

ASSEMBLY, No. 4889

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 26, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT

District 29 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Timberlake, Assemblymen Zwicker, Johnson and Chiaravalloti

SYNOPSIS

Establishes sexual violence liaison officer in Division of State Police and local police departments.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/22/2021)

1 **AN ACT** establishing sexual violence liaison officers in certain
2 police departments and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised
3 Statutes and Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. a. The Superintendent of State Police shall designate the
9 Station Intervention Officer as the sexual violence liaison officer
10 for each State Police station.

11 b. The sexual violence liaison officer shall:

12 (1) serve as the station's in-house expert on how to respond to
13 sexual violence cases;

14 (2) act as the primary point-of-contact for each local sexual
15 violence program and county Sexual Assault Response Team as
16 established pursuant section 6 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-54) to
17 coordinate an effective community response;

18 (3) when appropriately trained, provide in-house training on
19 sexual violence and support training implementation by the Victim
20 Services Unit;

21 (4) monitor the station's compliance with sexual violence best
22 practices as set forth in the statutory law and Attorney General
23 policies; and

24 (5) serve in any other capacity deemed appropriate by the
25 superintendent.

26 c. A sexual violence liaison officer shall complete specialized
27 sexual violence training as specified by the superintendent.

28 d. A regional investigator of the Victim Services Unit of the
29 Division of State Police shall:

30 (1) be a member of the Victim Services Unit, or its successor;

31 (2) complete specialized sexual violence training as specified by
32 the superintendent; and

33 (3) represent the station at county meetings of the Sexual
34 Assault Response Team.

35 e. A member of the Division of State Police shall be
36 disqualified from serving as a sexual violence liaison officer or
37 regional investigator of the Victim Services Unit if:

38 (1) the member has been the subject of an investigation
39 regarding sexual violence, sexual misconduct, domestic violence,
40 stalking, or sexual harassment; or

41 (2) a court has issued a protective or restraining order against
42 the member.

43 f. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the sexual assault
44 liaison officer from simultaneously serving as a domestic violence
45 liaison officer or Megan's Law resource officer.

46
47 2. a. The chief of police or other executive head of a municipal
48 police department and force established pursuant to the provisions

1 of N.J.S.40A:14-118 shall appoint a full-time sworn officer of the
2 department and force to serve as a sexual violence liaison officer.

3 b. The sexual violence liaison officer shall:

4 (1) serve as the department and force in-house expert on how to
5 respond to sexual violence cases;

6 (2) act as the primary point-of-contact for each local sexual
7 violence program and county Sexual Assault Response Team as
8 established pursuant section 6 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-54) to
9 coordinate an effective community response;

10 (3) represent the department and force at county meetings of the
11 Sexual Assault Response Team;

12 (4) when appropriately trained, provide in-house training on
13 sexual violence;

14 (5) monitor the department and force's compliance with sexual
15 violence best practices as set forth in the statutory law and Attorney
16 General policies; and

17 (6) serve in any other capacity deemed appropriate by the chief
18 of police or other executive head of the department or force.

19 c. A sexual violence liaison officer shall complete specialized
20 sexual violence training as specified by the chief of police or other
21 executive head of the municipal police department and force.

22 d. An officer of the department or force shall be disqualified
23 from serving as a sexual violence liaison officer if:

24 (1) the officer has been the subject of an investigation regarding
25 sexual violence, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, stalking, or
26 sexual harassment; or

27 (2) a court has issued a protective or restraining order against
28 the officer.

29 e. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the sexual assault
30 liaison officer from simultaneously serving as a domestic violence
31 liaison officer or a Megan's Law resource officer.

32

33 3. a. The chief of police or other executive head of a county
34 police department and force established pursuant to the provisions
35 of N.J.S.40A:14-106 through N.J.S.40A:14-117 shall appoint a full-
36 time sworn officer of the department and force to serve as the
37 sexual violence liaison officer.

38 b. The sexual violence liaison officer shall:

39 (1) serve as the department and force in-house expert on how to
40 conduct sexual violence cases;

41 (2) act as the primary point-of-contact for each local sexual
42 violence program and county Sexual Assault Response Team as
43 established pursuant section 6 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-54) to
44 coordinate an effective community response;

45 (3) represent the department and force at county meetings of the
46 Sexual Assault Response Team;

47 (4) when appropriately trained, provide in-house training on
48 sexual violence;

1 (5) monitor the department and force's compliance with sexual
2 violence best practices as set forth in the statutory law and Attorney
3 General policies; and

4 (6) serve in any other capacity deemed appropriate by the chief
5 of police or other executive head of the department or force.

6 c. A sexual violence liaison officer shall complete specialized
7 sexual violence training as specified by the chief of police or other
8 executive head of the county police department and force.

9 d. An officer of the department or force shall be disqualified
10 from serving as a sexual violence liaison officer if:

11 (1) the officer has been the subject of an investigation regarding
12 sexual violence, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, stalking, or
13 sexual harassment; or

14 (2) a court has issued a protective or restraining order against
15 the officer.

16 e. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the sexual assault
17 liaison officer from simultaneously serving as a domestic violence
18 liaison officer or a Megan's Law resource officer.

19
20 4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
21 next following enactment.
22
23

24 STATEMENT
25

26 This bill requires a sexual violence liaison officer to be
27 appointed to each State Police station and municipal and county
28 police department.

29 The bill specifically requires the Superintendent of State Police
30 to designate the Station Intervention Officer as the sexual violence
31 liaison officer for each State Police station. The chief of police of a
32 municipal or county police department, as appropriate, is to appoint
33 a full-time sworn member to serve as the sexual violence liaison.
34 The liaison for the State Police and for municipal and county police
35 departments is responsible for serving as the in-house expert on
36 how to conduct sexual violence cases; acting as the primary point-
37 of-contact for each local sexual violence program and county
38 Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) to coordinate an effective
39 community response; when appropriately trained, providing in-
40 house training on sexual violence; monitoring the compliance with
41 sexual violence best practices set forth in the statutory law and
42 Attorney General policies; and serving in any other capacity
43 deemed appropriate by the superintendent or chief of police.

44 The liaison for municipal and county police departments also is
45 to represent the department at county meetings of the SART. The
46 bill provides for a regional investigator of the Victims Services Unit
47 in the Division of State Police to represent the State Police at these
48 meetings.

1 The State Police sexual violence liaison officer is required to be
2 a member of the Victim Services Unit of the division; a county or
3 municipal police officer liaison is required to be a full-time sworn
4 member of the department. The State Police member or department
5 police officer also is required to complete specialized sexual
6 violence training as specified by the superintendent or chief of
7 police, as applicable.

8 A State Police member or police officer is disqualified from
9 serving as a sexual violence liaison officer if the member or officer
10 has been the subject of an investigation regarding sexual violence,
11 sexual misconduct, domestic violence, stalking, or sexual
12 harassment; or if a court has issued a protective or restraining order
13 against the member or officer.

14 The bill authorizes a sexual assault liaison officer to
15 simultaneously serve as a domestic violence liaison officer and
16 Megan's Law resource officer.

17 According to the sponsor, having an officer specially trained in
18 the handling of sexual violence cases at each police department will
19 strengthen law enforcement's overall response to survivors of these
20 crimes. Working with survivors of these uniquely traumatic acts
21 requires a significant amount of specialized training and expertise
22 that extends beyond the current training requirement. The creation
23 of a Sexual Violence Liaison Officer (SVLO) will ensure each
24 department has an in-house resource that can establish departmental
25 best practices and ensure departmental compliance with current and
26 future law and policy requirements as they pertain to law
27 enforcement's response to survivors of sexual violence.