



**ARIZONA STATE SENATE**  
*Fifty-Sixth Legislature, Second Regular Session*

**AMENDED**  
FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1578

involuntary treatment; substance abuse

Purpose

Allows persons who have a substance use disorder and who do not have any co-occurring mental disorders to be considered for court-ordered treatment, if certain conditions apply.

Background

A person who has a substance use disorder without any co-occurring mental disorder may not be considered for involuntary treatment. A person who initially presents with impairments consistent with both a mental disorder and a substance use disorder is eligible for screening and evaluation, and that person may be eligible for involuntary treatment if, after considering the person's history, an appropriate assessment of the person's current presentation, and a reasonable period of time to rule out substance abuse as the primary cause of the alleged behavior, the person's presentation is consistent with a mental disorder that would benefit from treatment ([A.R.S. § 36-521.01](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Prohibits a person who suffers from a substance use disorder from being ordered to undergo court-ordered treatment unless they:
  - a) have been diagnosed by a qualified health professional as suffering from a substance use disorder;
  - b) have a substance use disorder that is severe and persistent and results in the person being a danger to self or others, or having a grave disability and being unwilling or unable to accept voluntary treatment; and
  - c) can reasonably benefit from treatment.
2. Amends the statutory prohibition on persons who have substance use disorders and who do not have any co-occurring mental disorder from being admitted for involuntary treatment, to instead allow for persons with substance use disorders to be admitted for treatment if the disorder is severe and persistent and results in the person being a danger to self or others, or having a grave disability and being unwilling to accept voluntary treatment.
3. Modifies the definition of *mental disorder* to include substance use disorders which may co-occur with another disorder.

4. Designates this legislation as the "Matthew Casey Wethington Act for Substance Abuse Intervention".
5. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Amendments Adopted by Committee of the Whole

1. Amends the statutory prohibition on persons with substance use disorders and without any co-occurring mental disorder from being admitted for involuntary treatment, to instead allow for persons with substance use disorders to be admitted for treatment if the disorder is severe and persistent and results in the person being a danger to self or others, or having a grave disability and being unwilling to accept voluntary treatment.
2. Modifies the definition of *mental disorder* to include substance use disorders which may co-occur with another disorder.
3. Strikes provisions of the bill relating to petitions for involuntary treatment, duties of the court in treatment hearings, emergency involuntary treatment, health evaluations and transportation of persons to hospitals or other facilities.

Senate Action

JUD            2/15/24    DP            4-3-0

Prepared by Senate Research

March 5, 2024

ZD/cs