CHAPTER 980
SEXUALLY VIOLENT PERSON COMMITMENTS

980.01 Definitions. In this chapter:
(1b) “Act of sexual violence” means conduct that constitutes the commission of a sexually violent offense.
(1d) “Agency with jurisdiction” means the agency with the authority or duty to release or discharge the person.
(1e) “Assisted living facility” has the meaning given in s. 101.123 (1) (ab).
(1g) “Child care facility” means a child care facility that is operated by a person licensed under s. 48.65 or certified under s. 48.651 or that is established or contracted for under s. 120.13 (14).
(1h) “Department” means the department of health services.
(1i) “Incarceration” includes confinement in a juvenile correctional facility, as defined in s. 938.02 (10p), or a secured residential care center for children and youth, as defined in s. 938.02 (15g), if the person was placed in the facility for being adjudicated delinquent under s. 48.34, 1993 stats., or under s. 938.183 or 938.34 on the basis of a sexually violent offense.
(1m) “Likely” means more likely than not.
(2) “Mental disorder” means a congenital or acquired condition affecting the emotional or volitional capacity that predisposes a person to engage in acts of sexual violence.
(2m) “Nursing home” has the meaning given in s. 50.01 (3).
(3) “Petitioner” means the agency or person that filed a petition under s. 980.02.
(3d) “Place of worship” means a church building where religious services are held.
(3g) “Public park” means a park or playground that is owned or maintained by the state or by a city, village, town, or county.
(3m) “School premises” has the meaning given in s. 948.61 (1) (c).
(4) “Secretary” means the secretary of health services.
(4m) “Serious child sex offender” means a person who has been convicted, adjudicated delinquent or found guilty or not responsible by reason of insanity or mental disease, defect or illness for committing a violation of a crime specified in s. 940.02 (1) or (2), 948.025 (1), or 948.085 against a child who had not attained the age of 13 years.
(5) “Sexually motivated” means that one of the purposes for an act is for the actor’s sexual arousal or gratification or for the sexual humiliation or degradation of the victim.
(6) “Sexually violent offense” means any of the following:
(a) Any crime specified in s. 940.225 (1), (2), or (3), 940.02 (1) or (2), 948.025, 948.06, 948.07, or 948.085.
   (am) An offense that, prior to June 2, 1994, was a crime under the law of this state and that is comparable to any crime specified in par. (a).
(b) Any crime specified in s. 940.01, 940.02, 940.03, 940.05, 940.06, 940.19 (2), (4), (5), or (6), 940.195 (4) or (5), 940.30, 940.305, 940.31, 941.32, 943.10, 943.32, or 948.03 that is determined, in a proceeding under s. 980.05 (3) (b), to have been sexually motivated.
(bm) An offense that, prior to June 2, 1994, was a crime under the law of this state, that is comparable to any crime specified in par. (b) and that is determined, in a proceeding under s. 980.05 (3) (b), to have been sexually motivated.
(c) Any solicitation, conspiracy, or attempt to commit a crime under par. (a), (am), (b), or (bm).
(7) “Sexually violent person” means a person who has been convicted of a sexually violent offense, has been adjudicated delinquent for a sexually violent offense, or has been found not guilty of or not responsible for a sexually violent offense by reason of insanity or mental disease, defect, or illness, and who is dangerous because he or she suffers from a mental disorder that makes it likely that the person will engage in one or more acts of sexual violence.
(8) “Significant progress in treatment” means that the person is doing all of the following:
   (a) Meaningfully participating in the treatment program specifically designed to reduce his or her risk to reoffend offered at a facility described under s. 980.065.
   (b) Participating in the treatment program at a level that is sufficient to allow the identification of his or her specific treatment needs and demonstrating, through overt behavior, a willingness to work on addressing the specific treatment needs.
   (c) Demonstrating an understanding of the thoughts, attitudes, emotions, behaviors, and sexual arousal linked to his or her sexual offending and an ability to identify when the thoughts, emotions, behaviors, or sexual arousal occur.
   (d) Demonstrating sufficiently sustained change in the thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors and sufficient management of sexual arousal such that one could reasonably assume that, with continued treatment, the change could be maintained.
(9) “Substantially probable” means much more likely than not.
(10) “Treating professional” means a licensed physician, licensed psychologist, licensed social worker, or other mental health professional who provides, or supervises the provision of, sex offender treatment at a facility described under s. 980.065.
(11) “Youth center” means any center that provides, on a regular basis, recreational, vocational, academic, or social services activities for persons younger than 18 years old or for those persons and their families.
Chapter 980 creates a civil commitment procedure primarily intended to provide treatment and protect the public, not to punish the offender. As such the chapter does not provide for “punishment” in violation of the constitutional prohibitions against double jeopardy and ex post facto laws. State v. Carpenter, 197 Wis. 2d 252, 541 N.W.2d 105 (1995), 94–1998.

Chapter 980 does not violate substantive due process guarantees. The definitions of “more likely than not” and “dangerous” are not beyond. The treatment obligations under ch. 980 are consistent with the nature and duration of commitments under the chapter. The lack of a precommitment finding of treatability is not offensive to due process requirements. State v. Post, 197 Wis. 2d 279, 541 N.W.2d 115 (1995), 94–2356.

Chapter 980 does not violate equal protection guarantees. The state’s compelling interest in protecting the public justifies the differential treatment of the sexually violent offender compared to the chapter. State v. Post, 197 Wis. 2d 279, 541 N.W.2d 115 (1995), 94–2356.

A child enticement conviction under a statute that had been repealed and reenacted under the former number was not listed in the new statute. State v. Irish, 210 Wis. 2d 107, 569 N.W.2d 161 (Cl. App. 1997), 96–2030.

Under [former] sub. (7), a “mental disorder that makes it substantially probable that the person will engage in acts of sexual violence” is a disorder that predisposes the affected person to sexual violence. A diagnosis of “antisocial personality disorder,” unattached with any other diagnosis but coupled with sufficient evidence establishing that a defendant is a “sexually violent person,” may constitute a mental disorder that makes it substantially probable that the person will engage in acts of sexual violence under [former] sub. (7). State v. Adams, 223 Wis. 2d 60, 588 N.W.2d 316 (Cl. App. 1998), 96–3136.

Definitions in ch. 980 serve a legal, and not medical, function. The court will not adopt a definition that pedophilia for ch. 980 purposes. State v. Zanelli, 223 Wis. 2d 545, 589 N.W.2d 687 (Cl. App. 1998), 98–0733.

That the state’s expert opined that pedophilia is a lifelong disorder did not mean that the evidence was based solely on prior bad acts rather than a present condition. State v. Mark, 199 Wis. 2d 561, 641 N.W.2d 441 (Cl. App. 1998), 96–3524.

As used in this chapter, “substantial probability” and “substantially probable” both mean much more likely than not. This standard for dangerousness does not violate equal protection nor is the term unconstitutionally vague. State v. Curiel, 227 Wis. 2d 413, 597 N.W.2d 197 (1999), 97–1337.

The definition of “sexually violent person” includes conduct prohibited by a previous version of a statute enumerated in sub. (6) as long as the conduct prohibited under the current statute remains under the current statute. State v. Pharm, 2000 WI App 167, 238 Wis. 2d 97, 617 N.W.2d 163, 98–1542.

Chapter 980 is not facially unconstitutional. Due process does not require proof of a break in the offender’s incarceration and the offender is reincarcerated for non-violent offenses prior to the applicable date of the following:

- The anticipated release on parole or discharge of a person’s supervision.
- The anticipated termination of a commitment.
- The anticipated discharge of an order under s. 971.50. 

Chapter 980 was not void because the period of treatment and protection was not a sentence. State v. Lash, 1999 WI App 219, 741 N.W.2d 80 (2006). The “appropriately defined” term “more likely than not” could not have connoted a reasonable person the phrase meant other than more likely to happen than not to happen. State v. Smalley, 2001 WI App 179, 268 Wis. 2d 440, 671 N.W.2d 163, 97–2347.

The legislature’s replacement of “substantially probable” in sub. (7) with “likely,” lowered the level of dangerousness required to commit a person under ch. 980 but did not offend due process on either due process grounds or equal protection grounds. State v. Nelson, 2001 WI App 2, 298 Wis. 2d 453, 727 N.W.2d 364, 05–0810.

A ch. 980 commitment did not violate equal protection or due process guarantees when the state not only committed the defendant to community upon a finding that he was an eligible candidate for commitment and subsequently committed after parole violations that did not involve overt acts of sexual violence. State v. Feldmann, 2007 WI App 35, 300 Wis. 2d 741, 779 N.W.2d 449, 05–2437.

“A more likely than not,” as used in sub. (1m), is not an obscure or specialized term of art, but a commonly—used expression. An expert witness’s ambiguous and confusing statement regarding the meaning of “more likely than not” could not have convinced a reasonable person the phrase meant other than more likely to happen than not to happen. State v. Smalley, 2001 WI App 219, 268 Wis. 2d 440, 671 N.W.2d 163, 97–2347.

Under sub. (7), a sexually violent person is one who is dangerous because he or she suffers from a mental disorder that makes it likely that the person will engage in one or more acts of sexual violence. Actual instruments that measure dangerousness without regard to the defendant’s mental illness were relevant to determining whether he was a sexually violent person. State v. Sugden, 2010 WI App 166, 330 Wis. 2d 628, 795 N.W.2d 456, 09–2445.

The proportion of abou−to−be released sex offenders who are referred for a special purpose evaluation to determine whether they meet the requirements of ch. 980 is not, in itself, relevant to whether a particular person referred meets the requirements of being a sexually violent person. This is true whether that proportion is expressed in terms of a specific percentage or is not. The treatment obligations under ch. 980 are consistent with the nature and duration of commitments under the chapter. The lack of a precommitment finding of treatability is not offensive to due process requirements. State v. Sugden, 2010 WI App 166, 330 Wis. 2d 628, 795 N.W.2d 456, 09–2445.

The Kansas Sexually Violent Predator Act comports with due process requirements, does not run afoul of double jeopardy principles, and is not an ex post facto law. State v. Struck, 554 F.3d 555 (2010).

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In a trial on a petition filed under sub. (2), the state has the burden to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the petition was filed within 90 days of the subject’s release or discharge based on a sexually violent offense. State v. Thel, 2000 WI App 54, 241 Wis. 2d 439, 625 N.W.2d 321, 99–0316.

While a commitment under ch. 980 is civil, a court does not lose subject matter jurisdiction because a petition is filed under a criminal case number. State v. Pharm, 2000 WI App 167, 238 Wis. 2d 97, 617 N.W.2d 163, 98–1542.

Chapter 980 provides its own procedures for opening actions, and, as such, chs. 801 and 802 are inapplicable to the commencement of ch. 980 actions. State v. Wolfe, 2001 WI App 136, 246 Wis. 2d 233, 631 N.W.2d 240, 99–2145.

While a ch. 980 petition was filed within 90 days of release from a sentence for an offense that was not a sexually violent offense, which was being served concurrently with a shorter sentence imposed for a sexually violent offense, the petition was timely. State v. Treadway, 2002 WI App 195, 257 Wis. 2d 467, 651 N.W.2d 334, 00–2977.

A state was not precluded in seeking a ch. 980 commitment if the defendant’s parole revocation, even though the state had failed to prove that the defendant was a sexually violent person in need of commitment in a previous ch. 980 trial, took place prior to the defendant’s parole. State v. Parrah, 2002 WI App 263, 258 Wis. 2d 521, 654 N.W.2d 273, 00–2524.

The circuit court had jurisdiction to conduct ch. 980 proceedings involving an enrolled tribal member who committed the underlying sexual offenses on an Indian reservation. State v. Burgess, 2003 WI JI, 262 Wis. 2d 354, 665 N.W.2d 124, 00–3074.

See also Burgess v. Watters, 467 F.3d 677 (2007).

(1) A petition filed under this section shall be filed before the person is released or discharged.

(2) A petition filed under this section shall allege that all of the following apply to the person alleged to be a sexually violent person:

(a) The person satisfies any of the following criteria:

1. The person has been convicted of a sexually violent offense.

2. The person has been found delinquent for a sexually violent offense.

3. The person has been found not guilty of a sexually violent offense by reason of mental disease or defect.

(b) The person has a mental disorder.

(c) The person is dangerous to others because the person’s mental disorder makes it likely that he or she will engage in acts of sexual violence.

(3) A petition filed under this section shall state with particularity sufficient facts to establish probable cause to believe the person is a sexually violent person. If the petition alleges that a sexually violent offense or act is that basis for the allegation under sub. (2) (a) was an act that was sexually motivated as provided under s. 980.01 (6) (b), the petition shall state the grounds on which the offense or act alleged to be sexually motivated.

(4) A petition under this section shall be filed in one of the following:

(a) The circuit court for the county in which the person was convicted of a sexually violent offense, adjudicated delinquent for a sexually violent offense or found not guilty of a sexually violent offense by reason of mental disease or defect.

(b) The circuit court for the county in which the person will reside or be placed upon his or her discharge from a sentence, release on parole or extended supervision, or release from imprisonment, from a juvenile correctional facility, as defined in s. 938.02 (10p), or a secured residential care center for children and youth, as defined in s. 938.02 (15g), or from a commitment order.

Notwithstanding sub. (4), if the department of justice decides to file a petition under sub. (1) (a), it may file the petition in the circuit court for Dane County.

(5) A court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under chs. 48 and 938 does not have jurisdiction over a petition filed under this section alleging that a person who was adjudicated delinquent as a child is a sexually violent person.


A ch. 980 commitment is not an extension of a commitment under ch. 975, and s. 975.12 does not limit the state’s ability to seek a separate commitment under ch. 980 of a person originally committed under ch. 975. State v. Post, 197 Wis. 2d 279, 541 N.W.2d 115 (1995), 94–2356.

To the extent that s. 938.35 (1) prohibits the admission of delinquent adjudications in ch. 980 proceedings, it is repealed by implication. State v. Matthew A.B. 231 Wis. 2d 688, 605 N.W.2d 398 (Ct. App., 1999), 98–0229.

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the person’s attorney, or the petitioner does not request a jury trial, the court may on its own motion require that the trial be a jury. The jury shall be selected as provided under s. 980.05 (2m). A verdict of a jury under this chapter is not valid unless it is unanimous.


There are circumstances when comment on the defendant’s silence is permitted. If the defendant has retained or the court appoints a psychologist or a mental health professional who is expected to be called as a witness by the state, or who has been committed under this chapter may move to change the place of trial under s. 980.05 on the ground that an impartial trial cannot be had in the county in which the trial is set to be held. The motion shall be made within 20 days after the completion or waiver of the probable cause hearing under s. 980.04 (2), whichever is applicable, except that it may be made after that time for cause.

(2) The motion shall be in writing and supported by affidavit which shall state evidentiary facts showing the nature of the prejudice alleged. The petitioner may file counter affidavits.

(3) If the court determines that there exists in the county where the action is pending such prejudice that a fair trial cannot be had, it shall, except as provided in sub. (4), order that the trial be held in any county where an impartial trial can be had. Only one change may be granted under this subsection. The judge who orders the change in the place of trial shall preside at the trial. Preliminary matters before trial may be conducted in either county at the discretion of the court.

(4) (a) Instead of changing the place of trial under sub. (3), the court may require the selection of a jury under par. (b) if all of the following apply:

1. The court will sequester the jurors during the trial.
2. There are grounds for changing the place of trial under sub. (1).
3. The estimated cost to the county of using the procedure under this subsection is less than the estimated cost to the county of holding the trial in another county.

(b) A court that proceeds under this subsection shall follow the procedure under sub. (3) until the jury is chosen in the 2nd county. At that time, the proceedings shall return to the original county using the jurors selected in the 2nd county. The original county shall reimburse the 2nd county for all applicable costs under s. 814.22.

History: 2005 a. 434.

980.036 Discovery and inspection. (1) Definitions. In this section:

(1) “Person subject to this chapter” means a person who is subject to a petition filed under s. 980.02 or a person who has been committed under s. 980.06.

The circuit court must appoint an examiner for the court under sub. (3) regardless of whether the court also appointed an examiner for the petitioner under sub. (4), 2001 WI App 136, 239 Wis. 2d 49, 619 N.W.2d 97, 98–2455.

The court may conduct an examination of the person’s mental condition, the examiner shall have reasonable access to the person for the purpose of the examination, as well as to the person’s past and present treatment records, as defined in s. 51.30 (1) (b), and patient health care records as provided under s. 146.82 (2) (cm), past and present juvenile records, as provided under ss. 48.396 (6), 48.78 (2) (e), 938.396 (10), and 938.78 (2) (e), and the person’s past and present correctional records, including presentence investigation reports under s. 972.15 (6).

(5) A licensed physician, licensed psychologist, or other mental health professional who is expected to be called as a witness by one of the parties or by the court may not be subject to any order by the court for the sequestration of witnesses at any proceeding under this chapter.

History: 2005 a. 434 ss. 88, 90, 91.
(b) “Prosecuting attorney” means an attorney representing the state in a proceeding under this chapter.

(2) WHAT A PROSECUTING ATTORNEY MUST DISCLOSE TO A PERSON SUBJECT TO THIS CHAPTER. Upon demand, a prosecuting attorney shall disclose to a person subject to this chapter or his or her attorney, and permit the person subject to this chapter or his or her attorney to inspect and copy or photograph, all of the following materials and information, if the material or information is within the possession, custody, or control of the state:

(a) Any written or recorded statement made by the person subject to this chapter concerning the allegations in the petition filed under s. 980.02 or concerning other matters at issue in the trial or proceeding and the names of witnesses to the written statements of the person subject to this chapter.

(b) A written summary of all oral statements of the person subject to this chapter that the prosecuting attorney plans to use at the trial or proceeding and the names of witnesses to the oral statements of the person subject to this chapter.

(c) Evidence obtained in the manner described under s. 968.31 (2), if the prosecuting attorney intends to use the evidence at the trial or proceeding.

(d) A copy of the criminal record of the person subject to this chapter.

(e) A list of all witnesses whom the prosecuting attorney intends to call at the trial or proceeding, together with their addresses. This paragraph does not apply to rebuttal witnesses or witnesses called for impeachment only.

(f) Any relevant written or recorded statements of a witness listed under par. (e), including all of the following:
   1. Any videotaped oral statement of a child under s. 908.08.
   2. Any reports prepared in accordance with s. 980.031 (5).

(g) The criminal record of a witness listed under par. (e) that is known to the prosecuting attorney.

(h) The results of any physical or mental examination or any scientific or psychological test, instrument, experiment, or comparison that the prosecuting attorney intends to offer in evidence at the trial or proceeding, and any raw data that were collected, used, or considered in any manner as part of the examination, test, instrument, experiment, or comparison.

(i) Any physical or documentary evidence that the prosecuting attorney intends to offer in evidence at the trial or proceeding.

(j) Any exculpatory evidence.

(3) WHAT A PERSON SUBJECT TO THIS CHAPTER MUST DISCLOSE TO THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Upon demand, a person who is subject to this chapter or his or her attorney shall disclose to the prosecuting attorney, and permit the prosecuting attorney to inspect and copy or photograph, all of the following materials and information, if the material or information is within the possession, custody, or control of the person who is subject to this chapter or his or her attorney:

(a) A list of all witnesses, other than the person who is subject to this chapter, whom the person who is subject to this chapter intends to call at the trial or proceeding, together with their addresses. This paragraph does not apply to rebuttal witnesses or witnesses called for impeachment only.

(b) Any relevant written or recorded statements of a witness listed under par. (a), including any reports prepared in accordance with s. 980.031 (5).

(c) The criminal record of a witness listed under par. (a) if the criminal record is known to the attorney for the person who is subject to this chapter.

(d) The results of any physical or mental examination or any scientific or psychological test, instrument, experiment, or comparison that the person who is subject to this chapter intends to offer in evidence at the trial or proceeding, and any raw data that were collected, used, or considered in any manner as part of the examination, test, instrument, experiment, or comparison.

(e) Any physical or documentary evidence that the person who is subject to this chapter intends to offer in evidence at the trial or proceeding.

(3m) WHEN DISCLOSURE MUST BE MADE. A party required to make a disclosure under this section shall do so within a reasonable time after the probable cause hearing and within a reasonable time before a trial under s. 980.05, if the other party’s demand is made in connection with a trial. If the demand is made in connection with a proceeding under s. 980.08 or 980.09 (3), the party shall make the disclosure within a reasonable time before the start of that proceeding.

(4) COMMENT OR INSTRUCTION ON FAILURE TO CALL WITNESS. No comment or instruction regarding the failure to call a witness at a trial may be made or given if the sole basis for the comment or instruction is the fact that the name of the witness appears upon a list furnished under this section.

(5) TESTING OR ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE. On motion of a party, the court may order the production of any item of evidence or raw data that is intended to be introduced at the trial for testing or analysis under such terms and conditions as the court prescribes.

(6) PROTECTIVE ORDER. Upon motion of a party, the court may at any time order that discovery, inspection, or the listing of witnesses required under this section be denied, restricted, or deferred, or make other appropriate orders. If the prosecuting attorney or the attorney for a person subject to this chapter certifies that listing a witness under sub. (2) (e) or (3) (a) may subject the witness or others to physical or economic harm or coercion, the court may order that the deposition of the witness be taken under s. 967.04 (2) to (6). The name of the witness need not be divulged prior to the taking of such deposition. If the witness becomes unavailable or changes his or her testimony, the deposition shall be admissible at trial as substantive evidence.

(7) IN CAMERA PROCEEDINGS. Either party may move for an in camera inspection of any document required to be disclosed under sub. (2) or (3) for the purpose of masking or deleting any material that is not relevant to the case being tried. The court shall mask or delete any irrelevant material.

(8) CONTINUING DUTY TO DISCLOSE. If, after complying with a requirement of this section, and before or during trial, a party discovers additional material or the names of additional witnesses requested that are subject to discovery, inspection, or production under this section, the party shall promptly notify the other party of the existence of the additional material or names.

(9) SANCTIONS FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY. (a) The court shall exclude any witness not listed or evidence not presented for inspection, copying, or photographing required by this section, unless good cause is shown for failure to comply. The court may in appropriate cases grant the opposing party a recess or a continuance.

(b) In addition to or in place of any sanction specified in par. (a), a court may, subject to sub. (4), advise the jury of any failure or refusal to disclose material or information required to be disclosed under sub. (2) or (3), or of any untimely disclosure of material or information required to be disclosed under sub. (2) or (3).

(10) PAYMENT OF COPYING COSTS IN CASES INVOLVING INDIGENT RESPONDENTS. When the state public defender or a private attorney appointed under s. 977.08 requests copies, in any format, of any item that is discoverable under this section, the state public defender shall pay any fee charged for the copies from the appropriation account under s. 20.550 (1) (a). If the person providing copies under this section charges the state public defender a fee for the copies, the fee may not exceed the applicable maximum fee for copies of discoverable materials that is established by rule under s. 977.02 (9).

(11) EXCLUSIVE METHOD OF DISCOVERY. Chapter 804 does not apply to proceedings under this chapter. This section provides the only methods of obtaining discovery and inspection in proceedings under this chapter.
980.038  Miscellaneous procedural provisions.

(1)  Motions challenging jurisdiction or competency of court or timeliness of petition.  (a) A motion challenging the jurisdiction or competency of the court or the timeliness of a petition filed under s. 980.02 shall be filed within 30 days after the court holds the probable cause hearing under s. 980.04 (2).  Failure to file a motion within the time specified in this paragraph waives the right to challenge the jurisdiction or competency of the court or the timeliness of a petition filed under s. 980.02.

(b) Notwithstanding s. 801.11, a court may exercise personal jurisdiction over a person who is the subject of a petition filed under s. 980.02 even though the person is not served as provided under s. 801.11 (1) or (2) with a verified petition and summons or with an order for detention under s. 980.04 (1) and the person has not had a probable cause hearing under s. 980.04 (2).

(2) Evidence of refusal to participate in examination.  (a) At any hearing under this chapter, the state may present evidence or comment on evidence that a person who is the subject of a petition filed under s. 980.02 or a person who has been committed under this chapter refused to participate in an examination of his or her mental condition that was being conducted under this chapter or that was conducted for the purpose of evaluating whether to file a petition before the petition under s. 980.02 was filed.

(b) A licensed physician, licensed psychologist, or other mental health professional may indicate in any written report that he or she prepares in connection with a proceeding under this chapter that the person whom he or she examined refused to participate in the examination.

(3) Testimony by telephone or live audiovisual means.  Unless good cause to the contrary is shown, proceedings under ss. 980.04 (2) (a) and 980.08 (7) (d) may be conducted by telephone or audiovisual means, if available.  If the proceedings are required to be reported under SCR 71.02 (2), the proceedings shall be reported by a court reporter who is in simultaneous voice communication with all parties to the proceeding.  Regardless of the physical location of any party to the telephone call, any action taken by the court or any party has the same effect as if made in open court.  A proceeding under this subsection shall be conducted in a courtroom or other place reasonably accessible to the public.  Simultaneous access to the proceeding shall be provided to a person entitled to attend by means of a loudspeaker or, upon request to the court, by making the person party to the telephone call without charge.

(4) Motions for postcommitment relief; appeal.  (a) A motion for postcommitment relief by a person committed under s. 980.06 shall be made in the time and manner provided in ss. 809.30 to 809.32.  An appeal by a person who has been committed under s. 980.06 from a final order under s. 980.06, 980.08, or 980.09 or from an order denying a motion for postcommitment relief or from both shall be taken in the time and manner provided in ss. 808.04 (3) and 809.30 to 809.32.  If a person is seeking relief from an order of commitment under s. 980.06, the person shall file a motion for postcommitment relief in the trial court prior to an appeal unless the grounds for seeking relief are deficiency of the evidence or issues previously raised.

(b) An appeal by the state from a final judgment or order under this chapter may be taken to the court of appeals within the time specified in s. 808.04 (4) and in the manner provided for civil appeals under chs. 808 and 809.

(5) Failure to comply with time limits; effect.  Failure to comply with any time limit specified in this chapter does not deprive the circuit court of personal or subject matter jurisdiction or of competency to exercise that jurisdiction.  Failure to comply with any time limit specified in this chapter is not grounds for an appeal or grounds to vacate any order, judgment, or commitment issued or entered under this chapter.  Failure to object to a period of delay or a continuance waives the time limit that is the subject of the period of delay or continuance.

(6) Errors and defects not affecting substantial rights.  The court shall, in every stage of a proceeding under this chapter, disregard any error or defect in the pleadings or proceedings that does not affect the substantial rights of either party.


980.04  Detention; probable cause hearing; transfer for examination.  (1) Upon the filing of a petition under s. 980.02, the court shall review the petition to determine whether to issue an order for detention of the person who is the subject of the petition.  The person shall be detained only if there is probable cause to believe that the person is eligible for commitment under s. 980.05 (5).  A person detained under this subsection shall be held in a facility approved by the department.  If the person is serving a sentence of imprisonment, is in a juvenile correctional facility, as defined in s. 938.02 (10p), or a secured residential care center for children and youth, as defined in s. 938.02 (15g), or is committed to institutional care, and the court orders detention under this subsection, the court shall order that the person be transferred to a detention facility approved by the department.  A detention order under this subsection remains in effect until the petition is dismissed after a hearing under sub. (3) or after a trial under s. 980.05 (5) or until the effective date of a commitment order under s. 980.06, whichever is applicable.

(2) (a) Whenever a petition is filed under s. 980.02, the court shall hold a hearing to determine whether there is probable cause to believe that the person named in the petition is a sexually violent person.

(b) 1. Except as provided in subd. 2., the court shall hold the probable cause hearing within 30 days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, after the filing of the petition, unless that time is extended by the court for good cause shown upon its own motion, the motion of any party, or the stipulation of the parties.

2. If the person named in the petition is in custody under a sentence, dispositional order, or commitment and the probable cause hearing will be held after the date on which the person is scheduled to be released or discharged from the sentence, dispositional order, or commitment, the probable cause hearing under par. (a) shall be held no later than 10 days after the person’s scheduled release or discharge date, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, unless that time is extended by the court for good cause shown upon its own motion, the motion of any party, or the stipulation of the parties.

(3) If the court determines after a hearing that there is probable cause to believe that the person named in the petition is a sexually violent person, the court shall order that the person be taken into custody if he or she is not in custody and shall order the person to be transferred within a reasonable time to an appropriate facility specified by the department for an evaluation by the department as to whether the person is a sexually violent person.  If the court determines that probable cause does not exist to believe that the person is a sexually violent person, the court shall dismiss the petition.

(4) The department shall promulgate rules that provide the qualifications for persons conducting evaluations under sub. (3).

(5) If the person named in the petition claims or appears to be indigent, the court shall, prior to the probable cause hearing under sub. (2) (a), refer the person to the authority for indigency determinations under s. 977.07 (1) and, if applicable, the appointment of counsel.


Cross-reference:  See also ch. DHS 99, Wis. adm. code.

The rules of evidence apply to probable cause hearings under ch. 980.  The exceptions to the rules for preliminary examinations also apply.  Although s. 907.03 allows an expert to base an opinion on hearsay, an expert’s opinion based solely on hearsay cannot constitute probable cause.  State v. Watson, 227 Wis. 2d 167, 595 N.W.2d 403 (1999), 95–1067.

In sub. (2), “in custody” means in custody pursuant to ch. 980 and does not apply to custody under a previously imposed sentence.  State v. Brassette, 230 Wis. 2d 82, 601 N.W.2d 678 ( Ct. App. 1999), 98–2152.

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Chapter 980 provides its own procedures for commencing actions, and, as such, chs. 801 and 802 are inapplicable to the commencement of ch. 980 actions. State v. Wolfe, 2001 WI App 136, 246 Wis. 2d 233, 631 N.W.2d 240, 99–2145.

The 72-hour time limit set by sub. (1) is not mandatory. However, the individual’s due process rights prevent the state from indefinitely delaying the probable cause hearing when the subject of the petition is in custody awaiting the hearing.

A trial to determine whether the person is a sexually violent offender.

The general rule for determining the qualification of an expert applies. State v. Sprosty, 2001 WI App 231, 248 Wis. 2d 480, 636 N.W.2d 213, 0–2404.

980.05 Trial. (1) A trial to determine whether the person is a subject of a petition under s. 980.02 is a sexually violent person shall commence no later than 90 days after the date of the probable cause hearing under s. 980.04 (2) (a). The court may grant one or more continuances of the trial date for good cause upon its own motion, the motion of any party or the stipulation of the parties.

(2) The person who is the subject of the petition, the person’s attorney, or the petitioner may request that a trial under this section be to a jury of 12. A request for a jury trial under this subsection shall be made within 10 days after the probable cause hearing under s. 980.04 (2) (a). If no request is made, the trial shall be to the court. The person, the person’s attorney, or the petitioner may withdraw the request for a jury trial if the 2 persons who did not make the request consent to the withdrawal.

(2m) (a) At a jury trial under this section, juries shall be selected and treated in the same manner as they are selected and treated in civil actions in circuit court, except that, notwithstanding s. 805.08 (3), each party shall be entitled to 4 peremptory challenges or, if the court orders additional jurors to be selected under s. 805.08 (2), to 5 peremptory challenges. A party may waive in advance any or all of its peremptory challenges and the number of jurors called under par. (b) shall be reduced by this number.

(b) The number of jurors selected shall be the number prescribed in sub. (2), unless a lesser number has been stipulated to and approved under par. (c) or the court orders that additional jurors be selected.

That number of jurors, plus the number of peremptory challenges available to all of the parties, shall be called initially and maintained in the jury box by calling others to replace jurors excused for cause until all jurors have been examined. The parties shall exercise in their order, the state beginning, the procedure for determining probable cause to believe a person is a sexually violent offender.

Evidence that the person who is the subject of a petition under s. 980.02 is a sexually violent person, the court shall entertain a judgment on that finding and shall commit the person as provided under s. 980.06. If the court or jury is not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the person is a sexually violent person, the court shall dismiss the petition and direct that the person be released unless he or she is under some other lawful restriction.

History: 1993 a. 479; 1999 a. 9; 2005 a. 434. The trial of a fact is free to weigh expert testimony that conflicts and decide which is more reliable, to accept or reject an expert’s testimony, including accepting only part of the testimony, and to consider expert testimony. State v. Kneitz, 227 Wis. 2d 423, 597 N.W.2d 712 (1999), 97–1460.

This section does not conform expert testimony to any specific standard nor mandate evidence that the state must present. State v. Sprosty, 2001 WI App 231, 248 Wis. 2d 480, 636 N.W.2d 213, 0–2404.

The court may find, in the exercise of its discretion, that the state is burdened of proof. State v. Zanelli, 223 Wis. 2d 545, 589 N.W.2d 687 (Cl. App. 1998), 98–0733.

The standard of review for commitments under ch. 980 is the standard applicable to the review of criminal cases — whether the evidence could have led the trial of fact to find beyond a reasonable doubt that the person subject to commitment is a sexually violent person. State v. Currie, 235 Wis. 2d 389, 597 N.W.2d 791 (1999), 99–2259.

The court to a jury trial under ch. 980 is governed by sub. (2) rather than case law governing the right to a jury trial in criminal proceedings. State v. Bernstein, 231 Wis. 2d 505, 655 N.W.2d 555 (1999), 98–2259.

The right to a jury trial under ch. 980 is a constitutional right under the 5th amendment privilege. It prohibits the prosecutorial authorities from using the compelled testimony in any respect, and it therefor prevents the introduction of this evidence at trial, the trial of the defendant, and the determination of the outcome of the trial. State v. Kastigar, 406 U.S. 441, 92 S. Ct. 2513, 33 L. Ed. 2d 435 (1972), 07–0522.

When new evidence of victim recantation was offered at the ch. 980 trial, the defendant had a due process right in gaining admission of the evidence to ensure that the court did not rely on the expert’s opinions on his mental disorder and future dangerousness when the experts’ opinions presented were based heavily on the fact that the defendants committed the underlying crime. State v. Sorensen, 2003 WI App 254, 254 Wis. 2d 54, 646 N.W.2d 740 (2007), 07–0522.

A sexually violent person committed under ch. 980 preserves the right to a trial, as a matter of right, by filing postverdict motions within 20 days of the commitment order. State v. Treadway, 2002 WI App 195, 257 Wis. 2d 467, 651 N.W.2d 334, 00–2957.

A parole and probation agent who had been employed full-time in a specialized sexual offender unit for 3 years during which he had supervised hundreds of cases that were prepared by training and experience to assess a sex offender, and was qualified to render an opinion on whether he would reoffend. That the agent did not make the request consent to the withdrawal does not require a personal state-ment by defense counsel. State v. Bernstein, 231 Wis. 2d 392, 659 N.W.2d 555 (1999), 98–2259.

To the extent that s. 938.35 (1) prohibits the admission of delinquency adjudications in ch. 980 proceedings, it is repealed by implication. State v. Matthew A.B. 231 Wis. 2d 688, 605 N.W.2d 598 (Cl. App. 1999), 98–0229.

Sub. (2) does not require that a respondent be advised by the court that a jury verdict must be unanimous in order for the withdrawal of a request for a jury trial, if the 2 persons who did not make the request consent to the withdrawal.

(3) (a) At a trial on a petition under this chapter, the petitioner has the burden of proving beyond a reasonable doubt that the person who is the subject of the petition is a sexually violent person.

(b) If the state alleges that the sexually violent offense or act that forms the basis for the petition was not sexually motivated as provided in s. 980.01 (6) (b) or (bm), the state is required to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the alleged sexually violent act was sexually motivated.

(4) Evidence that the person who is the subject of a petition under s. 980.02 was convicted for or committed sexually violent offenses before committing the offense or act on which the petition is based is not sufficient to establish a reasonable doubt that the person has a mental disorder.

(5) If the court or jury determines that the person who is the subject of a petition under s. 980.02 is a sexually violent person, the court shall entertain a judgment on that finding and shall commit the person as provided under s. 980.06. If the court or jury is not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the person is a sexually violent person, the court shall dismiss the petition and direct that the person be released unless he or she is under some other lawful restriction.

2015–16 Wisconsin Statutes updated through 2017 Wis. Act 273 and all Supreme Court and Controlled Substances Board Orders effective on or before April 14, 2018. Published and certified under s. 35.18. Changes effective after April 14, 2018 are designated by NOTES. (Published 4–14–18)
nal—law—based due-process right to a competency hearing in a ch. 980 proceeding. State v. Luttrell, 2008 WI App 93, 312 Wis. 2d 695, 754 N.W.2d 249, 07−1840.

Section 904.04(2) does not apply in ch. 980 commitment proceedings. The Frank−
lin opinion concerned whether legislative intent to restrict the application of s. 904.04 (2) to analyzing evidence used to prove past acts. Future conduct is the rele-
vant question in ch. 980 proceedings. The nature of ch. 980 hearings demands the jury to discern whether an individual will normally be a danger in a traditional criminal trial. Although Franklyn did not discuss the due process implications of its decision, the inapplicability of s. 904.04 (2) is consistent with the demands of due process under both the United States and Wisconsin constitutions. State v. Karninski, 2009 WI App 175, 322 Wis. 2d 653, 777 N.W.2d 654, 08−2439.

980.06 Commitment. If a court or jury determines that the person who is the subject of a petition under s. 980.02 is a sexually violent person, the court shall order the person to be committed to the custody of the department for control, care and treatment until such time as the person is no longer a sexually violent person. A commitment order under this section shall specify that the person be placed in institutional care.

In the event that there is a failure to develop an appropriate treatment program, the remedy is to obtain appropriate treatment and not supervised release. State v. Seibert, 222 Wis. 2d 308, 585 N.W.2d 745 (Cl. App. 1998), 97−2554.

Chapter 980 and s. 51.61 provide the statutory basis for a court to issue an invoku-
able medical order for individuals who suffer from a chronic mental illness and are contemplated under ch. 980. State v. Anthony D.B., 2000 WI 94, 237 Wis. 2d, 614 N.W.2d 435, 98−0576.

The incremental infringement by s. 980.06 on the liberty interests of those who have a sexually violent, predatory past and are currently suffering from a mental illness or disorder that makes them dangerous sexual predators does not violate constitutional guarantees of due process. State v. Randell, 2001 WI App 202, 247 Wis. 2d, 613 N.W.2d 871, 00−2224.

Although ch. 51 is more “lenient” with those who are subject to its provisions than is ch. 980, the significant differences between the degree of danger posited by each of the statutes, and the conditions subject to commitments under the two chapters, and the differences in what must be proven in order to commit under each, does not result in a violation of equal protection. State v. Williams, 2001 WI App 263, 249 Wis. 2d, 670, 679 N.W.2d 237, 00−2899.

Chapter 980, as amended, is not a punitive criminal statute. Because whether a statute is punitive is a threshold question for both double jeopardy and ex post facto analysis, the ultimate question is whether the statutes violates ch. 980. State v. Rachel, 2002 WI 81, 254 Wis. 2d, 215, 646 N.W.2d 375, 00−0467.

The mere limitation of a committed person’s access to supervised release does not impose a punishment that violates a due process guarantee. State v. Rachel, 2002 WI 81, 254 Wis. 2d, 215, 646 N.W.2d 375, 00−0467.

Chapter 980 does not require a separate factual finding that an in-
dividual’s mental disorder involves serious difficulty in controlling the person in controlling his or her behavior. Proof that the person’s mental disorder predisposes the individual to engage in acts of sexual violence and establishes a substantial probability that the person will again commit those acts necessarily and implicitly includes proof that the person’s mental disorder involves serious difficulty in controlling his or her behavior. State v. Laxton, 2000 WI 78, 254 Wis. 2d, 215, 647 N.W.2d 784, 99−1364.

Chapter 980 does not preclude finding that a person with a sexually−related mental disorder has difficulty in controlling his or her behavior even if that person is able to control his or her behavior in most situations. State v. Burgess, 2002 WI App 264, 258 Wis. 2d, 548, 654 N.W.2d 81, 00−3074.

Affirmed: 2003 WI 71, 262 Wis. 2d, 354, 665 N.W.2d 354.

Chapter 980 does not require the dismissal of a pending commitment petition when the individual subject to the petition is incarcerated because of the revocation of either parole or extended supervision. This section requires the circuit court to order the person committed under ch. 980 to leave the grounds of the facility under escort. The wide discretion given to the trial court regarding the timing of the probable cause hearing together with the evident recogni-
tion that the subject of the petition might be incarcerated during the commitment pro-
cedings compels the conclusion that the legislature did not intend for commitment proceedings to stop because the person subject to the petition is returned to depart-
ment of corrections custody. State v. Gilbert, 2011 WI App 61, 333 Wis. 2d, 157, 798 N.W.2d 889, 10−0594.

Nothing in the U.S. Constitution prevents state officials from temporarily detain-
ing a civil committee in conditions normally reserved for inmates so that he or she may attend court proceedings concerning his commitment. Thiel v. State, 399 F. Supp. 929 (2005).

980.067 Activities off grounds. The superintendent of the facility at which a person is placed under s. 980.065 may allow the person to leave the grounds of the facility under escort. The department of health services shall promulgate rules for the administration of this section.

History: 1993 a. 479; 1997 a. 27; 1999 a. 9; 2001 a. 16; 2007 a. 20; 2011 a. 61; 2012 a. 44.

980.07 Periodic reexamination and treatment progress; report from the department. (1) If a person is committed under s. 980.06 and has not been discharged under s. 980.09 (4), the department shall appoint an examiner to conduct a reexamination of the person’s mental condition within 12 months after the date of the initial commitment order under s. 980.06 and again thereafter at least once each 12 months to determine whether the person has made sufficient progress for the court to consider whether the person should be placed on supervised release or discharged. The examiner shall apply the criteria under s. 980.08 (4), (5), (6) and (7) when considering if the person should be discharged. The examiner shall provide a written report of the reexamination no later than 30 days after the date of the reexamination. The examiner shall pro-
vide a copy of the report to the department.

(2) Any examiner conducting a reexamination under sub. (1) shall prepare a written report of the reexamination no later than 30 days after the date of the reexamination. The examiner shall pro-
vide a copy of the report to the department.
Notwithstanding sub. (1), the court that committed a person under s. 980.06 may order a reexamination of the person at any time during the period in which the person is subject to the commitment order. Any reexamination ordered under this subsection shall conform to sub. (1).

(4) At any reexamination under sub. (1), the treating professional shall prepare a treatment progress report. The treating professional shall provide a copy of the treatment progress report to the department. The treatment progress report shall consider all of the following:

(a) The specific factors associated with the person’s risk for committing another sexually violent offense.

(b) Whether the person is making significant progress in treatment or has refused treatment.

(c) The ongoing treatment needs of the person.

(d) Any specialized needs or conditions associated with the person that must be considered in future treatment planning.

(5) Any examiners under sub. (1) and treating professionals under sub. (4) shall have reasonable access to the person for purposes of reexamination, to the person’s past and present treatment records, as defined in s. 51.30 (1) (b), and to the person’s patient health care records, as provided under s. 146.82 (2) (c).

(6) (a) The department shall submit an annual report comprised of the reexamination report under sub. (1) and the treatment progress report under sub. (4) to the court that committed the person under s. 980.06. A copy of the annual report shall be placed in the person’s treatment records. The department shall provide a copy of the annual report to the person committed under s. 980.06, the department of justice, and the district attorney, if applicable. The court shall provide a copy of the annual report to the person’s attorney as soon as he or she is retained or appointed.

(b) When the department provides a copy of the report under par. (a) to the person who has been committed under s. 980.06, the department shall provide to the person a standardized petition form for supervised release under s. 980.08 and a standardized petition form for discharge under s. 980.09.

(6m) If a person committed under s. 980.06 is incarcerated at a county jail, state correctional institution, or federal correction institution for a new criminal charge or conviction or because his or her parole was revoked, any reporting requirement under sub. (1), (4), or (6) (a) does not apply during the incarceration period.

A court may order a reexamination of the person under sub. (1) if the courts finds reexamination to be necessary. The schedule for reporting established under sub. (1) shall remain upon the release of the person.

(7) At any time before a hearing under s. 980.08 or 980.09, the department may file a supplemental report if the department determines that court should have additional information. The court shall accept the supplemental report and permit testimony from the department regarding the report or any relevant portion of the report.

History: 1993 a. 479; 1999 a. 7; 2005 a. 434; 2009 a. 248; 2013 a. 84 ss. 4 to 7, 9, 13.

As part of an annual review, an involuntary medication order must be reviewed following the procedure used to obtain the initial order. State v. Anthony v. Department of Corrections 2000 WI 94, 237 Wis. 2d. 1, 614 N.W.2d 435, 98–0576.

It is within the committed person’s discretion to ask for an independent examination. The trial court does not have discretion to refuse the request. State v. Thiel, 2012 WI App 48, 340 Wis. 2d 654, 813 N.W.2d 709, 11–0933.

The Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the commitment in Laxton in light of the jury’s instructions in the case was not diametrically different or opposite in character or nature from any clearly established federal law. Laxton v. Bartow, 421 F.3d 565 (2005).

The 14th amendment due process guarantee was violated by a delay of over 22 months between the first annual periodic examination report was provided to the circuit court under s. 980.07 and the circuit court’s probable cause hearing under [former] s. 980.06 (2) (a) to determine if facts warranted a hearing on whether the committed person was still a sexually violent person. Discharge is not an appropriate remedy for a sexually violent person who is dangerous because he or she suffers from a mental disorder likely that he or she will engage in acts of sexual violence. Appropriate remedies are motions for mandamus or equitable relief, but because a ch. 980 committee may encounter considerable obstacles to pursuing these remedies, DHFS, the Department of Justice, the bar, and the circuit courts must bear substantial responsibility for ensuring prompt judicial review of annual periodic examination reports. State v. Beyer, 2006 WI 2, 287 Wis. 2d 1, 707 N.W.2d 309, 04–1208.

A rule in a supervised release plan requiring the petitioner to “abide by all rules of any detention, treatment or correctional facility in which [the petitioner] may be confined” was permissible. While the rule did not give DHFS the power to detain the petitioner solely for a rule violation, it did require him to abide by all rules of any detention, treatment or correctional facility in which the petitioner may be confined. The rule was permissible. State v. Beyer, 2006 WI 2, 287 Wis. 2d 1, 707 N.W.2d 309, 04–1208.

In a supervised release petition requiring the petitioner to abide by all rules of any detention, treatment or correctional facility in which petitioner may be confined”, the term “confined” was ambiguous. The duty of the prison should be himself determined there for other reasons. State v. Thiel, 2012 WI App 48, 340 Wis. 2d 654, 813 N.W.2d 709, 11–0933.

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circumstances of the behavior that was the basis of the allegation in the petition under s. 980.02 (2) (a), the person’s mental history and present mental condition, where the person will live, how the person will support himself or herself, and what arrangements are available to ensure that the person has access to and will participate in necessary treatment, including pharmacological treatment using an antiandrogen or the chemical equivalent of an antiandrogen if the person is a serious child sex offender. A decision under par. (cg) on a petition filed by a person who is a serious child sex offender may not be made based on the fact that the person is a proper subject for pharmacological treatment using an antiandrogen or the chemical equivalent of an antiandrogen or on the fact that the person is willing to participate in pharmacological treatment using an antiandrogen or the chemical equivalent of an antiandrogen.

(cg) The court may not authorize supervised release unless, based on all of the reports, trial records, and evidence presented, the court finds that all of the following criteria are met:

1. The person is making significant progress in treatment and the person’s progress can be sustained while on supervised release.

2. It is substantially probable that the person will not engage in an act of sexual violence while on supervised release.

3. Treatment that meets the person’s needs and a qualified provider of the treatment are reasonably available.

4. The person can be reasonably expected to comply with his or her treatment requirements and with all of his or her conditions or rules of supervised release that are imposed by the court or by the department.

5. A reasonable level of resources can provide for the level of residential placement, supervision, and ongoing treatment needs that are required for the safe management of the person while on supervised release.

(c) The person has the burden of proving by clear and convincing evidence that the person meets the criteria in par. (cg).

(dm) 1. If the court finds that all of the criteria in par. (cg) are met, the court shall order the county of the person’s residence, as determined by the department of health services under s. 980.105, to prepare a report. The county shall create a temporary committee to prepare the report for the county. The committee shall consist of the county department under s. 51.42, a representative of the department of health services, a local probation or parole officer, the county corporation counsel or his or her designee, and a representative of the county that is responsible for land use planning or the department of the county that is responsible for land information. In the report, the county shall identify an appropriate residential option in that county while the person is on supervised release. In counties with a population of 750,000 or more, the committee shall select a residence in the person’s city, village, or town of residence, as determined by the department of health services under s. 980.105 (2m). The report shall demonstrate that the county has contacted the landlord for that residential option and that the landlord has committed to enter into a lease. The county shall when identifying an appropriate residential option:

a. Ensure that the person’s placement is into a residence that is not less than 1,500 feet from any school premises, child care facility, public park, place of worship, or youth center. A person is not in violation of a condition or rule of supervised release under sub. (7) (a) if an existing school premises, child care facility, public park, place of worship, or youth center is established within 1,500 feet of the person’s residence after he or she is placed in the residence under this section.

b. If the person committed a sexually violent offense against an adult at risk, as defined in s. 55.01 (1e), or an elder adult at risk, as defined in s. 46.90 (1) (br), ensure that the person’s placement is into a residence that is not less than 1,500 feet from a nursing home or an assisted living facility. A person is not in violation of a condition or rule of supervised release under sub. (7) (a) if a nursing home or an assisted living facility is established within 1,500 feet from the person’s residence after he or she is placed in the residence under this section.

c. If the person is a serious child sex offender, ensure that the person’s placement is into a residence that is not on a property adjacent to a property where a child’s primary residence exists. For the purpose of this subdivision, adjacent properties are properties that share a property line without regard to a public or private road if the living quarters on each property are not more than 1,500 feet apart. A person is not in violation of a condition or rule of supervised release under sub. (7) (a) if a child establishes primary residence in a property adjacent to the person’s residence after the person is placed in the residence under this section.

2. When preparing the report, the county shall consult with a local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the residential option. The law enforcement agency may submit a written report that provides information relating to the residential option, and, if the law enforcement agency submits a report, the county department shall include the agency’s report when the county department submits its report to the department of health services.

3. To assist the county in identifying appropriate residential options for the report, within 30 days after the court orders the county to prepare the report, the department of health services shall determine the identity and location of known and registered victims of the person’s acts by searching its victim database and consulting with the office of victim services in the department of corrections, the department of justice, and the county coordinator of victims and witnesses services in the county of intended placement, the county where the person was convicted, and the county of commitment. The county may consult with the department of health services on other matters while preparing the report and the department of health services shall respond within 10 days.

4. The county shall submit its report to the department of health services within 120 days following the court order. A county that does not submit its report within 120 days violates the person’s rights under s. 51.61, and each day that the county does not submit the report after the 120 days have expired constitutes a separate violation under s. 51.61. Notwithstanding s. 51.61 (7), any damages beyond costs and reasonable actual attorney fees recovered by the person for a violation shall be deposited into the appropriation account under s. 20.435 (2) (g).

(f) The court shall direct the department to use the report submitted under par. (dm) to prepare a supervised release plan for the person that identifies the residential option the county identified in its report. The plan shall also address the person’s need, if any, for supervision, counseling, medication, community support services, residential services, vocational services, and alcohol or other drug abuse treatment. The supervised release plan shall be submitted to the court within 30 days after the county submitted its report under par. (dm). The court may grant one extension of up to 30 days of this time period for good cause.

(g) The court shall review the plan submitted by the department under par. (f). If the details of the plan adequately meet the treatment needs of the individual and the safety needs of the community, then the court shall approve the plan and determine that supervised release is appropriate. If the details of the plan do not adequately meet the treatment needs of the individual or the safety needs of the community, then the court shall determine that supervised release is not appropriate or direct the preparation of another supervised release plan to be considered by the court under this paragraph. If the plan is inadequate under this paragraph due to the residential option, the court shall order the county to identify and arrange to lease another residential option and to prepare a new report under par. (dm). If the plan is inadequate under this paragraph due to the treatment options, the court shall order the department to prepare another plan under par. (f).

(6m) An order for supervised release places the person in the custody and control of the department. The department shall arrange for control, care and treatment of the person in the least restrictive manner consistent with the requirements of the person.
and in accordance with the plan for supervised release approved by the court under sub. (4) (g). A person on supervised release is subject to the conditions set by the court and to the rules of the department. Within 10 days of imposing a rule, the department shall file with the court any additional rule of supervision not inconsistent with the rules or conditions imposed by the court. If the department wants to change a rule or condition of supervision imposed by the court, the department must obtain the court’s approval. Before a person is placed on supervised release by the court, the court shall notify the municipal police department and county sheriff for the municipality and county in which the person will be residing. The notification requirement under this subsection does not apply if a municipal police department or county sheriff submits to the court a written statement waiving the right to be notified.

(7) (a) If the department believes that a person on supervised release, or awaiting placement on supervised release, has violated, or threatened to violate, any condition or rule of supervised release, the department may petition for revocation of the order granting supervised release as described in par. (c) or may detain the person.

(b) If the department believes that a person on supervised release, or awaiting placement on supervised release, is a threat to the safety of others, the department shall detain the person and petition for revocation of the order granting supervised release as described in par. (c).

(c) If the department concludes that the order granting supervised release should be revoked, it shall file with the committing court a statement alleging the violation and or threat of a violation and a petition to revoke the order for supervised release and provide a copy of each to the regional office of the state public defender responsible for handling cases in the county where the committing court is located. If the department has detained the person under par. (a) or (b), the department shall file the statement and the petition and provide them to the regional office of the state public defender within 72 hours after the detention, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays. Pending the revocation hearing, the court may detain the person in a jail or a facility described under s. 980.065. The court shall refer the matter to the authority for indigency determinations under s. 977.07 (1) and appointment of counsel under s. 977.05 (4) (j). The determination of indigency and the appointment of counsel shall be done as soon as circumstances permit.

(d) The court shall hear the petition within 30 days, unless the hearing or time deadline is waived by the detained person. A final decision on the petition to revoke the order for supervised release shall be made within 90 days of the filing. Pending the revocation hearing, the department may detain the person in the county jail or return him or her to institutional care.

(8) (a) If the court finds after a hearing, by clear and convincing evidence, that any rule or condition of release has been violated and the court finds that the violation of the rule or condition merits the revocation of the order granting supervised release, the court may revoke the order for supervised release and order that the person be placed in institutional care. The court may consider alternatives to revocation. The person shall remain in institutional care until the person is discharged from the commitment under s. 980.09 or is placed again on supervised release under sub. (4) (g).

(b) If the court finds after a hearing, by clear and convincing evidence, that the safety of others requires that supervised release be denied, the court shall revoke the order for supervised release and order that the person be placed in institutional care. The person shall remain in institutional care until the person is discharged from the commitment under s. 980.09 or is placed on supervised release under sub. (4) (g).

(9) (a) As a condition of supervised release granted under this chapter, for the first year of supervised release, the court shall restrict the person on supervised release to the person’s residence except for outings approved by the department of health services that are under the direct supervision of a department of corrections

and that are for employment or volunteer purposes, religious purposes, educational purposes, treatment and exercise purposes, supervision purposes, or residence maintenance, or for caring for the person’s basic living needs.

(b) The department of corrections may contract for the escort services under par. (a).


Cross-reference: See also ch. DHS 98, Wis. adm. code.

Sub. (6) (fmr. s. 980.06 (2) (d)) requires post-hearing notice to the local law enforcement agencies. In re Commitment of Goodson, 199 Wis. 2d 426, 544 N.W.2d 611 (Ct. App. 1996), 95-0664.

Whether in a proceeding for an initial ch. 980 commitment or a later petition for supervised release, the court is not required to show that the state proved the person is treatable. State v. Seibert, 220 Wis. 2d 308, 582 N.W.2d 745 (Ct. App. 1998), 97-2554.

As used in this chapter, “substantial probability” and “substantially probable” both mean much more likely than not. This standard for dangerousness does not require the state to prove a higher level of probability than the state must prove in a civil commitment case. State v. Currier, 227 Wis. 2d 697, 607 N.W.2d 697 (1999), 99-1337.

An institutionalized sex offender who agreed to a stipulation providing supervised release, giving up his right to a jury trial on his discharge petition in exchange, had a constitutional right to an attorney. State v. Kruenger, 2001 WI App 76, 242 Wis. 2d 793, 626 N.W.2d 83, 00-0152.

An indigently violent person is constitutionally entitled to assistance of counsel. State v. Gene, 2005 WI 77, 253 Wis. 2d 127, 643 N.W.2d 213, 2006 WI 2, 247 Wis. 2d 478, 633 N.W.2d 236, 00-3075.

A relevant inquiry under sub. (4) (f) is whether the person’s behavior indicates a likelihood to reoffend. A sexual assault need not occur and the person’s behavior need not be criminal. State v. Sprosty, 2001 WI App 231, 248 Wis. 2d 480, 636 N.W.2d 513, 00-2404.

Sub. (6m), not s. 806 007 (1) (b) grants governing relief to the state from a ch. 980 committee’s supervised release when the committee is confined in a state or local public institution. Sub. (6m) does not provide for initiating revocation other than by the department of health and family services action, an order of the court or prosecutors for initiation of the supervised release. State ex rel. Seibert v. Macht, 2001 WI 67, 244 Wis. 2d 378, 677 N.W.2d 881, 99-3554.

A person subject to a proceeding to revoke supervised release is entitled to the same due process protections as afforded persons in probation and parole revocation proceedings. Notice of the grounds that are the basis for the revocation must be given. A court can only base a revocation on the grounds of public safety if the court determines, by clear and convincing evidence, that the person’s basic living needs. State v. VanBromhorst, 2001 WI App 190, 247 Wis. 2d 247, 633 N.W.2d 236, 00-3075.

Sub. (6m) [formerly s. 980.06 (2) (d)], not s. 806.07 (1) (h), governs granting relief to the state from a ch. 980 committee’s supervised release when the committee is confined in an institution. Sub. (6m) does not provide for initiating revocation other than by the department of health and family services action, an order of the court or prosecutors for initiation of the supervised release. Under sub. (6m) [formerly s. 980.06 (2) (d)], a circuit court must determine whether any rule or condition of release has been violated or whether the safety of others requires revocation. A circuit court is not required to expressly consider alternatives to revocation before revoking a sexually violent person’s supervised release when the court determines that the safety of the public requires the person’s commitment to a secure facility. State v. Mars, 2004 WI 91, 273 Wis. 2d 304, 682 N.W.2d 812, 00-1425.

The sufficiency of evidence standard of review applies when reviewing a circuit court order denying a petition for supervised release under sub. (6m). If the evidence is insufficient to support the order the court is not whether a reviewing court is convinced by clear and convincing evidence that a person’s petition for supervised release should be denied, but whether the court would be able to so conclude by evidence it has a right to believe and accept as true. State v. Brown, 2005 WI 29, 279 Wis. 2d 102, 695 N.W.2d 715, 03-1419.

Sub. (4) (g) unambiguously places the burden of proof with the committed individual. The appropriate burden of persuasion is clear and convincing evidence. This allocation does not violate the guarantees of due process and equal protection under the Wisconsin and United States Constitutions. State v. West, 2004 WI 72, 227 Wis. 2d 268, 624 N.W.2d 349, 00-3461.

The petition for discharge under chapter 980: Alternatives to Protect Wisconsin While Upholding the Constitution. Hamrin. 2007 WLR 889.
(c) If a person files a petition for discharge under sub. (1), the person may use experts or professional persons to support his or her petition. The district attorney or the department of justice may use experts or professional persons to support or oppose any petition filed under sub. (1).

(2) In reviewing the petition, the court may hold a hearing to determine if the person’s condition has sufficiently changed such that a court or jury would likely conclude the person no longer meets the criteria for commitment as a sexually violent person. In determining this subsection whether the petitioner’s condition has sufficiently changed such that a court or jury would likely conclude that the person no longer meets the criteria for commitment, the court may consider the record, including evidence introduced at the initial commitment trial or the most recent trial on a petition for discharge, any current or past reports filed under s. 980.031 (3) or 980.07 (1) for the current reexamination period, the court shall appoint for the person an examiner having the specialized knowledge determined by the court to be appropriate. If an examination conducted under s. 980.07 (1) within the 6 months preceding the filing of the petition supports discharge, the court may appoint the examiner who conducted that examination as the examiner for the person. The examiner shall have reasonable access to the person for purposes of examination and to the person’s past and present treatment records, as defined in s. 51.30 (1) (b), and patient health care records, as provided in s. 146.82 (2) (c). The county shall pay the costs of an examiner appointed under this paragraph as provided under s. 51.20 (18) (a).

(3) The court shall hold a trial within 90 days of the determination that the person’s condition has sufficiently changed such that a court or jury would likely conclude that the person no longer meets the criteria for commitment as a sexually violent person. At trial, the state has the burden of proving by clear and convincing evidence that the person meets the criteria for commitment as a sexually violent person.

(4) If the court or jury is satisfied that the state has not met its burden of proof under sub. (3), the person shall be discharged from the custody of the department. If the court or jury is satisfied that the state has met its burden of proof under sub. (3), the court shall proceed under s. 980.08 (4) to determine whether to modify the person’s existing commitment order by authorizing supervised release, unless the person waives consideration of the criteria in s. 980.08 (4) (cg). If the person waives consideration of these criteria, the waiver is a denial of supervised release for purposes of s. 980.08 (1).

(5) If a court orders discharge of a committed person under this section, the court shall stay the execution of the order so that the department may comply with its statutory duties under s. 980.11 (2) and (3). The stay of execution may not exceed 10 working days and shall be for as short a period as necessary to permit the department to comply with s. 980.11 (2) and (3).

History: 1993 a. 479; 1999 a. 9; 2003 a. 187; 2005 a. 434; 2013 a. 84; t 10 to 12, 21 to 25; 2013 a. 168 s. 20.
980.095 Procedures for discharge hearings. (1) USE OF JURIES. (a) The district attorney or the department of justice, whichever filed the original petition, or the person who filed the petition for discharge or his or her attorney may request that a trial under s. 980.09 (3) be to a jury of 6. A jury trial is deemed waived unless it is demanded within 10 days of the determination by the court that a court or jury would likely conclude under s. 980.09 (1) that the person’s condition has sufficiently changed.

(b) Juries shall be selected and treated in the same manner as they are selected and treated in civil actions in circuit court. The number of jurors prescribed in par. (a), plus the number of peremptory challenges available to all of the parties, shall be called initially and maintained in the jury box by calling others to replace jurors excused for cause until all jurors have been examined. The parties shall exercise in their order, the state beginning, the challenge shall be made by the clerk by lot.

(c) No verdict shall be valid or received unless at least 5 of the jurors agree to it.

(2) POST VERDICT MOTIONS. Motions after verdict may be made without further notice upon receipt of the verdict.

(3) APPEALS. Any party may appeal an order under this subsection as a final order under chs. 808 and 809.

980.101 Reversal, vacation or setting aside of judgment relating to a sexually violent offense; effect. (1) In this section, “judgment relating to a sexually violent offense” means a judgment of conviction for a sexually violent offense, an adjudication of delinquency on the basis of a sexually violent offense, or a judgment of not guilty of a sexually violent offense by reason of mental disease or defect.

(2) If, at any time after a person is committed under s. 980.06, a judgment relating to a sexually violent offense committed by the person is reversed, set aside, or vacated and that sexually violent offense was a basis for the allegation made in the petition under s. 980.02 (2) (a), the person may bring a motion for postcommitment relief in the court that committed the person. The court shall proceed as follows on the motion for postcommitment relief:

(a) If the sexually violent offense was the sole basis for the allegations under s. 980.02 (2) (a) and there are no other judgments relating to a sexually violent offense committed by the person, the court shall reverse, set aside, or vacate the judgment under s. 980.06 (3) that the person is a sexually violent person, vacate the commitment order, and discharge the person from the custody of the department.

(b) If the sexually violent offense was the sole basis for the allegations under s. 980.02 (2) (a) but there are other judgments relating to a sexually violent offense committed by the person that have not been reversed, set aside, or vacated, or if the sexually violent offense was not the sole basis for the allegations under s. 980.02 (2) (a), the court shall determine whether to grant the person a new trial under s. 980.06 because the reversal, setting aside, or vacating of the judgment for the sexually violent offense would probably change the result of the trial.

(3) An appeal may be taken from an order entered under sub. (2) as from a final judgment.

980.105 Determination of county and city, village, or town of residence. (1m) The department shall determine a person’s county of residence for the purposes of this chapter by doing all of the following:

(a) The department shall consider residence as the voluntary concurrence of physical presence with intent to remain in a place of fixed habitation and shall consider physical presence as prima facie evidence of intent to remain.

(b) The department shall apply the criteria for consideration of residence and physical presence under par. (a) to the facts that existed on the date that the person committed the sexually violent offense that resulted in the sentence, placement, or commitment that was in effect when the petition was filed under s. 980.02.

(2) If sub. (1m) is insufficient to determine the county of residence, the department shall find that the county of residence is the county in which, on the date that the person committed the sexually violent offense that resulted in the sentence, placement, or commitment that was in effect when the petition was filed under s. 980.02, the person would have been a resident for the purposes of social security disability insurance eligibility.

(2m) The department shall determine a person’s city, village, or town of residence for the purposes of chs. 980.08 (4) (dm) 1. by doing all of the following:

(a) The department shall consider residence as the voluntary concurrence of physical presence with intent to remain in a place of fixed habitation and shall consider physical presence as prima facie evidence of intent to remain.

(b) The department shall apply the criteria for consideration of residence and physical presence under par. (a) to the facts that existed on the date that the person committed the sexually violent offense that resulted in the sentence, placement, or commitment that was in effect when the petition was filed under s. 980.02.

History: 2005 a. 434; 2013 a. 84.
The department shall provide the cards, without charge, to the department of justice and district attorneys. The department of justice and district attorneys shall provide the cards, without charge, to persons specified in sub. (2) (am). These persons may send completed cards to the department of health services. All records or portions of records of the department of health services that relate to mailing addresses of these persons are not subject to inspection or copying under s. 19.35 (1), except as needed to comply with a request by the department of corrections under s. 301.46 (3) (d).


980.12 Department duties; costs. (1) Except as provided in ss. 980.031 (3) and 980.07 (1), the department shall pay from the appropriations under s. 20.435 (2) (a) and (bm) for all costs relating to the evaluation, treatment, and care of persons evaluated or committed under this chapter.

(2) By February 1, 2002, the department shall submit a report to the legislature under s. 13.172 (2) concerning the extent to which pharmacological treatment using an antiandrogen or the chemical equivalent of an antiandrogen has been required as a condition of supervised release under s. 980.06, 1997 stats., or s. 980.08 and the effectiveness of the treatment in the cases in which its use has been required.


980.13 Applicability. This chapter applies to a sexually violent person regardless of whether the person engaged in acts of sexual violence before, on or after June 2, 1994.

History: 1993 a. 479.

980.135 Local restrictions; limited exemption. No county, city, town, or village may enforce an ordinance or resolution that restricts or prohibits a sex offender from residing at a certain location or that restricts or prohibits a person from providing housing to a sex offender against an individual who is released under s. 980.08 or against a person who provides housing to the individual so long as the individual is subject to supervised release under this chapter, the individual is residing where he or she is ordered to reside under s. 980.08, and the individual is in compliance with all court orders issued under this chapter.

History: 2015 a. 156.

980.14 Immunity. (1) In this section, “agency” means the department of corrections, the department of health services, the department of justice, or a district attorney.

(2) Any agency or officer, employee, or agent of an agency is immune from criminal or civil liability for any acts or omissions as the result of a good faith effort to comply with any provision of this chapter.