

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to public records; creating s.
 3 397.6760, F.S.; providing an exemption from public
 4 records requirements for pleadings and other documents
 5 filed in, and personal identifying information on the
 6 docket of, court proceedings under part V of chapter
 7 397, F.S., relating to involuntary admissions for
 8 substance abuse treatment services; permitting a clerk
 9 of the court to allow certain persons access to such
 10 records; providing applicability; providing for future
 11 legislative review and repeal of the exemption;
 12 providing a statement of public necessity; providing
 13 an effective date.

14
 15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

16
 17 Section 1. Section 397.6760, Florida Statutes, is created
 18 to read:

19 397.6760 Court records; confidentiality.-

20 (1) All pleadings and other documents, and the images of
 21 all pleadings and other documents, filed with a court pursuant
 22 to this part are confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and
 23 s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution. Pleadings and other
 24 documents made confidential and exempt by this section may be
 25 disclosed by the clerk of the court, upon request, to:

26 (a) The petitioner.

27 (b) The petitioner's attorney.

28 (c) The respondent.

29 (d) The respondent's attorney.

30 (e) The respondent's guardian or guardian advocate, if
 31 applicable.

32 (f) In the case of a minor respondent, the respondent's
 33 parent, guardian, legal custodian, or guardian advocate.

34 (g) The respondent's treating health care practitioner.

35 (h) The respondent's health care surrogate or proxy.

36 (i) The Department of Corrections, without charge, upon
 37 request if the respondent is committed or is to be returned to
 38 the custody of the Department of Corrections from the Department
 39 of Children and Families.

40 (j) A person or entity authorized to view records upon a
 41 court order for good cause. In determining whether there is good
 42 cause for disclosure, the court shall weigh the need for the
 43 information to be disclosed against the possible harm of
 44 disclosure to the respondent.

45 (2) The clerk of the court may not post any personal
 46 identifying information on the docket or in a publicly
 47 accessible file.

48 (3) A person, agency, or entity receiving information
 49 pursuant to this section shall maintain such information as
 50 confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1).

51 (4) The exemption under this section applies to all
 52 documents filed with a court before, on, or after July 1, 2016.

53 (5) This section is subject to the Open Government Sunset
54 Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed
55 on October 2, 2021, unless reviewed and saved from repeal
56 through reenactment by the Legislature.

57 Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public
58 necessity to exempt from s. 119.07(1), Florida Statutes, and s.
59 24(a), Article I of the State Constitution all pleadings and
60 other documents, and identifying information in the
61 corresponding dockets, for an involuntary admission pursuant to
62 part V of chapter 397, Florida Statutes, in order to preserve
63 the privacy of the individual alleged to suffer from substance
64 abuse. The personal health of an individual and his or her
65 alleged impairment by substance abuse are intensely private
66 matters. The Legislature finds that the public disclosure of
67 such information in the petition or order or docket would
68 produce undue harm to an individual alleged to be impaired from
69 substance abuse. Making pleadings and other documents filed for
70 involuntary admission pursuant to part V of chapter 397, Florida
71 Statutes, confidential and exempt from disclosure will protect
72 information of a sensitive personal nature, the release of which
73 could cause unwarranted damage to the reputation of an
74 individual. Further, the knowledge that sensitive personal
75 information is subject to disclosure could have a chilling
76 effect on the willingness of individuals to seek substance abuse
77 treatment services.

78 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.