



AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO PROBATION AND PAROLE; ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT TO USE COMPLIANCE OR NONCOMPLIANCE VIOLATIONS IN REQUESTS TO REVOKE PROBATION; AND AMENDING SECTION 46-18-203, MCA.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 46-18-203, MCA, is amended to read:

**"46-18-203. Revocation of suspended or deferred sentence.** (1) Upon the filing of a petition for revocation showing probable cause that the offender has violated any condition of a sentence, any condition of a deferred imposition of sentence, or any condition of supervision after release from imprisonment imposed pursuant to 45-5-503(4), 45-5-507(5), 45-5-601(3), 45-5-602(3), 45-5-603(2)(b), or 45-5-625(4), ~~and describing the exhaustion and documentation in the offender's file of appropriate violation responses according to the incentives and interventions grid adopted under 46-23-1028,~~ the judge may issue an order for a hearing on revocation. The order must require the offender to appear at a specified time and place for the hearing and be served by delivering a copy of the petition and order to the offender personally. The judge may also issue an arrest warrant directing any peace officer or a probation and parole officer to arrest the offender and bring the offender before the court.

(2) The petition for a revocation must be filed with the sentencing court either before the period of suspension or deferral has begun or during the period of suspension or deferral but not after the period has expired. Expiration of the period of suspension or deferral after the petition is filed does not deprive the court of its jurisdiction to rule on the petition.

(3) The provisions pertaining to bail, as set forth in Title 46, chapter 9, are applicable to persons arrested pursuant to this section.

(4) Without unnecessary delay and no more than 60 days after arrest, the offender must be

brought before the judge, and at least 10 days prior to the hearing the offender must be advised of:

- (a) the allegations of the petition;
- (b) the opportunity to appear and to present evidence in the offender's own behalf;
- (c) the opportunity to question adverse witnesses; and
- (d) the right to be represented by counsel at the revocation hearing pursuant to Title 46, chapter 8,

part 1.

(5) A hearing is required before a suspended or deferred sentence can be revoked or the terms or conditions of the sentence can be modified unless:

- (a) the offender admits the allegations and waives the right to a hearing; or
- (b) the relief to be granted is favorable to the offender and the prosecutor, after having been given notice of the proposed relief and a reasonable opportunity to object, has not objected. An extension of the term of probation is not favorable to the offender for the purposes of this subsection (5)(b).

(6) (a) At the hearing, the prosecution shall prove, by a preponderance of the evidence, that there has been a violation of:

- (i) the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence; or
- (ii) a condition of supervision after release from imprisonment imposed pursuant to 45-5-503(4), 45-5-507(5), 45-5-601(3), 45-5-602(3), 45-5-603(2)(b), or 45-5-625(4).

(b) However, when a failure to pay restitution is the basis for the petition, the offender may excuse the violation by showing sufficient evidence that the failure to pay restitution was not attributable to a failure on the offender's part to make a good faith effort to obtain sufficient means to make the restitution payments as ordered.

(7) (a) If the judge finds that the offender has violated the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence ~~and the violation is not a compliance violation~~ by committing either compliance violations, noncompliance violations, or both, the judge may:

- (i) continue the suspended or deferred sentence without a change in conditions;
- (ii) continue the suspended sentence with modified or additional terms and conditions, which may include placement in:

- (A) a secure facility designated by the department for up to 9 months; or

(B) a community corrections facility or program designated by the department for up to 9 months, including but not limited to placement in a prerelease center, sanction or hold bed, transitional living program, enhanced supervision program, relapse intervention bed, chemical dependency treatment, or 24/7 sobriety program;

(iii) revoke the suspension of sentence and require the offender to serve either the sentence imposed or any sentence that could have been imposed that does not include a longer imprisonment or commitment term than the original sentence; or

(iv) if the sentence was deferred, impose any sentence that might have been originally imposed.

(b) If a suspended or deferred sentence is revoked, the judge shall consider any elapsed time, consult the records and recollection of the probation and parole officer, and allow all of the elapsed time served without any record or recollection of violations as a credit against the sentence. If the judge determines that elapsed time should not be credited, the judge shall state the reasons for the determination in the order. Credit must be allowed for time served in a detention center or for home arrest time already served.

(c) If the judge finds that the offender has not violated a term or condition of a suspended or deferred sentence, the judge is not prevented from setting, modifying, or adding conditions of probation as provided in 46-23-1011.

~~(8) (a) Except as provided in subsection (8)(c), if the judge finds that the offender has violated the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence, that the violation is a compliance violation, and that the appropriate violation responses under the incentives and interventions grid have not been exhausted and documented in the offender's file, the judge shall notify the department and refer the matter back to the hearings officer.~~

~~(b) Except as provided in subsection (8)(c), if the judge finds that the offender has violated the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence, that the violation is a compliance violation, and that the appropriate violation responses under the incentives and interventions grid have been exhausted and documented in the offender's file, the judge may:~~

~~(i) continue the suspended or deferred sentence without a change in conditions; or~~

~~(ii) continue the suspended or deferred sentence with modified or additional terms and conditions, which may include placement as provided in subsection (7)(a)(ii).~~

~~(c) If the judge finds that the offender has violated the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence, that the violation is a compliance violation, and that the offender's conduct indicates that the offender will not be responsive to further efforts under the incentives and interventions grid, the judge may sentence the offender as provided in subsection (7).~~

~~(9)(8)~~ If the judge finds that the prosecution has not proved, by a preponderance of the evidence, that there has been a violation of the terms and conditions of the suspended or deferred sentence, the petition must be dismissed and the offender, if in custody, must be immediately released.

~~(10)(9)~~ All sanction and placement decisions must be documented in the offender's file.

~~(11)(10)~~ As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

~~(a) "Absconding"~~

~~(a) "absconding" means when an offender deliberately makes the offender's whereabouts unknown to a probation and parole officer or fails to report for the purposes of avoiding supervision, and reasonable efforts by the probation and parole officer to locate the offender have been unsuccessful; and~~

~~(b) "Compliance violation" means a violation of the conditions of supervision that is not:~~

~~(i) a new criminal offense;~~

~~(ii) possession of a firearm in violation of a condition of probation;~~

~~(iii) behavior by the offender or any person acting at the offender's direction that could be considered stalking, harassing, or threatening the victim of the offense or a member of the victim's immediate family or support network;~~

~~(iv) absconding; or~~

~~(v) failure to enroll in or complete a required sex offender treatment program or a treatment program designed to treat violent offenders.~~

(b) "compliance violation" means a violation of the conditions of supervision that is not:

(i) a new criminal offense;

(ii) possession of a firearm in violation of a condition of probation;

(iii) behavior by the offender or any person acting at the offender's direction that could be considered stalking, harassing, or threatening the victim of the offense or a member of the victim's immediate family or support network;

(iv) absconding; or

(v) failure to enroll in or complete a required sex offender treatment program or a treatment program designed to treat violent offenders.

~~(12)~~(11) The provisions of this section apply to any offender whose suspended or deferred sentence is subject to revocation regardless of the date of the offender's conviction and regardless of the terms and conditions of the offender's original sentence."

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
HB 689, originated in the House.

---

Chief Clerk of the House

---

Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

---

President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

HOUSE BILL NO. 689

INTRODUCED BY L. SHELDON-GALLOWAY

AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO PROBATION AND PAROLE; ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT TO USE COMPLIANCE OR NONCOMPLIANCE VIOLATIONS IN REQUESTS TO REVOKE PROBATION; AND AMENDING SECTION 46-18-203, MCA.