

38-2348. Proceedings to determine competency. (a) For the purpose of this section, a person charged as a juvenile is incompetent for adjudication as a juvenile offender if, because of mental illness or defect, such person is unable to:

- (1) Understand the nature and purpose of the proceedings; or
- (2) make or assist in making a defense.

Whenever the words "competent," "competency," "incompetent" and "incompetency" are used without qualification in this code, such words shall refer to the standard for incompetency described in this subsection.

(b) (1) If at any time after such person has been charged as a juvenile there is reason to believe that the juvenile is incompetent for adjudication as a juvenile offender, the proceedings shall be suspended and the court before whom the case is pending shall conduct a hearing to determine the competency of the juvenile. Such a hearing may be held upon the motion of the juvenile's attorney or the prosecuting attorney, or upon the court's own motion.

(2) The court shall determine the issue of competency. To facilitate in this determination, the court may: (A) Appoint a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist to examine the juvenile; or (B) designate a private or public mental health facility to conduct a psychiatric or psychological examination and report to the court. If the examining psychiatrist, psychologist or private or public mental health facility determines that further examination is necessary, the court may commit the juvenile for not more than 60 days to any appropriate public or private institution for examination and report to the court. For good cause shown, the commitment may be extended for another 60 days. No statement made by the juvenile in the course of any examination provided for by this section, whether the examination is with or without the consent of the juvenile, shall be admitted in evidence against the juvenile in any hearing.

(3) Unless the court finds the attendance of the juvenile would be injurious to the juvenile's health, the juvenile shall be present personally at all proceedings under this section.

(c) If the juvenile is found to be competent, the proceedings which have been suspended shall be resumed.

(d) If the juvenile is found to be incompetent, the juvenile shall remain subject to the jurisdiction of the court and shall be committed for evaluation and treatment pursuant to K.S.A. 2014 Supp. 38-2349 and 38-2350, and amendments thereto. One or both parents of the juvenile may be ordered to pay child support pursuant to the Kansas child support guidelines. Upon application of the juvenile and in the discretion of the court, the juvenile may be released to any appropriate private institution upon terms and conditions prescribed by the court.

(e) If at any time after proceedings have been suspended under this section, there are reasonable grounds to believe that a juvenile who has been adjudged incompetent is now competent, the court in which the case is pending shall conduct a hearing to determine the juvenile's present mental condition. Reasonable notice of the hearings shall be given to the prosecuting attorney, the juvenile and the juvenile's attorney of record, if any. If the court, following the hearing, finds the juvenile to be competent, the pending proceedings shall be resumed.

History: L. 2006, ch. 169, § 48; Jan. 1, 2007.