

## "SWIFT & SURE SANCTIONS" PROBATION PROGRAM: ADD FUND & SPECIALTY COURT

Phone: (517) 373-8080  
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**Senate Bills 948 and 949 as passed by the Senate**  
**Sponsor: Sen. John Proos**  
**House Committee: Criminal Justice**  
**Senate Committee: Michigan Competitiveness**  
**Complete to 11-27-16**

Analysis available at  
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

### BRIEF SUMMARY:

#### Senate Bill 948:

- Creates the Swift and Sure Probation Supervision Fund;
- Allows Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Programs (SSSPP) to accept participants from any jurisdiction under certain circumstances;
- Establishes eligibility criteria for participants;
- Allows a probationer to decline placement in a SSSPP; and
- Shifts responsibility to adhere to program requirements from a program funded under the Swift and Sure Sanctions Act to a judge overseeing a probationer participating in a SSSPP.

Senate Bill 949 allows any circuit court to adopt or institute a Swift and Sure Sanctions Court and allows the problem-solving court to accept participants from any jurisdiction under certain conditions.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills could have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the state and on local units of government. In the FY 2016 Judiciary appropriations act, there was \$4.3 million appropriated for distribution to courts that operated a Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program. In FY 2016, nineteen circuit courts received the grant funding. There is \$4.0 million appropriated in the FY 2017 Judiciary appropriations act for the same purpose.

If the bills result in an increase in the number of Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Programs implemented and operated by courts, and, subsequently, an increase in the number of swift and sure sanctions issued, there would be increased costs to local courts, if the state does not continue to provide the grant funding to cover the costs. Or, there would be increased costs to the state if the state does continue to cover the costs. Costs would depend on the number of people supervised under the program. The program costs roughly \$2,800 per person per year, in addition to annual administrative costs.

Also, increased program utilization would be expected to result in increased use of jail bed space. In turn, the demand for state prison beds could be expected to decrease due to more sanctions to jail rather than to prison. This would mean a savings for the state. The average

cost of prison incarceration in a state facility is roughly \$34,900 per prisoner per year, a figure that includes various fixed administrative and operational costs.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Under Michigan law, probation may be imposed for either misdemeanor or felony offenses, with some exceptions such as murder, armed robbery, criminal sexual conduct in the first- or third-degree, certain controlled substance offenses, and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. In general, the sentencing court imposes the conditions of probation. Participation in a Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program, by comparison, only applies to probationers convicted of a felony.

According to information provided on the Michigan Courts website,

*[t]he swift and sure sanctions probation program (SSSPP) is an intensive probation supervision program that targets high-risk felony offenders with a history of probation violations or failures." Participants are closely monitored and probation violations are quickly addressed with the imposition of graduated sanctions. Judges in SSSPP courts report a reduction in positive drug tests and failures to appear at scheduled meetings with probation officers by participants in the SSSPP.*

(See: <http://courts.mi.gov/administration/admin/op/problem-solving-courts/pages/swift-and-sure-sanctions-probation-program.aspx>)

Enabling legislation for implementation of the Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program was created by Public Act 616 of 2012. According to an online newsletter published by the State Court Administrative Office, probationers participating in SSSPPs are "36 percent less likely to reoffend, compared to a comparison group of probationers on regular probation." Reportedly, the intensive supervision, coupled with immediate sanctions for probation violations that increase in severity with repeat violations, is providing the support structure necessary for some probationers to turn their lives around. Even repeat offenders with long criminal records are breaking the cycle and successfully reintegrating into the community. [Myers, Thomas, The Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program: Success Stories, Connections (April 14, 2016). At: <http://info.courts.mi.gov/connectionsnewsletter/the-swift-and-sure-sanctions-probation-program-success-stories>]

## **DETAILED SUMMARY:**

**Senate Bill 948** amends Chapter XIA (Probation Swift and Sure Sanctions Act) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (MCL 771A.3 et al.). The bill makes the following changes:

- ❖ Instead of specifying that the swift and sure sanctions program is created with several listed objectives, the bill specifies that the program shall be implemented and maintained as provided in Chapter XIA, but it keeps the listed objectives unchanged.

- ❖ Restricts eligibility for the SSSPP to an individual receiving a risk score of high on a validated risk assessment or an individual receiving a risk score other than high or low the validated risk assessment and the judge, prosecutor, and defendant agree to the defendant's placement in the program.
- ❖ Specifically excludes from eligibility a defendant charged with a crime under one or more of the following:
  - First or second degree murder, first- or third-degree criminal sexual conduct, use or possession of a dangerous weapon in the commission of a crime, or treason.
  - A major controlled substance offense as the term is defined in Section 2 of Chapter I (refers to Schedule 1 or 2 narcotics or cocaine).
- ❖ Creates the Swift and Sure Probation Supervision Fund within the state treasury, allows money or other assets from any source to be deposited into the Fund, requires the treasurer to direct the investment of the Fund and credit interest and earnings from Fund investments to the Fund, and requires money at the close of a fiscal year to remain in the Fund (not lapse to the state General Fund). The treasurer must allocate sufficient funds to allow the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to expend funds to administer Chapter XIA. As currently provided in the act, SCAO will continue to provide grants to fund eligible SSSPPs.
- ❖ Allows a court receiving a grant for an SSSPP to accept participants from any other jurisdiction in the state based upon either where the participant resides or the unavailability of an SSSPP in the jurisdiction where the participant is charged. The transfer may occur at any time during the proceeding, including prior to adjudication. The receiving court could impose sentence, including sanctions, incentives, incarceration, and phase changes. To be valid, a transfer must be agreed upon by the defendant or respondent in writing, the attorney representing the defendant or respondent, the judge of the transferring court and the prosecutor of the case, and the judge of the receiving court and the prosecutor of the receiving court funding unit.
- ❖ Shifts the responsibility to meet certain listed requirements from the SSSPP to the judge and specifies the requirements must be met if swift and sure probation applies to a probationer. In addition to currently listed requirements, the judge will be required to adhere to and not depart from the prescribed list of sanctions and remedies imposed on the probationer.
- ❖ Allows an individual eligible for participation in an SSSPP to request to not be sentenced to probation in an SSSPP. The court may place the individual on probation under Chapter XI (Probation).

**Senate Bill 949** adds a new section to the Revised Judicature Act (600.1086). The bill allows a circuit court in any judicial circuit to adopt or institute a swift and sure sanctions

court, by statute or court rule. This new type of problem-solving court must carry out the purposes of the Swift and Sure Sanctions Act, Chapter XIA of the Code of the Criminal Procedure.

Similarly to amendments proposed by Senate Bill 948 to the Swift and Sure Sanctions Act, a court that has adopted a swift and sure sanctions court may accept participants from any other jurisdiction in the state based upon either the residence of the participant in the receiving jurisdiction or the unavailability of a swift and sure sanctions court in the jurisdiction where the participant is charged. To be valid, the transfer must be agreed upon by the defendant or respondent, the attorney representing the defendant or respondent, the judge of the transferring court and the prosecutor of the case, and the judge of the receiving court and the prosecutor of a court funding unit of the swift and sure sanctions court.

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky  
Fiscal Analyst: Robin Risko

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.