

SENATE, No. 2490

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 28, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Madden

SYNOPSIS

Requires health care facilities to screen health care workers, first responders, and other frontline workers for symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder related to COVID-19 pandemic.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 7/22/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning post-traumatic stress disorder and
2 supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statues.

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

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7 1. a. Health care facilities licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136
8 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) shall establish procedures to screen health care
9 workers, first responders, and other frontline workers, upon intake
10 for inpatient or outpatient services, for the symptoms of post-
11 traumatic stress disorder related to the coronavirus disease 2019
12 (COVID-19) pandemic. Each facility shall implement measures to
13 avoid performing redundant screenings on a given health care
14 worker, first responder, or other frontline worker, both at the same
15 facility and at other facilities in the State, unless the individual
16 requests a subsequent screening or a subsequent screening appears
17 to be clinically appropriate. Health care workers, first responders,
18 and other frontline workers presenting at a facility for health care
19 services shall have the right to refuse to be screened for the
20 symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder related to the COVID-
21 19 pandemic. In the event a health care worker, first responder, or
22 other frontline worker screens positive for the symptoms of post-
23 traumatic stress disorder related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the
24 facility shall offer to assist the individual with referrals to
25 appropriate treatment resources and shall provide the individual
26 with a link to the informational resources published on the Internet
27 websites of the Department of Health and the Division of Mental
28 Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human
29 Services pursuant to subsection c. of this section.

30 b. Health care facilities employing health care workers, first
31 responders, or other frontline workers who provided services in
32 response to the COVID-19 pandemic or who provided essential
33 services during the COVID-19 pandemic shall ensure that those
34 health care workers, first responders, and other frontline workers
35 are provided with information about the resources that are available
36 concerning to post-traumatic stress disorder related to the COVID-
37 19 pandemic, including, but not limited to, employee assistance
38 programs and a link to the informational resources published on the
39 Internet websites of the Department of Health and the Division of
40 Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human
41 Services pursuant to subsection c. of this section.

42 c. The Department of Health and the Division of Mental Health
43 and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services shall:

44 (1) jointly develop a screening tool for post-traumatic stress
45 disorder related to the COVID-19 pandemic, along with guidance
46 concerning the use of the screening tool, for use by health care
47 facilities for the purposes of conducting screenings pursuant to
48 subsection a. of this section;

1 (2) publish on their respective Internet websites information and
2 a list of available resources related to treatment for post-traumatic
3 stress disorder, including links to appropriate third-party resource
4 providers, for use by health care facilities in connection with
5 subsections a. and b. of this section; and

6 (3) provide such other resources and implement such other
7 programs and initiatives as each shall determine to be appropriate to
8 meet the clinical needs of health care workers, first responders, and
9 other frontline workers experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder
10 related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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12 2. This act shall take effect 60 days after the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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17 This bill requires health care facilities to establish procedures to
18 screen health care workers, first responders, and other frontline
19 workers, upon intake for inpatient or outpatient services, for the
20 symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to the
21 coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Each facility is
22 to implement measures to avoid performing redundant screenings
23 on a given health care worker, first responder, or other frontline
24 worker, both at that facility and at other facilities throughout the
25 State, unless the individual requests a subsequent screening or a
26 subsequent screening appears to be clinically appropriate. Health
27 care workers, first responders, and other frontline workers will have
28 the right to refuse to be screened for the symptoms of PTSD related
29 to the COVID-19 pandemic.

30 In the event a health care worker, first responder, or other
31 frontline worker screens positive for the symptoms of PTSD related
32 to the COVID-19 pandemic, the facility will be required to offer to
33 assist the individual with referrals to appropriate treatment
34 resources and a link to informational resources that are required to
35 published on the Internet websites of the Department of Health
36 (DOH) and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
37 (DMHAS) in the Department of Human Services under the bill.

38 The DOH and DMHAS will be required to develop a PTSD
39 screening tool, and guidance concerning the use of the screening
40 tool, for use by health care facilities in complying with the
41 requirements of the bill. In addition, the DOH and DMHAS are to
42 provide other resources and implement other programs and
43 initiatives as they deem appropriate to meet the clinical needs of
44 health care workers, first responders, and other frontline workers
45 experiencing PTSD related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

46 The bill additionally requires health care facilities employing
47 health care workers, first responders, or other frontline workers who
48 provided services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic or who

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1 provided essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic to
2 ensure that those health care workers and first responders are
3 provided with information concerning available resources and
4 services for PTSD related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including,
5 but not limited to, employee assistance programs and a link to the
6 informational resources the bill requires to be published on the
7 Internet websites of the DOH and the DMHAS.