

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 228 (SB 407)

2020 Regular Session

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Prior law provided that the legislature recognizes that there is a critical need for criminal justice system programs to assist veterans in order to reduce the incidence of recidivism.

New law authorizes the secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections (department) to establish a Post-Conviction Veterans Mentor Program for incarcerated veterans.

Prior law provided that an offender who is incarcerated is eligible to participate in the program if certain conditions are met.

New law provides that an offender who is incarcerated is eligible for consideration to participate in the program if certain conditions are met.

New law retains prior law conditions and adds the requirement that the offender has completed a mentor training program as deemed appropriate by the department and the consent of the sentencing court and the district attorney of the jurisdiction of the conviction.

Prior law provided for requirements to maintain eligibility in the program.

New law changes these to additional requirements for participation in the program.

Additionally, new law adds the requirement of submitting to random drug screenings and receiving no positive results from such screenings.

New law provides that liability for all activity and possible illegal activity will fall solely on the veteran offender participating in the program. Provides that the department will have indemnity for any and all actions taken by the offender that may be illegal, that subject the offender to parole revocation, or that are deemed eligible to terminate the offender's participation in the Post-Conviction Veterans Mentor Program.

New law provides that the offender will serve as a mentor in the Veterans Court probation program, upon written approval of the presiding judge.

Prior law authorized transitional facilities for incarcerated veterans who serve as mentors for the Veterans Court probation program. Further provided for certain requirements for the facilities.

New law provides that existing transitional work release program facilities, otherwise known as work release, may be used to provide services and opportunities to the veterans participating in the program to benefit both the veterans participating and the parish jails.

Effective August 1, 2020.

(Amends R.S. 15:1199.22, 1199.24(A)(1), (2), (7), and (8), (B), (C), (D), (E), and (F), 1199.25, and 1199.26; adds R.S. 15:1199.24(A)(11), (12), and (G))