

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2016 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

House Bill 4558

BY DELEGATES FRICH, SHOTT, ARVON, P. SMITH,

ROWAN, SOBONYA, MILLER, BORDER, UPSON,

KESSINGER AND SUMMERS

[Passed March 12, 2016; in effect ninety days from
passage.]

1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §61-11A-8 of the Code of West Virginia, as amended, relating to
 2 victim notification and designation of additional individuals to receive notice of an
 3 offender's release, sentencing, placement or escape; providing an option to victims to
 4 designate an additional adult individual to receive notification; and requiring the victim to
 5 provide the additional adult individual's contact information in writing to the appropriate
 6 notifying entity.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §61-11A-8 of the Code of West Virginia, as amended, be amended and reenacted to
 2 read as follows:

ARTICLE 11A. VICTIM PROTECTION ACT OF 1984.

§61-11A-8. Notification to victim of offender's release, placement, or escape from custody.

1 (a) At the time a criminal prosecution is commenced by the filing of a complaint, if the
 2 complaint charges a person with committing an offense described in subsection (e) of this section,
 3 then the prosecuting attorney is required to provide notice, in writing or by telephone, to the victim
 4 or a family member that he or she may request that they be notified prior to or at the time of any
 5 release of the accused from custody pending judicial proceedings.

6 (b) If a person is convicted of an offense described in subsection (e) of this section, the
 7 prosecuting attorney is required to provide notice, in writing or by telephone, to the victim or a
 8 family member that he or she may request that they be notified prior to or at the time of sentencing
 9 if the convicted person will be placed on work release, home confinement or probation.

10 (c) If a person is convicted of an offense described in subsection (e) of this section and is
 11 imprisoned in a state correctional facility or confined in a county or regional jail, the commissioner
 12 of corrections, the regional jail supervisor or the sheriff, as the case may be, is required to provide
 13 notice, in writing or by telephone, to the victim or a family member that he or she may request that
 14 they be notified prior to or at the time of:

15 (1) Releasing the convicted person from imprisonment in any correctional facility;

- 16 (2) Releasing the convicted person from confinement in any jail;
- 17 (3) Placing the convicted person in a halfway house or other nonsecure facility to complete
- 18 his or her sentence; or
- 19 (4) Any escape by the convicted person from a state correctional facility or a jail.
- 20 (d) The notice shall include instructions for the victim or the victim's family member on how
- 21 to request the notification.
- 22 (e) Offenses which are subject to the provisions of this section are as follows:
- 23 (1) Murder;
- 24 (2) Aggravated robbery;
- 25 (3) Sexual assault in the first degree;
- 26 (4) Kidnapping;
- 27 (5) Arson;
- 28 (6) Any sexual offense against a minor; or
- 29 (7) Any violent crime against a person.
- 30 (f) The Commissioner of Corrections, a regional jail supervisor, a sheriff or a prosecuting
- 31 attorney who receives a written request for notification shall provide notice, in writing or by
- 32 telephone, to the last known address or addresses or telephone number or numbers provided by
- 33 the victim or a member of the victim's family, or in the case of a minor child, to the custodial parent,
- 34 guardian or custodian of the child, in accordance with the provisions of this section. In case of
- 35 escape, notification shall be by telephone, if possible.
- 36 (g) If one or more family members of a victim request notification and if the victim is an
- 37 adult and is alive and competent, notification shall be sent to the victim, if possible,
- 38 notwithstanding that he or she did not request the notification. If the victim is deceased or an adult
- 39 who is alive but not competent, the notice shall be sent to the first family member requesting
- 40 notice in conformity with this section.
- 41 (h) If notification by telephone to a victim is attempted, notification is not complete unless

42 it is given directly to the person requesting notification and after that person's identity has been
43 verified. An attempted notification made to a voice mail or another recording device or to another
44 member of the household is insufficient.

45 (i) For the purposes of this section, the following words or phrases defined in this
46 subsection have the meanings ascribed to them. These definitions are applicable unless a
47 different meaning clearly appears from the context.

48 (1) "Filing of a complaint" means the filing of a complaint in accordance with the West
49 Virginia Rules of Criminal Procedure promulgated by the Supreme Court of Appeals or the
50 provisions of this code.

51 (2) "Victim" means a victim of a crime listed in subsection (e) of this section who is alive
52 and competent.

53 (3) "Victim's family member" means a member of the family of a victim of a crime listed in
54 subsection (e) of this section who is not alive and competent.

55 (j) In addition to those persons required to be notified under this section, a victim may
56 designate an additional adult individual to receive notice provided for by this section: *Provided,*
57 That the obligation to notify the additional individuals under this section only arises if the additional
58 adult individual's contact information is provided in writing by the victim to the appropriate notifying
59 entity.