or older, or a minor of any age who is in a dating relationship as defined in subdivision 1101(2) of this chapter, may file a complaint under this chapter seeking relief on his or her own behalf. The plaintiff shall submit an affidavit in support of the order.

\* \* \*

Sec. 32. 15 V.S.A. § 1104 is amended to read:

§ 1104. EMERGENCY RELIEF

(a) In accordance with the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure, temporary orders under this chapter may be issued ex parte, without notice to the defendant, upon motion and findings by the Court that the defendant has abused the plaintiff or his or her children, or both. The plaintiff shall submit an affidavit in support of the order. A minor 16 years of age or older, or a minor of any age who is in a dating relationship as defined in subdivision 1101(2) of this chapter, may seek relief on his or her own behalf. Relief under this section shall be limited as follows:

\* \* \*

Sec. 33. DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES;

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS;

REPORT

The Commissioners for Children and Families and of Corrections shall consider the implications of adjudicating as youthful offenders all defendants who have attained 18 years of age, but not 21 years of age, who have not been

charged with an offense specified in 33 V.S.A. § 5204(a). The Commissioners shall report their findings and any associated recommendations or proposed legislation to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee on or before November 1, 2016.

Sec. 34. JOINT LEGISLATIVE JUSTICE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE;  
2016 LEGISLATIVE INTERIM

During the 2016 legislative interim, the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee shall:

(1) evaluate the fiscal implications of adjudicating in the Family Division of the Superior Court all offenders 18–20 years of age who are not charged with an offense specified in 33 V.S.A. § 5204(a);

(2) consider whether the creation of an Office for Youth Justice or similar with jurisdiction to coordinate supervision and services for youths adjudicated juvenile delinquents and youthful offenders 25 years of age and younger would improve outcomes for youths in the justice system;

(3) consider expanding youthful offender status eligibility to offenders 24 years of age and younger, while requiring offenders 22–24 years of age to be under Department of Corrections supervision;

(4) consider whether State’s Attorneys should have the discretion to bring charges against 14 and 15 year olds alleged to have committed an act specified in 33 V.S.A. § 5204(a) in either the Criminal or Family Division of the Superior Court;

(5) explore options for housing offenders 16 and 17 years of age serving a sentence for an offense specified in 33 V.S.A. § 5204(a);

(6) evaluate the resources necessary to expand the jurisdiction of the juvenile courts for offenders 21 years of age and younger as contemplated by other state legislatures; and

(7) evaluate the resources necessary to expand youthful offender treatment for offenders 24 years of age and younger.

Sec. 35. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

PRACTICES

The Agency of Education shall explore the use of restorative and similar practices regarding school climate and culture, truancy, bullying and harassment, and school discipline. The Agency shall consider the research that demonstrates that restorative approaches lead to reductions in absenteeism, suspensions, and expulsions and to improved educational outcomes.

Sec. 36. REPEAL

33 V.S.A. §§ 5226 (notification of conditions of release) and 5233 (victim's statement at disposition) are repealed.

Sec. 37. 23 V.S.A. § 4 is amended to read:

§ 4. DEFINITIONS

Except as may be otherwise provided herein, and unless the context otherwise requires in statutes relating to motor vehicles and enforcement of the

law regulating vehicles, as provided in this title and 20 V.S.A. part 5, the following definitions shall apply:

\* \* \*

(84) "Serious bodily injury" has the meaning set forth in 13 V.S.A.

§ 1021.

Sec. 38. 23 V.S.A. § 1091 is amended to read:

§ 1091. NEGLIGENCE OPERATION; GROSSLY NEGLIGENCE

OPERATION

(a) Negligent operation.

(1) A person who operates a motor vehicle on a public highway in a negligent manner shall be guilty of negligent operation.

(2) The standard for a conviction for negligent operation in violation of this subsection shall be ordinary negligence, examining whether the person breached a duty to exercise ordinary care.

(3) A person who violates this subsection shall be imprisoned not more than one year or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both. If the person has been previously convicted of a violation of this subsection, the person shall be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than \$3,000.00, or both.

If serious bodily injury to or death of any person other than the operator results, the operator shall be subject to imprisonment for not more than two years or to a fine of not more than \$3,000.00, or both. If serious bodily injury or death results to more than one person other than the operator, the operator

may be convicted of a separate violation of this subdivision for each decedent or person injured.

(b) Grossly negligent operation.

(1) A person who operates a motor vehicle on a public highway in a grossly negligent manner shall be guilty of grossly negligent operation.

(2) The standard for a conviction for grossly negligent operation in violation of this subsection shall be gross negligence, examining whether the person engaged in conduct which involved a gross deviation from the care that a reasonable person would have exercised in that situation.

(3) A person who violates this subsection shall be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than \$5,000.00, or both. If the person has previously been convicted of a violation of this section, the person shall be imprisoned not more than four years or fined not more than \$10,000.00, or both. If serious bodily injury ~~as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021~~ to or death of any person other than the operator results, the ~~person~~ operator shall be imprisoned for not more than 15 years or fined not more than \$15,000.00, or both. If serious bodily injury or death results to more than one person other than the operator, the operator may be convicted of a separate violation of this subdivision for each decedent or person injured.

(c) The provisions of this section do not limit or restrict the prosecution for manslaughter.

\* \* \*

Sec. 39. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. 9 (commencement of delinquency proceedings), 10 (transfer from other courts), and 11 (transfer from Family Division of the Superior Court) shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

(b) Sec. 16 (powers and responsibilities of the Commissioner regarding juvenile services) shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

(b) Secs. 6 (Jurisdiction), 7 (commencement of delinquency proceedings), and 8 (transfer from other courts) shall take effect on January 1, 2018.

(c) Secs. 1 (commencement of youthful offender proceedings in the Family Division), 2 (motion in Criminal Division of Superior Court), 3 (report from the Department), 4 (hearing in Family Division), and 5 (youthful offender determination and disposition order) shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

(d) This section and the remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

Date Governor signed bill: June 1, 2016