

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Criminal Justice

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BILL: CS/SB 1054

INTRODUCER: Criminal Justice Committee and Senators Gruters and Farmer

SUBJECT: Substance Abuse Services

DATE: February 18, 2020

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Hendon</u>	<u>Hendon</u>	<u>CF</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Cellon</u>	<u>Jones</u>	<u>CJ</u>	<b>Fav/CS</b>
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 1054 amends s. 397.334, F.S., which provides that drug court participants who are ordered by the court to document their participation in substance abuse self-help groups, may be offered either an electronic or a written option for documenting that participation.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2020.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Problem-Solving Courts**

In 1989, Florida created the first drug court in the United States in Miami-Dade County. Other types of problem-solving court dockets subsequently followed using the drug court model and were implemented to assist individuals with a range of problems such as drug addiction, mental illness, domestic violence, and child abuse and neglect.<sup>1</sup>

Florida's problem-solving courts address the root causes of an individual's involvement with the justice system through specialized dockets, multidisciplinary teams, and a nonadversarial

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<sup>1</sup>The most common problem-solving courts in Florida are drug courts, mental health courts, veterans courts, and early childhood courts. Florida Courts, Office of Court Improvement, Problem-Solving Courts, available at <https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Court-Improvement/Problem-Solving-Courts> (last visited February 12, 2020).

approach.<sup>2</sup> As of July 2019, the following more commonly known problem-solving courts operated in the state:

- 54 Adult Drug Courts;
- 31 Veteran’s Courts;
- 27 Mental Health Courts;
- 20 Juvenile Drug Courts;
- 23 Early Childhood Courts;
- 13 Family Dependency Drug Courts; and
- 4 DUI Courts.<sup>3</sup>

When the court’s focus is on helping people overcome substance use issues that contributed to their justice system involvement (drug court, juvenile drug court, family dependency drug court, and DUI court), the program will involve various treatment options. However, even when the docket seemingly consists exclusively of different types of cases (early childhood courts, mental health courts, and veteran’s courts), substance use issues may play a part and may be treated in those courts, too.

In Drug Courts, a participant’s goal is usually to complete the phases of the program and graduate. Phase promotion is predicated on the achievement of realistic and defined behavioral goals. Criteria for phase advancement and graduation include objective evidence that participants are engaged in productive activities; such as, employment, education, or attendance in peer support groups.<sup>4</sup>

Drug Court participants regularly attend self-help or peer support groups in addition to group and individual counseling. The peer support groups follow a structured model such as 12-step or Smart Recovery. Before participants enter the peer support groups, treatment providers use an evidence-based preparatory intervention, such as 12-step facilitation therapy, to prepare the participants for what to expect in the groups and assist them to gain the most benefit from the groups. The Florida Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards states that participants should have the option to choose a secular alternative to 12-step peer support groups.<sup>5</sup>

If a Drug Court participant attends peer support group meetings, and he or she wants the court to be made aware of that productive behavior, there must be proof that the participant attended the meeting. Based upon the Drug Court Model, the Case Manager is likely to receive such proof from the participant at their meeting and report it to the drug court team. Traditionally, this proof of meeting attendance is provided by a paper record of attendance.

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Florida Courts, Office of Court Improvement, Problem-Solving Courts, Florida Problem Solving Courts Best Practice Standards, Florida Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, available at <https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Court-Improvement/Problem-Solving-Courts/Florida-Problem-Solving-Courts-Best-Practice-Standards> (last visited February 12, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

## **GEO Fencing and GEO Location Technology as a Possible Reporting Tool**

Geofencing is a location-based service in which an application (app) or other software uses GPS, RFID, Wi-Fi or cellular data to trigger a pre-programmed action when a mobile device or RFID tag enters or exits a virtual boundary set up around a geographical location, known as a geofence. A geofence is most commonly defined within the code of a mobile application, especially since users need to opt-in to location services for the geofence to work.<sup>6</sup>

With the rising popularity of mobile devices, the use of geofencing has become a standard practice for businesses. Once a geographic area has been defined, the opportunities are seemingly endless for what companies can do, and it has become especially popular in marketing and social media. Some companies rely on geofencing for monitoring employees, especially workers who spend time off-site doing field work. It's also an easy way to automate time cards, clocking employees in and out as they come and go.<sup>7</sup>

There are also apps available that will “locate” the user for specific periods of time. For example, if a person is in a support group meeting, it is possible for the app, through the user's telephone, to let a case manager, but not necessarily anyone else, know the location of the person in real time.<sup>8</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill amends s. 397.334, F.S., which allows a problem-solving court to offer a drug court participant either an electronic or a written option of proving attendance in self-help or support groups if such participation is a component of the person's court-ordered treatment.

Case managers in a problem-solving court will be required to report a defendant's compliance or non-compliance with the conditions of the participant's program to the court regardless of the process by which verification is obtained.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2020.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

#### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

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<sup>6</sup> Sarah K. White, CIO, What is geofencing? Putting location to work, November 1, 2017, available at <https://www.cio.com/article/2383123/geofencing-explained.html> (last visited February 13, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Lynn Morton, R2I, 6 Geolocation Apps You May Not Have Heard About, available at <https://www.r2integrated.com/r2insights/6-geolocation-apps-you-may-not-have-heard-about> (last visited February 13, 2020).

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill amends section 397.334 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Criminal Justice on February 18, 2020:**

The committee substitute:

- Eliminates the requirement that the Department of Children and Families and the Office of the State Court Administrator collaborate to develop an electronic process by which problem-solving court participants can verify their participation in self-help or support groups.

- Specifies that a drug court may offer an electronic reporting option to drug court participants who are required to verify their participation in ancillary services like self-help or support groups.

**B. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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