

Stephanie Pitcher proposes the following substitute bill:

**Nonjudicial Adjustment Amendments**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Stephanie Pitcher**

House Sponsor: Ryan D. Wilcox

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies the provisions of the Indigent Defense Act in relation to nonjudicial adjustments and access to legal counsel.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- prohibits a minor from declining to enter into a nonjudicial adjustment agreement unless the minor has received advice from legal counsel, with exceptions;
- modifies the duties of the Indigent Defense Commission to include encouraging the provision of resources for minors to receive access to legal advice when considering a nonjudicial adjustment;
- modifies the duties of the Office of Indigent Defense Services to require the office to provide no-cost legal advice for minors considering a nonjudicial adjustment;
- permits the Office of Indigent Defense Services to employ or contract with an attorney to provide legal advice to minors considering a nonjudicial adjustment;
- creates procedures for giving notice of requirements before declining a nonjudicial adjustment agreement; and
- makes clarifying amendments.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

- 78B-22-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 124
- 78B-22-404**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 193

29 **78B-22-452**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 193

30 **80-6-304**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 161

31 **80-6-602**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 261

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33 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

34 Section 1. Section **78B-22-204** is amended to read:

35 **78B-22-204 . Waiver by a minor.**

36 (1) A minor may not waive the right to be represented by counsel at all stages of court  
37 proceedings unless:

38 ~~[(1)]~~ (a) the minor has consulted with counsel; and

39 ~~[(2)]~~ (b) the court is satisfied that in light of the minor's unique circumstances and  
40 attributes:

41 ~~[(a)]~~ (i) the minor's waiver is knowing and voluntary; and

42 ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) the minor understands the consequences of the waiver.

43 (2) A minor may not decline to enter into a nonjudicial adjustment without first being  
44 advised of their right to consult with counsel, consistent with the requirements of  
45 Section 80-6-304.

46 Section 2. Section **78B-22-404** is amended to read:

47 **78B-22-404 . Powers and duties of the commission.**

48 (1) The commission shall:

49 (a) adopt core principles for an indigent defense system to ensure the effective  
50 representation of indigent individuals consistent with the requirements of the United  
51 States Constitution, the Utah Constitution, and the Utah Code, which principles at a  
52 minimum shall address the following:

53 (i) an indigent defense system shall ensure that in providing indigent defense services:

54 (A) an indigent individual receives conflict-free indigent defense services; and

55 (B) there is a separate contract for each type of indigent defense service; and

56 (ii) an indigent defense system shall ensure an indigent defense service provider has:

57 (A) the ability to exercise independent judgment without fear of retaliation and is  
58 free to represent an indigent individual based on the indigent defense service  
59 provider's own independent judgment;

60 (B) adequate access to indigent defense resources;

61 (C) the ability to provide representation to accused individuals in criminal cases at  
62 the critical stages of proceedings, and at all stages to indigent individuals in

- 63 juvenile delinquency and child welfare proceedings;
- 64 (D) a workload that allows for sufficient time to meet with clients, investigate
- 65 cases, file appropriate documents with the courts, and otherwise provide
- 66 effective assistance of counsel to each client;
- 67 (E) adequate compensation without financial disincentives;
- 68 (F) appropriate experience or training in the area for which the indigent defense
- 69 service provider is representing indigent individuals;
- 70 (G) compensation for legal training and education in the areas of the law relevant
- 71 to the types of cases for which the indigent defense service provider is
- 72 representing indigent individuals; and
- 73 (H) the ability to meet the obligations of the Utah Rules of Professional Conduct,
- 74 including expectations on client communications and managing conflicts of
- 75 interest;
- 76 (b) encourage and aid indigent defense systems in the state in the regionalization of
- 77 indigent defense services to provide for effective and efficient representation to the
- 78 indigent individuals;
- 79 (c) emphasize the importance of ensuring constitutionally effective indigent defense
- 80 services;
- 81 (d) encourage members of the judiciary to provide input regarding the delivery of
- 82 indigent defense services;
- 83 (e) oversee individuals and entities involved in providing indigent defense services;~~and~~
- 84 (f) manage county participation in the Indigent Aggravated Murder Defense Fund
- 85 created in Section 78B-22-701[-] ; and
- 86 (g) develop and oversee the provision of resources for minors to access legal advice
- 87 when considering a nonjudicial adjustment.
- 88 (2) The commission may:
- 89 (a) make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative
- 90 Rulemaking Act, to carry out the commission's duties under this part;
- 91 (b) assign duties related to indigent defense services to the office to assist the
- 92 commission with the commission's statutory duties;
- 93 (c) request supplemental appropriations from the Legislature to address a deficit in the
- 94 Indigent Inmate Fund created in Section 78B-22-455; and
- 95 (d) request supplemental appropriations from the Legislature to address a deficit in the
- 96 Child Welfare Parental Representation Fund created in Section 78B-22-804.

97 Section 3. Section **78B-22-452** is amended to read:

98 **78B-22-452 . Duties of the office.**

99 (1) The office shall:

- 100 (a) establish an annual budget for the office for the Indigent Defense Resources  
101 Restricted Account created in Section 78B-22-405;
- 102 (b) assist the commission in performing the commission's statutory duties described in  
103 this chapter;
- 104 (c) identify and collect data that is necessary for the commission to:
- 105 (i) aid, oversee, and review compliance by indigent defense systems with the  
106 commission's core principles for the effective representation of indigent  
107 individuals; and
- 108 (ii) provide reports regarding the operation of the commission and the provision of  
109 indigent defense services by indigent defense systems in the state;
- 110 (d) assist indigent defense systems by reviewing contracts and other agreements, to  
111 ensure compliance with the commission's core principles for effective representation  
112 of indigent individuals;
- 113 (e) establish procedures for the receipt and acceptance of complaints regarding the  
114 provision of indigent defense services in the state;
- 115 (f) establish procedures to award grants to indigent defense systems under Section  
116 78B-22-406 that are consistent with the commission's core principles;
- 117 (g) create and enter into contracts consistent with Section 78B-22-454 to provide  
118 indigent defense services for an indigent defense inmate who:
- 119 (i) is incarcerated in a state prison located in a county of the third, fourth, fifth, or  
120 sixth class as classified in Section 17-50-501;
- 121 (ii) is charged with having committed a crime within that state prison; and
- 122 (iii) has been appointed counsel in accordance with Section 78B-22-203;
- 123 (h) assist the commission in developing and reviewing advisory caseload guidelines and  
124 procedures;
- 125 (i) investigate, audit, and review the provision of indigent defense services to ensure  
126 compliance with the commission's core principles for the effective representation of  
127 indigent individuals;
- 128 (j) administer the Child Welfare Parental Representation Program in accordance with  
129 Part 8, Child Welfare Parental Representation Program;
- 130 (k) administer the Indigent Aggravated Murder Defense Fund in accordance with Part 7,

- 131 Indigent Aggravated Murder Defense Fund;
- 132 (l) assign an indigent defense service provider to represent an individual prosecuted for  
 133 aggravated murder in accordance with Part 7, Indigent Aggravated Murder Defense  
 134 Fund;
- 135 (m) provide access for a minor to receive legal advice, at no cost, in connection with  
 136 considering a nonjudicial adjustment;
- 137 ~~[(m)]~~ (n) annually report to the governor, Legislature, Judiciary Interim Committee, and  
 138 Judicial Council, regarding:
- 139 (i) the operations of the commission;
- 140 (ii) the operations of the indigent defense systems in the state; and
- 141 (iii) compliance with the commission's core principles by indigent defense systems  
 142 receiving grants from the commission;
- 143 ~~[(n)]~~ (o) submit recommendations to the commission for improving indigent defense  
 144 services in the state;
- 145 ~~[(o)]~~ (p) publish an annual report on the commission's website; and
- 146 ~~[(p)]~~ (q) perform all other duties assigned by the commission related to indigent defense  
 147 services.
- 148 (2) The office may:
- 149 (a) enter into contracts and accept, allocate, and administer funds and grants from any  
 150 public or private person to accomplish the duties of the office[-] ; and
- 151 (b) employ or contract with an attorney to provide counsel, at no cost, to any minor  
 152 considering a nonjudicial adjustment.
- 153 (3) Any contract entered into under this part shall require that indigent defense services are  
 154 provided in a manner consistent with the commission's core principles implemented  
 155 under Section 78B-22-404.
- 156 Section 4. Section **80-6-304** is amended to read:
- 157 **80-6-304 . Nonjudicial adjustments -- Requirement to seek legal counsel before**  
 158 **declination.**
- 159 (1) For a nonjudicial adjustment, the juvenile probation officer may require a minor to:
- 160 (a) pay a financial penalty of no more than \$250 to the juvenile court, subject to the  
 161 terms established under Subsection ~~[(4)]~~ (5);
- 162 (b) pay restitution to any victim;
- 163 (c) complete community or compensatory service;
- 164 (d) attend counseling or treatment with an appropriate provider;

- 165 (e) attend substance abuse treatment or counseling;
- 166 (f) comply with specified restrictions on activities or associations;
- 167 (g) attend victim-offender mediation if requested by the victim; and
- 168 (h) comply with any other reasonable action that is in the interest of the minor, the
- 169 community, or the victim.
- 170 (2)(a) Within seven days of receiving a referral that appears to be eligible for a
- 171 nonjudicial adjustment in accordance with Section 80-6-303.5, the juvenile probation
- 172 officer shall provide an initial notice to reasonably identifiable and locatable victims
- 173 of the offense contained in the referral.
- 174 (b) The victim shall be responsible to provide to the juvenile probation officer upon
- 175 request:
- 176 (i) invoices, bills, receipts, and any other evidence of injury, loss of earnings, and
- 177 out-of-pocket loss;
- 178 (ii) documentation and evidence of compensation or reimbursement from an
- 179 insurance company or an agency of the state, any other state, or the federal
- 180 government received as a direct result of the crime for injury, loss of earnings, or
- 181 out-of-pocket loss; and
- 182 (iii) proof of identification, including home and work address and telephone numbers.
- 183 (c) The inability, failure, or refusal of the victim to provide all or part of the requested
- 184 information shall result in the juvenile probation officer determining restitution based
- 185 on the best information available.
- 186 (3) The juvenile probation officer may not predicate acceptance of an offer of a nonjudicial
- 187 adjustment on an admission of guilt.
- 188 (4)(a) A minor may not decline to enter into a nonjudicial adjustment without first being
- 189 advised of their right to consult with counsel, subject to the requirements of this
- 190 section.
- 191 (b) If a minor seeks to decline a nonjudicial adjustment, the juvenile probation officer
- 192 shall inform the minor of:
- 193 (i) the minor's right to consult with counsel; and
- 194 (ii) the availability of resources for the minor to receive legal advice provided by the
- 195 Office of Indigent Defense Services created in Section 78B-22-451.
- 196 (c) If a minor seeks to decline a nonjudicial adjustment, and also declines to seek the
- 197 advice of counsel after being informed as required under Subsection (4)(b), the
- 198 juvenile probation officer shall:

- 199           (i) sign an acknowledgment that the juvenile probation officer provided the minor  
200           with the information required by Subsection (4)(b);
- 201           (ii) have the minor sign an acknowledgment that the minor received the information  
202           required by Subsection (4)(b) and knowingly and voluntarily declined to seek the  
203           advice of counsel; and
- 204           (iii) permit the minor to decline the nonjudicial adjustment.
- 205           (d) No provision of this section affects a court's obligation to ensure a minor's right to  
206           counsel in the event a petition is filed.
- 207   ~~[(4)]~~ (5)(a) The juvenile probation officer may not deny a minor an offer of a nonjudicial  
208   adjustment due to a minor's inability to pay a financial penalty under Subsection (1).
- 209           (b) The juvenile probation officer shall base a fee, fine, or the restitution for a  
210           nonjudicial adjustment under Subsection (1) upon the ability of the minor's family to  
211           pay as determined by a statewide sliding scale developed in accordance with Section  
212           63M-7-208.
- 213   ~~[(5)]~~ (6)(a) A nonjudicial adjustment may not extend for more than 90 days, unless a  
214   juvenile court judge extends the nonjudicial adjustment for an additional 90 days.
- 215           (b) A juvenile court judge may extend a nonjudicial adjustment beyond the 180 days  
216           permitted under Subsection ~~[(5)(a)]~~ (6)(a):
- 217           (i) for a minor who is:
- 218                   (A) offered a nonjudicial adjustment for a sexual offense under Title 76, Chapter  
219                   5, Part 4, Sexual Offenses, that the minor committed before the minor was 12  
220                   years old; or
- 221                   (B) referred to a prosecuting attorney for a sexual offense under Title 76, Chapter  
222                   5, Part 4, Sexual Offenses, that the minor committed before the minor was 12  
223                   years old; and
- 224           (ii) the judge determines that:
- 225                   (A) the nonjudicial adjustment requires specific treatment for the sexual offense;  
226                   (B) the treatment cannot be completed within 180 days after the day on which the  
227                   minor entered into the nonjudicial adjustment; and
- 228                   (C) the treatment is necessary based on a clinical assessment that is  
229                   developmentally appropriate for the minor.
- 230           (c) If a juvenile court judge extends a minor's nonjudicial adjustment under Subsection [  
231           ~~(5)(b)]~~ (6)(b), the judge may extend the nonjudicial adjustment until the minor  
232           completes the specific treatment, but the judge may only grant each extension for 90

233 days at a time.

234 [(6)] (7) If a minor violates Section 76-10-105, the minor may be required to pay a fine or  
235 penalty and participate in a court-approved tobacco education program with a  
236 participation fee.

237 Section 5. Section **80-6-602** is amended to read:

238 **80-6-602 . Hearings or proceedings for minors -- Prosecuting attorney -- Order**  
239 **for indigent defense -- Custody in the Division of Child and Family Services.**

240 (1) In a hearing or proceeding under this chapter, the juvenile court:

241 (a) shall admit any person who has a direct interest in the case;

242 (b) may admit any person whose presence is requested by the minor's parent or guardian;  
243 and

244 (c) shall exclude any other person except as provided in Subsection (2).

245 (2) In a hearing or proceeding under this chapter for a minor who is 14 years old or older,  
246 the juvenile court shall admit any person, unless the hearing or proceeding is closed by  
247 the juvenile court upon findings, on the record, for good cause if:

248 (a) the minor has been charged with an offense that would be a felony if committed by  
249 an adult; or

250 (b) the minor is charged with an offense that would be a class A or B misdemeanor if  
251 committed by an adult and the minor has been previously charged with an offense  
252 that would be a misdemeanor or felony if committed by an adult.

253 (3) If more than one minor is alleged to be involved in a violation of a law or ordinance, the  
254 proceedings for the violation may be consolidated, except a separate hearing may be  
255 held with respect to a disposition for a minor.

256 (4) The county attorney, or the district attorney if within a prosecution district, shall  
257 represent the state in a proceeding under this chapter.

258 (5) If a minor is facing a proceeding under this chapter, a juvenile court shall:

259 (a) appoint an indigent defense service provider for the minor in accordance with Title  
260 78B, Chapter 22, Part 2, Appointment of Counsel; and

261 (b) order indigent defense services for the minor in accordance with Title 78B, Chapter  
262 22, Part 2, Appointment of Counsel.

263 (6) If a minor is facing a proceeding under this chapter, a minor may not decline to enter  
264 into a nonjudicial adjustment without first being advised of their right to consult with  
265 counsel, subject to the requirements of Subsection 80-6-304(4).

266 [(6)] (7) A juvenile court may appoint an attorney guardian ad litem under Section

267 78A-2-803, or as otherwise provided by law, to represent a child under this chapter.  
268 [~~7~~] (8) A juvenile court may not vest custody of a minor facing a delinquency proceeding  
269 under this chapter in the Division of Child and Family Services, except as provided in  
270 Chapter 3, Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings.

271 Section 6. **Effective Date.**

272 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.