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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- BAIL AND RECOGNIZANCE

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Cruz, Potter, J. Lombardi, Newberry, Tanzi, Felix,  
J. Brien, Hull, and Ajello  
Date Introduced: January 23, 2026  
Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

- 1           SECTION 1. Chapter 12-13 of the General Laws entitled "Bail and Recognizance" is  
2 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:
- 3           **12-13-26. Bail task force.**
- 4           (a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to analyze whether or not the judges of the  
5 district and superior courts:
- 6           (1) Should continue the use of monetary conditions of bail and if so, to what extent;  
7           (2) To ensure that they have sufficiently robust, reliable, and effective options available to  
8 them that serve as alternatives to monetary conditions of bail that will ensure an accused's  
9 appearance in court, enhance public safety, and honor the presumptions of innocence and non-  
10 monetary conditions of bail; and
- 11           (3) To further improve the already high quality of criminal justice in our state. In order to  
12 accomplish these goals, the general assembly creates a bail task force to study, identify, and  
13 recommend any necessary changes to current Rhode Island bail laws, court rules, procedures, and  
14 practices.
- 15           (b) Membership. The task force shall be comprised of the following ten (10) members or  
16 their designees:
- 17           (1) The chief justice of the Rhode Island supreme court who shall serve as the chairperson  
18 of the task force;
- 19           (2) The attorney general who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force;

1       (3) The public defender who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force;  
2       (4) The president of the Rhode Island association of criminal defense lawyers;  
3       (5) The president of the Rhode Island police chiefs' association;  
4       (6) The director of the Rhode Island department of corrections;  
5       (7) The head of the economic progress institute;  
6       (8) The president of Amos House;  
7       (9) A representative of an impacted community appointed by the president of the senate  
8       and;  
9       (10) A representative of an impacted community appointed by the speaker of the house.  
10       (c) Vacancies in said task force shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.  
11       (d) The membership of said task force shall receive no compensation for their services.  
12       (e) Consideration. In addressing the issues and related issues under consideration, the task  
13       force may:  
14       (1) Access and consider any relevant information including, but not limited to:  
15       (i) Testimony of witnesses including members of impacted communities;  
16       (ii) Relevant data from any source that the task force deems appropriate and relevant; and  
17       (iii) Compiled statistical information and any analyses of the data;  
18       (2) Consult with experts in the criminal justice field; and  
19       (3) Consider current procedures, practices, and training used in Rhode Island and other  
20       jurisdictions.  
21       (f) Resources. All state agencies, entities, boards, and commissions shall fully cooperate  
22       with the task force by providing accurate and timely information upon request and the joint  
23       committee on legislative services is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters and  
24       services necessary for said task force.  
25       (g) Procedures. The members of the task force shall meet and organize at the call of the co-  
26       chairpersons no later than September 1, 2026.  
27       (h) Final report. Upon completion of its work the task force shall prepare a report  
28       containing its recommendations for any necessary changes to current Rhode Island bail law, court  
29       rules, procedures, and practices in the following areas:  
30       (1) Continued use of monetary conditions of bail and if so, to what extent;  
31       (2) The availability of sufficiently robust, reliable, and effective options that might serve  
32       as alternatives to monetary conditions of bail that shall ensure an accused's appearance in court,  
33       enhance public safety, and honor the presumptions of innocence and non-monetary conditions of  
34       bail;

- 1           (3) Increased use of summons to appear in court rather than arrest;  
2           (4) Increased use of home confinement;  
3           (5) Use of reliable pre-trial risk assessment tools;  
4           (6) Enhancing the availability of counsel at the initial appearance;  
5           (7) In felony cases, enhancing and preserving the continuity of representation between the  
6 district and superior courts, providing effective notice to the defendant and counsel of upcoming  
7 court dates, and any information relative to changes in the information screening and charging  
8 process;  
9           (8) Education and training for judges, clerks of the court, prosecutors, defense counsel, and  
10 other stakeholders;  
11           (9) Effective use of pre-trial services; and  
12           (10) Establishment of community bail funds.  
13           (i) The final report shall be presented to the governor; the chief justice of the Rhode Island  
14 supreme court; the presiding justice of the superior court and presiding judge of the district court;  
15 the speaker of the house of representatives; the president of the senate; and the chairpersons of the  
16 judiciary committees of both the house of representatives and the senate no later than January 1,  
17 2028.  
18           (j) Following the completion and submittal of the report as mandated in subsection (i) of  
19 this section, the task force shall continue to meet periodically in order to assess the impact of the  
20 recommendations it has made. A supplemental report from the task force shall be delivered in the  
21 same manner as its initial report but in no event, no later than July 1, 2029. The task force shall  
22 complete its supplemental report no later than May 1, 2030 and dissolve on July 1, 2030.

23           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- BAIL AND RECOGNIZANCE

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1           This act would create a ten (10) member bail task force to study the need of monetary  
2   conditions of bail and to consider other methods for ensuring an accused’s appearance in court,  
3   enhance public safety and honor the presumption of innocence and to file a report by January 1,  
4   2028.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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