

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2955
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There have been calls for coordinated oversight of specialty court programs between the criminal justice division of the governor's office, the Office of Court Administration, and the Texas Judicial Council to improve these programs and their services based on the expertise of these entities. C.S.H.B. 2955 seeks to accomplish this by revising the oversight and reporting requirements of the specialty court programs.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2955 amends the Government Code to change from the criminal justice division of the governor's office to the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System (OCA) the entity to which a specialty court program is required to provide certain notice and documentation to operate. The bill requires a specialty court program to report to the Texas Judicial Council (TJC) any information required by the TJC regarding the performance of the program. The bill requires OCA to take the following actions:

- provide technical assistance to the specialty court programs on request;
- coordinate with an entity funded by the division that provides services to specialty court programs;
- monitor the specialty court programs for compliance with programmatic best practices recommended by the Specialty Courts Advisory Council and approved by the TJC; and
- notify the division about each specialty court program that is not in compliance with the programmatic best practices.

C.S.H.B. 2955 requires OCA to coordinate with and provide information to the criminal justice division of the governor's office on request of the division.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2955 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes provisions requiring OCA to coordinate with an entity funded by the criminal justice division of the governor's office that provides services to specialty court programs and to notify the division regarding noncompliant specialty court programs.