

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 389

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblywoman HECK and Assemblyman STUHLTRAGER

1 AN ACT establishing regional diagnostic and treatment centers for
2 child abuse ¹ and neglect ¹ and making an appropriation.

3

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

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7 1. The Commissioner of Human Services shall establish four
8 regional diagnostic and treatment centers for child abuse ¹ and
9 neglect¹ affiliated with ¹ medical¹ teaching ¹ [hospitals] institutions¹
10 in the State that meet the standards adopted by the commissioner, in
11 consultation with the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and
12 Neglect. The regional centers shall be located in the northern, north
13 central, south central and southern regions of the State. ¹ Each center
14 shall have experience in addressing the medical and mental health
15 diagnostic and treatment needs of abused and neglected children in the
16 region in which it is located.¹

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18 2. Each center shall ¹ [provide a multidisciplinary team trained in]
19 demonstrate a multidisciplinary approach to¹ identifying and
20 responding to child abuse ¹ and neglect ¹. The ¹ [team] center staff¹
21 shall include, at a minimum, a pediatrician, a consulting psychiatrist,
22 a psychologist and a social worker who are trained to evaluate and
23 treat children who have been abused ¹ or neglected¹ and their
24 families. Each ¹ [multidisciplinary team shall also include a
25 representative of] center shall establish a liaison with¹ the district
26 office of the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department
27 of Human Services and ¹ [a representative of]¹ the prosecutor's office
28 from the county in which the child who is undergoing evaluation and
29 treatment resides. ¹ At least one member of the staff shall also have an
30 appropriate professional credential or significant training and

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Assembly ACO committee amendments adopted September 16, 1996.

1 experience in the identification and treatment of substance abuse.¹

2 ¹[A member of the team shall be selected as an advocate of the
3 child to ensure that any action taken is in the best interest of the child.]
4 Each center shall develop an intake, referral and case tracking process
5 which assists the division and prosecutor's office in assuring that child
6 victims receive appropriate and timely diagnostic and treatment
7 services.¹

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9 3. The regional centers shall: evaluate and treat child abuse ¹ and
10 neglect¹ ; be resources for the region and develop additional resources
11 within the region; provide training and consultative services; ¹ and¹
12 be available for emergency ¹ phone¹ consultation 24 hours a day ¹ [
13 and be accessible to all child victims]¹ . The centers shall also be a
14 source for research and training for additional medical and mental
15 health personnel dedicated to the identification and treatment of child
16 abuse ¹ and neglect¹ .

17 The regional center may charge a sliding scale fee for services
18 provided under this act.

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20 4. Services provided by the ¹ [multidisciplinary team] center's staff
21 ¹ shall include, but not be limited to:

22 a. Providing psychological and medical evaluation and treatment
23 of the child ¹ [and],¹ counseling for family members ¹ and substance
24 abuse assessment and mental health and substance abuse counseling
25 for the parents or guardians of the child¹;

26 b. Providing referral for appropriate social services and medical
27 care;

28 c. Providing testimony regarding alleged child abuse ¹ or neglect¹ ¹
29 at judicial proceedings;

30 d. Providing treatment recommendations for the child and ¹ mental
31 health and substance abuse treatment recommendations for ¹ his
32 family, and ¹ [may provide] providing mental health and substance
33 abuse¹ treatment recommendations for persons convicted of child
34 abuse ¹ or neglect¹ ;

35 e. Receiving referrals from the Division of Youth and Family
36 Services and the county prosecutor's office and assisting them in any
37 investigation of child abuse ¹ or neglect¹ ;

38 f. Providing educational material and seminars on child abuse ¹ and
39 neglect¹ and the services the center provides to children, parents,
40 teachers, law enforcement officials, the judiciary, attorneys and other
41 citizens.

42

43 5. The regional center shall ensure the safety of a child undergoing
44 treatment while the child is at the regional center to the extent
45 permitted by law. The appropriate law enforcement officials and
46 protective services providers shall continue to ensure the safety of the

1 child to the extent permitted by law.

2

3 6. Regional centers shall ¹[encourage and assist counties to
4 establish a multidisciplinary team to assist the county prosecutor and
5 the Division of Youth and Family Services in an investigation of child
6 abuse] act as a resource in the establishment and maintenance of
7 county-based multidisciplinary teams which work in conjunction with
8 the county prosecutor and the Division of Youth and Family Services
9 in the investigation of child abuse and neglect in the county in which
10 the child who is undergoing evaluation and treatment resides¹. The
11 Commissioner of Human Services, in consultation with the Governor's
12 Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, shall establish standards for
13 a county team. The county team shall consist of representatives of the
14 following disciplines: law enforcement; child protective services;
15 mental health; ¹substance abuse identification and treatment; and¹
16 medicine ¹[; and education]¹, all of whom have been trained to
17 recognize child abuse ¹and neglect¹. The county team shall provide:
18 facilitation of the investigation, management and disposition of cases
19 of criminal child abuse ¹and neglect¹; referral services to the regional
20 diagnostic center; appropriate referrals to medical and social service
21 agencies; information regarding the identification and treatment of
22 child abuse ¹and neglect¹; and appropriate follow-up care for abused
23 children and their families.

24

25 7. There is established a ¹[14] 15¹ member Diagnostic and
26 Treatment Advisory Council to oversee the programs of the regional
27 centers, help facilitate communications among the centers, county
28 teams, law enforcement officials and the Division of Youth and Family
29 Services, develop standards of care for the treatment of child abuse,
30 and help coordinate any research it deems appropriate. The council
31 shall consist of: the Commissioners of the Departments of Human
32 Services, Health ¹and Senior Services¹ and Education, and the
33 Attorney General, or their designees; the Director of the Division of
34 Youth and Family Services; the directors of the four regional centers;
35 a physician; a social worker; a psychologist; ¹a certified alcohol and
36 drug abuse counselor or other professional appropriately credentialed
37 to identify and treat substance abuse;¹ an advocate for abused ¹and
38 neglected¹ children; and a person who has utilized the services of a
39 center. The Governor shall appoint the ¹ [five] six¹ public members
40 of the council, who shall serve as members for three years.

41 The advisory council shall report annually to the Governor and the
42 Legislature regarding the effectiveness of the regional centers and shall
43 make recommendations for improvements or changes.

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45 8. The Commissioner of Human Services shall adopt rules and
46 regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act" P.L.1968,

1 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) necessary to effectuate the provisions of
2 this act.

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4 9. There is appropriated \$1.5 million from the General Fund to the
5 Department of Human Services to carry out the purposes of this act.

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7 10. This act shall take effect immediately.

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12 Establishes four regional diagnostic and treatment centers for child
13 abuse; appropriates \$1.5 million.