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S.F. No. 4271 – Judicial Branch Policy Changes and Appropriations

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Overview

S.F. 4271 is the Minnesota Judicial Branch’s policy and appropriations bill. This bill makes several changes to provisions governing court administration, publication of notices on websites, qualifications of court examiners, and protections for jurors. This bill makes several appropriations to the Minnesota Supreme Court for the psychological and psychiatrics examiner services program; development of the judicial branch cybersecurity program; court interpreter services; juror services; and courthouse security.

Summary

Section 1. Possession. Modifies the state law on eminent domain. Clarifies that the award must be deposited with the court administrator and that if the amount exceeds \$10,000, the award must be deposited in an interest-bearing account within five business days.

Section 2. Copy of judgment to commissioner. Clarifies that the court administrator must notify the commissioner of public safety that a judgment related to a claim arising out of ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle has not been satisfied.

Section 3. Conditions. Makes a conforming change related to section 2.

Section 4. Court examiner. Modifies the definition of “court examiner” for purposes of the law governing civil commitment. Requires court examiners to either be licensed in Minnesota or hold authority to practice in Minnesota under an approved interstate compact.

Section 5. District court. Amends the chapter governing newspapers qualified to publish a public notice. Provides that the district court may publish its own notices, orders, and process for judicial proceedings on the Minnesota Judicial Branch website.

Section 6. Uniform collections policy and procedures for courts. Exempts court debts sent to the Department of Revenue for revenue recapture from certain notice and hearing requirements.

Section 7. Service; alternative service; publication; notice. Modifies the statute governing orders for protection. Permits service of an order for protection electronically or by mail if the respondent appears remotely at a hearing and is notified at the hearing that an order will be issued.

Section 8. Juror protection. Requires employers to release an employee from their regular work schedule to permit the employee to attend court for prospective jury service. Prohibits the employer from requiring an employee to work an alternative work schedule.

Section 9. Restraining order. Modifies the statute governing harassment restraining orders. Permits service of a restraining order electronically or by mail if the respondent appears remotely at a hearing and is notified at the hearing that an order will be issued.

Section 10. Court examiner. Modifies the definition of “court examiner” for purposes of the law governing competency proceedings. Requires court examiners to either be licensed in Minnesota or hold authority to practice in Minnesota under an approved interstate compact.

Section 11. Published notice. Provides that if the district court is required to publish its own notice, the notice may be published on the Minnesota Judicial Branch website.

Section 12. Judiciary appropriation. Provides several appropriations in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 to the Minnesota Supreme Court for the psychological and psychiatrics examiner services program; development of the judicial branch cybersecurity program; court interpreter services; juror services; and courthouse security. These appropriations are effective the day following final enactment.