

STATE OF NEW YORK

5845

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 26, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. O'DONNELL -- read once and referred to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law, in relation to grand jury proceedings

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Paragraph (d) of subdivision 3 of section 190.25 of the
2 criminal procedure law is amended and a new paragraph (a-1) is added to
3 read as follows:

4 (a-1) A judge or justice of the superior court;

5 (d) An interpreter. Upon request of the grand jury or the court, the
6 prosecutor must provide an interpreter to interpret the testimony of any
7 witness who does not speak the English language well enough to be readi-
8 ly understood. Such interpreter must, if he or she has not previously
9 taken the constitutional oath of office, first take an oath before the
10 grand jury that he or she will faithfully interpret the testimony of the
11 witness and that he or she will keep secret all matters before such
12 grand jury within his or her knowledge;

13 § 2. Subdivision 4 of section 190.25 of the criminal procedure law is
14 amended by adding seven new paragraphs (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and
15 (i) to read as follows:

16 (c) In addition to paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subdivision, when,
17 following submission to a grand jury of a criminal charge or charges,
18 the grand jury dismisses all charges presented or directs the district
19 attorney to file in a local criminal court a prosecutor's information
20 charging an offense other than a felony, as provided in subdivision one
21 of section 190.70 of this article, an application may be made to the
22 superior court for disclosure of the following material relating to the
23 proceedings before such grand jury:

24 (i) the criminal charge or charges submitted;

25 (ii) the legal instructions provided to the grand jury;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (iii) the testimony of all public servants who testified in an offi-
2 cial capacity before the grand jury and of all persons who provided
3 expert testimony; and

4 (iv) the testimony of all other persons who testified before the grand
5 jury, redacted as necessary to prevent discovery of their names and such
6 other personal data or information that may reveal or help to reveal
7 their identities.

8 (d) The application specified in paragraph (c) of this subdivision may
9 be made by any person, must be in writing and, except where made by the
10 people, must be upon notice to the people. The court shall direct or
11 provide notice to any other appropriate person or agency. Where more
12 than one application is made hereunder in relation to such a dismissal
13 or direction, the court may consolidate such applications and determine
14 them together. When no application hereunder is made, the superior court
15 may order disclosure on its own motion as provided in paragraph (e) of
16 this subdivision at any time following notice to the people and an
17 opportunity to be heard and reasonable efforts to notify and provide an
18 opportunity to be heard to any other appropriate person or agency.

19 (e) Upon an application as provided in paragraph (c) of this subdivi-
20 sion or on the court's own motion, the court, after providing persons
21 given notice an opportunity to be heard, shall determine whether:

22 (i) a significant number of members of the general public in the coun-
23 ty in which the grand jury was drawn and impaneled are likely aware that
24 a criminal investigation had been conducted in connection with the
25 subject matter of the grand jury proceeding; and

26 (ii) a significant number of members of the general public in such
27 county are likely aware of the identity of the subject against whom the
28 criminal charge specified in paragraph (c) of this subdivision was
29 submitted to a grand jury, or such subject has consented to such disclo-
30 sure; and

31 (iii) there is significant public interest in disclosure.

32 Where the court is satisfied that all three of these factors are pres-
33 ent, and except as provided in paragraph (f) of this subdivision, the
34 court shall direct the district attorney to promptly disclose the items
35 specified in paragraph (c) of this subdivision.

36 (f) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this subdivision, on
37 application of the district attorney or any interested person, or on its
38 own motion, the court shall limit disclosure of the items specified in
39 paragraph (c) of this subdivision, in whole or part, where the court
40 determines there is a reasonable likelihood that such disclosure may
41 lead to discovery of the identity of a witness who is not a public serv-
42 ant or expert witness, imperil the health or safety of a grand juror who
43 participated in the proceeding or a witness who appeared before the
44 grand jury, jeopardize an identified current or future criminal investi-
45 gation, create a specific threat to public safety, or despite the inter-
46 ests reflected by this subdivision is contrary to the interests of
47 justice.

48 (g) Where a court determines not to direct disclosure, in whole or in
49 part, pursuant to this subdivision, it shall do so promptly in a written
50 order that shall explain with specificity, to the extent practicable,
51 the basis for its determination.

52 (h) Where an application pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subdivision
53 has been denied, in whole or in part, the applicant may appeal as of
54 right from such order to the appellate division in the department in
55 which such order was entered, in accordance with article four hundred
56 sixty of this chapter.

1 (i) Nothing in this paragraph or paragraph (c), (d), (e), (f), (g) or
2 (h) of this subdivision shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting
3 any broader right of access to grand jury materials under any other law,
4 common law or court precedent.

5 § 3. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall
6 have become a law.