

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1057

Introduced by DeBoer, 10.

Read first time January 08, 2024

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to juveniles; to amend sections 29-1816 and
- 2 43-274, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022; to change
- 3 provisions relating to arraignments, filing of juvenile petitions,
- 4 and juvenile court jurisdiction; to harmonize provisions; and to
- 5 repeal the original sections.
- 6 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 29-1816, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
2 2022, is amended to read:

3 29-1816 (1)(a) The accused may be arraigned in county court or
4 district court:

5 (i) If the accused was eighteen years of age or older when the
6 alleged offense was committed;

7 (ii) If the accused was younger than eighteen years of age and was
8 fourteen years of age or older when an alleged offense punishable as a
9 Class I, IA, IB, IC, ID, II, or IIA felony was committed; or

10 (iii) If the alleged offense is a traffic offense as defined in
11 section 43-245. ~~;~~ ~~or~~

12 ~~(iv) Until January 1, 2017, if the accused was seventeen years of~~
13 ~~age when an alleged offense described in subdivision (1) of section~~
14 ~~43-247 was committed.~~

15 (b) Arraignment in county court or district court shall be by
16 reading to the accused the complaint or information, unless the reading
17 is waived by the accused when the nature of the charge is made known to
18 him or her. The accused shall then be asked whether he or she is guilty
19 or not guilty of the offense charged. If the accused appears in person
20 and by counsel and goes to trial before a jury regularly impaneled and
21 sworn, he or she shall be deemed to have waived arraignment and a plea of
22 not guilty shall be deemed to have been made.

23 (2)(a) ~~(2)~~ At the time of the arraignment, the county court or
24 district court shall advise the accused, if the accused was younger than
25 eighteen years of age at the time the alleged offense was committed, that
26 the accused may move the county court or district court at any time not
27 later than thirty days after arraignment, unless otherwise permitted by
28 the court for good cause shown, to waive jurisdiction in such case to the
29 juvenile court for further proceedings under the Nebraska Juvenile Code.
30 This subsection does not apply if the case was transferred to county
31 court or district court from juvenile court.

1 (b) The accused may move to transfer a case to juvenile court if the
2 accused was younger than eighteen years of age at the time the offense
3 was committed. The age of the accused at the time of charging, the time
4 the motion to transfer is filed, the time the hearing on the motion to
5 transfer is held, or the time of the court's decision on the motion shall
6 not prevent the court from granting a motion to transfer the case to the
7 juvenile court.

8 (3) For motions to transfer a case from the county court or district
9 court to juvenile court:

10 (a) The county court or district court shall schedule a hearing on
11 such motion within fifteen days. The customary rules of evidence shall
12 not be followed at such hearing. The accused shall be represented by an
13 attorney. The criteria set forth in section 43-276 shall be considered at
14 such hearing. After considering all the evidence and reasons presented by
15 both parties, the case shall be transferred to juvenile court unless a
16 sound basis exists for retaining the case in county court or district
17 court; and

18 (b) The county court or district court shall make a decision on such
19 motion within thirty days after the hearing and shall set forth findings
20 for the reason for its decision. If the county court or district court
21 determines that the accused should be transferred to the juvenile court,
22 the complete file in the county court or district court shall be
23 transferred to the juvenile court and the complaint, indictment, or
24 information may be used in place of a petition therein. The county court
25 or district court making a transfer shall order the accused to be taken
26 forthwith to the juvenile court and designate where the juvenile shall be
27 kept pending determination by the juvenile court. The juvenile court
28 shall then proceed as provided in the Nebraska Juvenile Code.

29 (4) ~~(c)~~ An order granting or denying transfer of the case from
30 county or district court to juvenile court shall be considered a final
31 order for the purposes of appeal. Upon entry of an order, any party may

1 appeal to the Court of Appeals within ten days. Such review shall be
2 advanced on the court docket without an extension of time granted to any
3 party except upon a showing of exceptional cause. Appeals shall be
4 submitted, assigned, and scheduled for oral argument as soon as the
5 appellee's brief is due to be filed. The Court of Appeals shall conduct
6 its review in an expedited manner and shall render the judgment and
7 opinion, if any, as speedily as possible. During the pendency of an
8 appeal from an order transferring the case to juvenile court, the
9 juvenile court may enter temporary orders in the best interests of the
10 juvenile.

11 ~~(5) (4)~~ When the accused was younger than eighteen years of age when
12 an alleged offense was committed, the county attorney or city attorney
13 shall proceed under section 43-274.

14 Sec. 2. Section 43-274, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
15 2022, is amended to read:

16 43-274 (1) The county attorney or city attorney, having knowledge of
17 a juvenile within his or her jurisdiction who appears to be a juvenile
18 described in subdivision (1), (2), (3)(b), or (4) of section 43-247 and
19 taking into consideration the criteria in section 43-276, may proceed as
20 provided in this section.

21 (2) The county attorney or city attorney may offer pretrial
22 diversion to the juvenile in accordance with a juvenile pretrial
23 diversion program established pursuant to sections 43-260.02 to
24 43-260.07.

25 (3)(a) If a juvenile appears to be a juvenile described in
26 subdivision (1), (2), (3)(b), or (4) of section 43-247, the county
27 attorney or city attorney may utilize restorative justice practices or
28 services as a form of, or condition of, diversion or plea bargaining or
29 as a recommendation as a condition of disposition, through a referral to
30 a restorative justice facilitator.

31 (b) For victim-involved offenses, a restorative justice facilitator

1 shall conduct a separate individual intake and assessment session with
2 each juvenile and victim to determine which, if any, restorative justice
3 practice is appropriate. All participation by the victim shall be
4 voluntary. If the victim declines to participate in any or all parts of
5 the restorative justice practice, a victim surrogate may be invited to
6 participate with the juvenile. If, after assessment, participation by the
7 juvenile is deemed inappropriate, the restorative justice facilitator
8 shall return the referral to the referring county attorney or city
9 attorney.

10 (c) A victim or his or her parent or guardian shall not be charged a
11 fee. A juvenile or his or her parent or guardian may be charged a fee
12 according to the policies and procedures of the restorative justice
13 facilitator and the referring county attorney or city attorney.
14 Restorative justice facilitators shall use a sliding fee scale based on
15 income and shall not deny services based upon the inability of a juvenile
16 or his or her parent or guardian to pay, if funding is otherwise
17 available.

18 (d) Prior to participating in any restorative justice practice or
19 service under this section, the juvenile, the juvenile's parent or
20 guardian, and the victim, if he or she is participating, shall sign a
21 consent to participate form.

22 (e) If a reparation plan agreement is reached, the restorative
23 justice facilitator shall forward a copy of the agreement to the
24 referring county attorney or city attorney. The terms of the reparation
25 plan agreement shall specify provisions for reparation, monitoring,
26 completion, and reporting. An agreement may include, but is not limited
27 to, one or more of the following:

28 (i) Participation by the juvenile in certain community service
29 programs;

30 (ii) Payment of restitution by the juvenile to the victim;

31 (iii) Reconciliation between the juvenile and the victim;

1 (iv) Apology, when appropriate, between the juvenile and the victim;
2 and

3 (v) Any other areas of agreement.

4 (f) The restorative justice facilitator shall give notice to the
5 county attorney or city attorney regarding the juvenile's compliance with
6 the terms of the reparation plan agreement. If the juvenile does not
7 satisfactorily complete the terms of the agreement, the county attorney
8 or city attorney may:

9 (i) Refer the matter back to the restorative justice facilitator for
10 further restorative justice practices or services; or

11 (ii) Proceed with filing a juvenile court petition or criminal
12 charge.

13 (g) If a juvenile meets the terms of the reparation plan agreement,
14 the county attorney or city attorney shall either:

15 (i) Not file a juvenile court petition or criminal charge against
16 the juvenile for the acts for which the juvenile was referred for
17 restorative justice practice or services when referred as a diversion or
18 an alternative to diversion; or

19 (ii) File a reduced charge as previously agreed when referred as a
20 part of a plea negotiation.

21 (4) The county attorney or city attorney shall file the petition in
22 the court with jurisdiction as outlined in section 43-246.01.

23 (5)(a) (5) When a transfer from juvenile court to county court or
24 district court is authorized because there is concurrent jurisdiction,
25 the county attorney or city attorney may move to transfer the
26 proceedings. Such motion shall be filed with the juvenile court petition
27 unless otherwise permitted for good cause shown.

28 (b) The age of the juvenile at the time of the filing of the
29 petition, the time the motion to transfer is filed, the time the hearing
30 on the motion to transfer is held, or the time of the court's decision on
31 the motion shall not prevent the court from retaining jurisdiction and

1 denying a motion to transfer the case to the county court or district
2 court.

3 (c) The juvenile court shall schedule a hearing on such motion
4 within fifteen days after the motion is filed. The county attorney or
5 city attorney has the burden by a preponderance of the evidence to show
6 why such proceeding should be transferred. The juvenile shall be
7 represented by counsel at the hearing and may present the evidence as to
8 why the proceeding should be retained. After considering all the evidence
9 and reasons presented by both parties, the juvenile court shall retain
10 the proceeding unless the court determines that a preponderance of the
11 evidence shows that the proceeding should be transferred to the county
12 court or district court. The court shall make a decision on the motion
13 within thirty days after the hearing. The juvenile court shall set forth
14 findings for the reason for its decision.

15 (d) An order granting or denying transfer of the case from juvenile
16 court to county or district court shall be considered a final order for
17 the purposes of appeal. Upon the entry of an order, any party may appeal
18 to the Court of Appeals within ten days. Such review shall be advanced on
19 the court docket without an extension of time granted to any party except
20 upon a showing of exceptional cause. Appeals shall be submitted,
21 assigned, and scheduled for oral argument as soon as the appellee's brief
22 is due to be filed. The Court of Appeals shall conduct its review in an
23 expedited manner and shall render the judgment and opinion, if any, as
24 speedily as possible. During the pendency of any such appeal, the
25 juvenile court may continue to enter temporary orders in the best
26 interests of the juvenile pursuant to section 43-295.

27 (e) If the proceeding is transferred from juvenile court to the
28 county court or district court, the county attorney or city attorney
29 shall file a criminal information in the county court or district court,
30 as appropriate, and the accused shall be arraigned as provided for a
31 person eighteen years of age or older in subdivision (1)(b) of section

1 29-1816.

2 Sec. 3. Original sections 29-1816 and 43-274, Revised Statutes

3 Cumulative Supplement, 2022, are repealed.