

evidence at criminal trials except that information may be excluded if its probative value is outweighed by the danger of creating unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, or misleading the jury. For the purposes of the preceding sentence, the fact that a victim, as defined in section 3510, attended or observed the trial shall not be construed to pose a danger of creating unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, or misleading the jury. The government and the defendant shall be permitted to rebut any information received at the hearing, and shall be given fair opportunity to present argument as to the adequacy of the information to establish the existence of any aggravating or mitigating factor, and as to the appropriateness in the case of imposing a sentence of death. The government shall open the argument. The defendant shall be permitted to reply. The government shall then be permitted to reply in rebuttal. The burden of establishing the existence of any aggravating factor is on the government, and is not satisfied unless the existence of such a factor is established beyond a reasonable doubt. The burden of establishing the existence of any mitigating factor is on the defendant, and is not satisfied unless the existence of such a factor is established by a preponderance of the information.

(d) RETURN OF SPECIAL FINDINGS.—The jury, or if there is no jury, the court, shall consider all the information received during the hearing. It shall return special findings identifying any aggravating factor or factors set forth in section 3592 found to exist and any other aggravating factor for which notice has been provided under subsection (a) found to exist. A finding with respect to a mitigating factor may be made by 1 or more members of the jury, and any member of the jury who finds the existence of a mitigating factor may consider such factor established for purposes of this section regardless of the number of jurors who concur that the factor has been established. A finding with respect to any aggravating factor must be unanimous. If no aggravating factor set forth in section 3592 is found to exist, the court shall impose a sentence other than death authorized by law.

(e) RETURN OF A FINDING CONCERNING A SENTENCE OF DEATH.—If, in the case of—

- (1) an offense described in section 3591(a)(1), an aggravating factor required to be considered under section 3592(b) is found to exist;
- (2) an offense described in section 3591(a)(2), an aggravating factor required to be considered under section 3592(c) is found to exist; or
- (3) an offense described in section 3591(b), an aggravating factor required to be considered under section 3592(d) is found to exist,

the jury, or if there is no jury, the court, shall consider whether all the aggravating factor or factors found to exist sufficiently outweigh all the mitigating factor or factors found to exist to justify a sentence of death, or, in the absence of a mitigating factor, whether the aggravating factor or factors alone are sufficient to justify a sentence of death. Based upon this consideration, the jury by unanimous vote, or if there is no jury, the court, shall recommend whether the defendant should be sentenced to death, to life imprisonment without possibility of release or some other lesser sentence.

(f) SPECIAL PRECAUTION TO ENSURE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION.—In a hearing held before a jury, the court, prior to the return of a finding under subsection (e), shall instruct the jury that, in considering whether a sentence of death is justified, it shall not consider the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant or of any victim and that the jury is not to recommend a sentence of death unless it has concluded that it would recommend a sentence of death for the crime in question no matter what the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant or of any victim may be. The jury, upon return of a finding under subsection (e), shall also return to the court a certificate, signed by each juror, that consideration of the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant or any victim was not involved in reaching his or her individual decision and that the individual juror would have made the same recommendation regarding a sentence for the crime in question no matter what the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant or any victim may be.

(Added Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, §60002(a), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1964; amended Pub. L. 105-6, §2(c), Mar. 19, 1997, 111 Stat. 12; Pub. L. 107-273, div. B, title IV, §4002(e)(8), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1810.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, referred to in subsec. (c), are set out in the Appendix to this title.

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 107-273 substituted “rule 32” for “rule 32(c)” in first sentence.

1997—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 105-6 inserted “For the purposes of the preceding sentence, the fact that a victim, as defined in section 3510, attended or observed the trial shall not be construed to pose a danger of creating unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, or misleading the jury.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1997 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-6 applicable to cases pending on Mar. 19, 1997, see section 2(d) of Pub. L. 105-6, set out as an Effective Date note under section 3510 of this title.

§ 3594. Imposition of a sentence of death

Upon a recommendation under section 3593(e) that the defendant should be sentenced to death or life imprisonment without possibility of release, the court shall sentence the defendant accordingly. Otherwise, the court shall impose any lesser sentence that is authorized by law. Notwithstanding any other law, if the maximum term of imprisonment for the offense is life imprisonment, the court may impose a sentence of life imprisonment without possibility of release.

(Added Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, §60002(a), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1966.)

§ 3595. Review of a sentence of death

(a) APPEAL.—In a case in which a sentence of death is imposed, the sentence shall be subject to review by the court of appeals upon appeal by the defendant. Notice of appeal must be filed within the time specified for the filing of a no-