

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 18, 2000  
AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 8, 2000  
AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 28, 2000  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 26, 2000  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 16, 2000  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 4, 2000

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2228**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Aroner  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bock, Dutra, Jackson, and  
Strom-Martin)**

February 24, 2000

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An act relating to mental health, *and making an appropriation therefor.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2228, as amended, Aroner. Juvenile offenders: mental health screening.

Existing law, the Arnold-Kennick Juvenile Court Law, provides for the adjudication of a minor as a ward of the juvenile court on the basis of criminal or certain noncriminal behavior.

Existing law also directs county mental health departments that receive specified funding to provide mental health screening, assessment, and other services to the extent



resources are available to children served by county social services and probation departments.

This bill would establish the Juvenile Probation Assessment Pilot Project to be administered by the State Department of Mental Health in 3 counties, for ~~3~~ 2 years. The project would require, in order to be eligible for the program, a county probation department to develop a local plan for assessing the service needs of *a statistically significant sample of the* minors in the county who have been arrested or cited on charges based on criminal conduct. The bill would require the department to evaluate or contract for an evaluation of the pilot project and to submit the evaluation to specified committees of the Legislature on or before March 1, 2003. ~~Implementation of the project would be contingent on an appropriation in the annual Budget Act. The bill would appropriate \$2,000,000 from the General Fund to the State Department of Mental Health for these purposes.~~ The bill would also express the intent of the Legislature ~~to enact legislation to provide appropriate screening and assessment of juvenile offenders to detect mental or emotional disorders, and to provide a continuum of appropriate mental health services for juvenile offenders at the local level in this regard.~~

Vote: ~~majority~~ <sup>2/3</sup>. Appropriation: ~~no~~ yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby finds and  
 2 declares all of the following:  
 3 (a) The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and  
 4 Delinquency Prevention estimates that 60 percent of  
 5 young people in the juvenile system suffer from  
 6 behavioral, mental, or emotional disorders.  
 7 (b) The National Mental Health Association reports  
 8 that, according to data obtained from site visits to a  
 9 nationally representative sample of 95 public and private  
 10 juvenile facilities, 73 percent of the young people in those  
 11 facilities reported mental health problems, and 57  
 12 percent reported that they had been previously treated  
 13 for mental health problems.



1 (1) The prevalence of mental disorders among young  
2 people in juvenile justice facilities ranges from 50 to 75  
3 percent.

4 (2) From one-quarter to one-third of the young people  
5 suffered from anxiety or mood disorders, nearly one-third  
6 of the girls suffered from posttraumatic stress syndrome,  
7 and up to 19 percent of the young people may be suicidal.

8 (3) Young people with learning disabilities or serious  
9 emotional problems are arrested at higher rates than  
10 other young people who do not suffer from those  
11 disabilities.

12 (4) Young people involved with the juvenile justice  
13 system have substantially higher rates of mental disorders  
14 than young people in the general population.

15 (c) Many young people involved in the juvenile justice  
16 system in California suffer from mental health problems,  
17 substance abuse problems, and other problems that  
18 frequently are undiagnosed or untreated due to the lack  
19 of proper screening and assessment or the unavailability  
20 of appropriate treatment resources.

21 (d) The Legislature recognizes the value of  
22 comprehensive strength-based assessments and  
23 coordination of appropriate services for young people  
24 and their families, including intensive followup to ensure  
25 the availability and accessibility of services.

26 Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to enact  
27 legislation that will provide ~~appropriate screening and~~  
28 ~~assessment of juvenile offenders to detect mental or~~  
29 ~~emotional disorders, and to provide a continuum of~~  
30 ~~appropriate mental health services for juvenile offenders~~  
31 ~~at the local level.~~ *for the development of an appropriate*  
32 *screening instrument and assessment protocols to be*  
33 *employed using a sample of juvenile offenders within*  
34 *pilot counties selected by the State Department of*  
35 *Mental Health.*

36 SEC. 2. (a) There is hereby established the Juvenile  
37 Probation Assessment Pilot Project to be administered by  
38 the State Department of Mental Health in three counties.  
39 The project shall be in effect for ~~three~~ two years.



1 (b) In order to be eligible for this program, a county  
2 probation department shall comply with guidelines set  
3 out by the department and shall develop a local plan for  
4 assessing the service needs of *a statistically significant*  
5 *sample of the* minors in the county who have been  
6 arrested or cited on charges that bring them within the  
7 jurisdiction of the juvenile court pursuant to Section 602  
8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

9 (c) The local plan shall provide for all of the following:

10 (1) The ~~development and~~ application of uniform  
11 screening and needs assessment instruments and  
12 protocols to be administered to minors coming within the  
13 provisions of this section, including provisions for the  
14 uniform collection of demographic information and the  
15 minor's history of substance abuse, mental health, health,  
16 education, and information on the minor's family history  
17 and offense history. The screening and assessment  
18 instruments shall ~~be strength based and~~ meet the  
19 minimum guidelines established by the department.

20 (2) The screening of *a statistically significant sample*  
21 *of* minors within timeframes identified by the  
22 department, and the referral of minors for a more  
23 extensive assessment, including evaluation by the county  
24 probation assessment team.

25 (3) A county probation assessment team that at a  
26 minimum includes representatives from the county  
27 probation department which shall act as the lead, and  
28 from the county mental health department, the county  
29 office of education, and local substance abuse and health  
30 programs. To the extent practicable, the assessment team  
31 shall also involve county social services, foster youth  
32 services, and other local programs serving delinquent or  
33 at-risk youth.

34 (4) Protocols for the referral of minors who have been  
35 screened and determined to need additional assessment.  
36 These assessments shall be used for developing case plans  
37 or referrals to service, to the extent that local resources  
38 are available. Referral to programs and services should be  
39 consistent with the minor's individual needs, and the  
40 safety of the community.



1 (5) Staff to administer the screening and assessment  
2 instruments identified in this section, and minimum  
3 requirements for the prior education and training of  
4 those staff members. The plan shall also contain  
5 provisions for the ongoing training of staff involved in the  
6 program, including guidelines established by the  
7 department.

8 (d) (1) The department, in consultation with the  
9 pilot counties and other individuals or organizations with  
10 expert knowledge regarding the assessment of juvenile  
11 offenders, shall develop minimum screening and  
12 assessment instruments and protocols to be used by pilot  
13 counties. The department shall provide technical  
14 assistance to the pilot counties, including training relative  
15 to quality screening and assessment of minors.

16 (2) The department shall establish minimum  
17 ~~standards, funding schedules~~ *program standards,*  
18 *procedures for allocating funds to pilot counties,*  
19 procedures for the collection of data, and procedures for  
20 the review and approval of a local plan developed  
21 pursuant to subdivision (c).

22 (3) (A) *The department shall review the screening*  
23 *and assessment protocols to ensure that they do not*  
24 *violate any rules or standards related to the testing of*  
25 *human subjects and to ensure that they do not lead to the*  
26 *inappropriate labeling of young persons who are assessed.*

27 (B) *The screening and assessment protocols*  
28 *developed by the department shall be appropriate for use*  
29 *with the population of young persons in the juvenile*  
30 *justice system.*

31 (C) *The department may contract for the*  
32 *development of the screening and assessment protocols*  
33 *with the assistance and collaboration of an advisory*  
34 *committee consisting of interested parties from the*  
35 *counties. In addition, the pilot counties shall participate*  
36 *in the development of the screening instrument and the*  
37 *assessment protocols.*

38 (e) County probation departments involved in this  
39 pilot project are authorized to release summary  
40 information to the department relating to the Juvenile



1 Probation Assessment Pilot Project, regarding minors  
2 involved in the program for purposes of oversight and  
3 evaluation. The information released shall not include  
4 any information that would permit the identification of  
5 an individual minor. If information regarding an  
6 individual minor is to be included for any reason, such as  
7 for illustrative purposes, the name of the minor and any  
8 other individual shall be redacted from the information  
9 that is to be provided to the department prior to its  
10 release.

11 (f) County probation departments involved in this  
12 pilot project shall use data collected through the  
13 screening and assessment process to identify *the* service  
14 needs of juveniles in the county, ~~and work in~~  
15 ~~collaboration with the assessment team to develop a plan~~  
16 ~~for developing an appropriate continuum of treatment~~  
17 ~~services. They shall also identify existing local, state,~~  
18 ~~federal, and private resources that may be used to fund~~  
19 ~~these services. who undergo the screening or assessment.~~

20 (g) ~~The funding schedule developed~~ *allocation*  
21 *provided* by the department ~~shall include a set rate~~  
22 ~~allocated to counties to pilot counties shall include an~~  
23 *allotment* for screening and ~~for~~ assessing minors  
24 ~~identified in this section, and an allocation allotment for~~  
25 ~~staff training and administration.~~

26 (h) The department shall evaluate or contract for an  
27 evaluation of the pilot project in order to judge the  
28 effectiveness of the screening and assessment protocol  
29 and processes used to implement the programs, including  
30 whether the assessments and screenings provide  
31 adequate background data on the minor and the minor's  
32 family unit, improve achievement of case plan goals, are  
33 useful to counties and services providers, and can be  
34 applied with ease. The department shall submit the  
35 evaluation to the appropriate fiscal and policy  
36 committees of the Legislature on or before March 1, 2003.

37 (i) Upon satisfactory completion of the pilot project  
38 described in this section and development of formal  
39 screening and assessment processes and protocols, the  
40 department, in collaboration with the evaluators, and



1 participating counties shall integrate information  
2 obtained from the pilot ~~project~~ *counties* and make it  
3 available to ~~the statewide chief probation officers~~  
4 ~~organization~~ *county probation officers, county mental*  
5 *health directors, and county substance abuse directors.*

6 ~~SEC. 3. Implementation of the Juvenile Probation~~  
7 ~~Assessment Pilot Project, as described in Section 2 of this~~  
8 ~~act, shall be contingent on an appropriation therefor in~~  
9 ~~the annual Budget Act.~~

10 *SEC. 3. The sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) is*  
11 *hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State*  
12 *Department of Mental Health for the purposes of the*  
13 *Juvenile Probation Assessment Pilot Project as described*  
14 *in Section 2 of this act.*

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16 CORRECTIONS

17 \_\_\_\_\_

18 Text — Page 3.

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