

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017**

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HOUSE BILL 790

Short Title: Solitary Confinement in Prisons. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Cunningham, Michaux, and Harrison (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 13, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ESTABLISH UNIFORM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE USE
OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR MINOR OFFENDERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 143B-704 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143B-704. Division of Adult Correction of the Department of Public Safety – functions.

(a) The functions of the Division of Adult Correction of the Department of Public Safety shall comprise, except as otherwise expressly provided by the Executive Organization Act of 1973 or by the Constitution of North Carolina, all functions of the executive branch of the State in relation to corrections and the rehabilitation of adult offenders, including detention, parole, and aftercare supervision, and further including those prescribed powers, duties, and functions enumerated in Article 14 of Chapter 143A of the General Statutes and other laws of this State.

(b) All such functions, powers, duties, and obligations heretofore vested in the Department of Social Rehabilitation and Control and any agency enumerated in Article 14 of Chapter 143A of the General Statutes and laws of this State are hereby transferred to and vested in the Division of Adult Correction of the Department of Public Safety except as otherwise provided by the Executive Organization Act of 1973. They shall include, by way of extension and not of limitation, the functions of:

- (1) The State Department of Correction and Commission of Correction,
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-423, s. 8, effective July 1, 1999.
- (3) The State Probation Commission,
- (4) The State Board of Paroles,
- (5) The Interstate Agreement on Detainers, and
- (6) The Uniform Act for Out-of-State Parolee Supervision.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2012-83, s. 9, effective June 26, 2012.

(d) The Division shall establish an alcoholism and chemical dependency treatment program. The program shall consist of a continuum of treatment and intervention services for male and female inmates, established in medium and minimum custody prison facilities, and for male and female probationers and parolees, established in community-based residential treatment facilities.

(e) The Department, in consultation with the Domestic Violence Commission, and in accordance with established best practices, shall establish a domestic violence treatment program for offenders sentenced to a term of imprisonment in the custody of the Department



1 and whose official record includes a finding by the court that the offender committed acts of
2 domestic violence.

3 The Department shall ensure that inmates, whose record includes a finding by the court that
4 the offender committed acts of domestic violence, complete a domestic violence treatment
5 program prior to the completion of the period of incarceration, unless other requirements,
6 deemed critical by the Department, prevent program completion. In the event an inmate does
7 not complete the program during the period of incarceration, the Department shall document, in
8 the inmate's official record, specific reasons why that particular inmate did not or was not able
9 to complete the program.

10 (f) Solitary Confinement. – The Division shall establish uniform guidelines and
11 procedures for the use of solitary confinement for minor offenders sentenced to a term of
12 imprisonment in the custody of the Department. The placement of a minor offender in solitary
13 confinement shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:

- 14 (1) Solitary confinement shall not be used before other less restrictive options
15 have been attempted and exhausted, unless attempting those options poses a
16 threat to the safety of any other minor, inmate, or staff.
17 (2) Solitary confinement shall not be used for the purposes of punishment,
18 coercion, convenience, or retaliation by staff.
19 (3) Solitary confinement shall not be used to the extent that it compromises the
20 mental and physical health of the minor."

21 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 148-11 reads as rewritten:

22 **"§ 148-11. Authority to adopt rules; authority to designate uniforms.**

23 (a) The Secretary shall adopt rules for the government of the State prison system. The
24 Secretary shall have the rules that pertain to enforcing discipline read to every prisoner when
25 received in the State prison system and a printed copy of these rules made available to the
26 prisoners. These rules shall contain the guidelines and procedures for solitary confinement as
27 promulgated by the Division pursuant to G.S. 143B-704(f).

28 (b) The Secretary of Public Safety has sole authority to designate the uniforms worn by
29 inmates confined in the Section of Prisons of the Division of Adult Correction."

30 **SECTION 3.** Article 2 of Chapter 148 of the General Statutes is amended by
31 adding a new section to read:

32 **"§ 148-13.1. Regulations and restrictions on time spent in solitary confinement.**

33 (a) Minor offenders sentenced to a term of imprisonment in the Department of
34 Corrections may be placed in solitary confinement only in accordance with the guidelines and
35 procedures promulgated by the Division to G.S. 143B-704(f) for an initial period of four hours.
36 After four hours, staff shall do one or more of the following:

- 37 (1) Return the minor to general population.
38 (2) Consult with mental health or medical staff.
39 (3) Develop an individualized plan that includes the goals or objectives that
40 must be met to reintegrate the minor into general population.

41 (b) If a minor must be held in solitary confinement for more than four hours, staff shall
42 do the following:

- 43 (1) Document the reason and need for extended solitary confinement, the date
44 and time the minor was first placed in solitary confinement, and the time the
45 minor is released from solitary confinement.
46 (2) Develop an individualized plan that includes the goals and objectives to be
47 met in order to reintegrate the minor to general population.
48 (3) Obtain documented authorization by the facility superintendent or the
49 superintendent's designee every four hours thereafter.

50 (c) This section does not apply during an extraordinary, emergency circumstance that
51 requires significant departure from normal institutional operations, including a natural disaster

1 or facility-wide threat that poses an imminent and substantial risk of harm to multiple staff,
2 minors, or wards. This exception shall apply for the shortest amount of time needed to address
3 the imminent and substantial risk of harm.

4 (d) The Department of Public Safety shall report to the chairs of the Joint Legislative
5 Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on the use of solitary confinement with
6 minor offenders under 18 years old."

7 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2017.