

CHAPTER 167

AN ACT establishing the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance in the Department of Law and Public Safety, and amending and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

C.52:4B-60.4 Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance established, Department of Law and Public Safety.

1. There is hereby established in the Department of Law and Public Safety the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance. The division shall be under the immediate supervision of an executive director who shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Attorney General and who shall administer the work of the division under the direction and supervision of the Attorney General. The Attorney General shall fix the compensation of the executive director within the limits of available appropriations.

C.52:4B-60.5 Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance, work organized, Attorney General.

2. The Attorney General shall organize the work of the division in bureaus and other organizational units as the Attorney General may determine to be necessary for efficient and effective operation and shall assign to the division employees in the Department of Law and Public Safety as may be necessary to assist the executive director in the performance of the executive director's duties. All employees of the division, except for secretarial and clerical personnel, shall be in the unclassified service of the Civil Service.

C.52:4B-60.6 Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance, services.

3. a. The Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance shall oversee and coordinate in the Department of Law and Public Safety all matters related to violence intervention and prevention and victim assistance and services performed by or on behalf of the Attorney General, including, but not limited to:

(1) directly providing, within the limits of resources made available for this purpose, victim and violence intervention and prevention services and coordinating the delivery of the services provided through the various divisions in the Department of Law and Public Safety;

(2) reviewing and overseeing the department's provision of services to victims of crime, human trafficking, and violence and services to communities for the prevention of violence;

(3) monitoring and administering the department's violence intervention and prevention programs, initiatives, and services intended to reduce the cycle of violence and advocating to advance the objectives of these measures;

(4) developing and implementing measures and strategies to better address the needs of underserved victim populations;

(5) assisting, supporting, consulting on and participating in the development and implementation of initiatives, projects, and strategies to address issues related to violence reduction and victim support, including, but not limited to, the development of a State infrastructure for victim assistance and violence intervention and prevention services, formation of a Statewide strategy for the growth and standardization of services, and directing efforts to enhance community engagement and program accountability;

(6) serving as a resource center and facilitator to provide technical assistance and training with respect to victim assistance and violence intervention and prevention services for the purpose of improving access to available services, promoting awareness of available resources

and models of services, expanding the scope and availability of these services, and developing new preventative strategies;

(7) building partnerships between, coordinating with, and supporting initiatives to improve public health and safety involving law enforcement entities and victim assistance and violence intervention and prevention service providers;

(8) developing intergovernmental partnerships and engaging in outreach and collaboration efforts with other State, county, and local government agencies on policy and programmatic issues, reforms, and initiatives related to violence intervention, and victim assistance;

(9) safeguarding victims' rights and ensuring appropriate consideration of victims' rights and interests in the performance of public safety, law enforcement, and prosecutorial functions by other divisions in the department;

(10) performing, arranging for, or coordinating community support and assistance programs and services in the aftermath of crimes involving multiple victims such as mass shootings, school shootings, or acts of terrorism; providing assistance to other governmental entities in their response to these crimes; and serving as a repository of resources to assist communities in preparing for these events;

(11) developing grant applications and applying for available grant funding for violence intervention and victim assistance projects and programs on behalf of the department;

(12) receiving and processing, or monitoring the receipt and processing of, applications from State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations for violence intervention and prevention and victim service or assistance project grants that may be made available from or through the department, including, but not limited to, the promulgation of standards and procedures related to the solicitation, qualification, and award of grants; and

(13) performing other functions as the Attorney General may prescribe.

b. In carrying out its responsibilities, the division shall take steps as it deems appropriate in furtherance of the following objectives:

(1) to promote a trauma-informed approach in the provision of victim and violence intervention and prevention services by the department, other State agencies, and local and county governments providing these services;

(2) to provide and coordinate the provision of services to victims of crime and violence at the State, county, and local levels in order to ameliorate the impact of crime and violence and to prevent future violence;

(3) to promote access to and deployment of services to vulnerable and less accessible victim populations, including, but not limited to, promoting policies that recognize that an individual's status as a prior offender should not be grounds for denial of services that could prevent future violence;

(4) to serve as a point of contact and engagement for community members, stakeholders, crime survivors, former clients, and justice-involved persons to offer input, local knowledge, and collaborative viewpoints for the purpose of improving services and influencing policymaking;

(5) to support and advocate for policies that promote the hiring and recruitment of culturally competent individuals in the field of victim assistance and violence intervention and prevention services;

(6) to promote policies and practices that encourage the use of peer support, such as credible messengers, individuals with lived experience, and trauma survivors in the provision of services;

(7) to identify best practices and evidence-based interventions in the provision of victim and violence intervention and prevention services and promote these measures within the

department, other State agencies, and local county governments that provide these services through methods including, but not limited to, training and reporting; and

(8) to provide or direct resources and assistance to communities and victims to address and ameliorate the impact of hate crimes or acts of violence which are motivated by or evince a discriminatory intent.

C.52:4B-60.7 Victims of Crime Compensation Office, functions, powers, duties transferred employees, certain, unclassified, Civil Service.

4. a. All the functions, powers, and duties of the Victims of Crime Compensation Office in the Department of Law and Public Safety, originally established as the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency pursuant to P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-1 et seq.) and continued as the Victims of Crime Compensation Office pursuant to P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2 et al.) and the Reorganization Plan No. 001-2008, are transferred to the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance established hereunder.

b. Except for secretarial and clerical personnel, all employees of the Victims of Crime Compensation Office, including the Victims of Crime Compensation Office investigators, shall be in the unclassified service of the Civil Service.

C.52:4B-60.8 Office of Violence Intervention and Prevention, responsibilities, duties.

5. a. The Attorney General shall establish an Office of Violence Intervention and Prevention in the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance in the Department of Law and Public Safety under the supervision of either a Director or Chief of the Office of Violence Intervention and Prevention. The office shall promote and facilitate the performance or provision of violence intervention and prevention services set forth in section 3 of P.L.2023, c.167 (C.52:4B-60.6) and manage and oversee the State's violence intervention and prevention work. The office's responsibilities shall include:

(1) managing and overseeing violence intervention and prevention programs maintained and operated by the department, including, but not limited to, any hospital-based or community-based violence intervention program;

(2) developing, and supporting the effectuation of, policies and projects related to violence intervention and prevention, including, but not limited to, a Statewide infrastructure of violence intervention and prevention services;

(3) assisting and advising community-based programs and local entities in their development and implementation of violence intervention and prevention programs and strategies, including, but not limited to, promoting, supporting, and facilitating, through the provision of training, guidance, and technical assistance, community-based violence intervention and prevention programs that adhere to or incorporate a public health approach to public safety, identifying best practices and evidence-based interventions, and recommending programs and services to be supported by local governing bodies which address community violence;

(4) developing or providing support for the development of a network of community-based organizations and health and mental health providers within the community that offer outreach that supports communities and individuals who experience or are at risk of experiencing community violence;

(5) supporting school-based opportunities to incorporate violence intervention and prevention strategies that address community violence;

(6) promoting the use of peer support services, such as credible messengers or other individuals with lived experience to serve as mentors or role models for individuals who are at risk of engaging in criminal activity or who have a high risk of involvement in violence;

(7) identifying, developing, and prioritizing approaches to violence intervention and prevention that are trauma-informed and promoting solutions that are supportive of and incorporate mental health services; and

(8) establishing partnerships with institutions of higher education and research centers to identify and develop tools for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of violence intervention and prevention strategies and partnering on grant applications studying or implementing the same.

b. The office may apply for and accept on behalf of the State any grants from the federal government or any agency thereof, or from any foundation, corporation, association or person, and may comply with the terms, conditions, and limitations thereof, for any of the purposes of the office. Any money received may be expended by the division, subject to any limitations imposed in the grants, to effectuate any of the purposes of the office upon warrant of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting of the Department of the Treasury on vouchers certified and approved by the director.

c. The Attorney General may establish a local, county, or regional structure for the execution of violence intervention and prevention services set forth in this section.

C.52:4B-60.9 Office of Victim Support and Assistance, responsibilities, duties.

6. a. The Attorney General shall establish an Office of Victim Support and Assistance in the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance in the Department of Law and Public Safety under the supervision of either a Director or Chief of the Office of Victim Support and Assistance. The office shall promote and facilitate the performance or provision of victim support and assistance services set forth in section 3 of P.L.2023, c.167 (C.52:4B-60.6) and oversee the department's victim-related services in a manner consistent with the goal of making victim assistance a key strategy for a public health approach to public safety that prevents violence and victimization. The office's responsibilities shall include:

(1) providing strategy and resources for the State to address the needs of victims of crimes, and through this assistance, to intervene in violence and prevent repeat victimization;

(2) setting departmental policy with respect to victims of crime and violence, including, but not limited to, victims of sexual assault, victims of domestic violence and intimate partner abuse, youth victims, victims of discrimination and bias-based crimes, and immigrant populations;

(3) serving as a repository of resources, information, best practices, and guidance for communities in the aftermath of mass or multiple acts of violence or bias-based acts, and developing policies and partnerships to prevent these incidents;

(4) identifying victim populations in need of support and assistance, including, but not limited to, victims of non-violent offenses, and communities and demographics that are disproportionally affected by violence, and developing policies for these populations;

(5) enhancing access to healing services after incidents of victimization;

(6) providing technical assistance, training, and guidance to other divisions and organizational units within the department relating to the provision of victim support and assistance;

(7) identifying best practices and evidence-based interventions for improving services to victims, and providing resources and toolkits to State and local government agencies to assist in the effective implementation of these strategies;

(8) identifying, developing, and prioritizing trauma-informed approaches to victim assistance and violence intervention that promote solutions that are supportive of and incorporate mental health services;

(9) identifying, developing recommendations on, and setting crime response policies that may impact the range of victim populations, including restorative justice approaches and other solutions; and

(10) identifying and cultivating survivor-centered strategies through guidance, policy and outreach support, and funding.

b. The office may apply for and accept on behalf of the State any grants from the federal government or any agency thereof, or from any foundation, corporation, association, or person, and may comply with the terms, conditions, and limitations imposed in the grants, to effectuate any of the purposes of the office upon warrant of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting of the Department of the Treasury on vouchers certified and approved by the director.

c. The Attorney General may designate the Office of Victim Support and Assistance to be the programmatic manager of victim-related federal and State grant funds, including grants issued to the State under the federal Victims of Crime Act and the federal Violence Against Women Act, which are allocated to or administered by the department.

C.52:4B-60.10 Office of Trial and Criminal Justice Process, responsibilities, duties.

7. The Attorney General shall establish an Office of Trial and Criminal Justice Process in the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance in the Department of Law and Public Safety under the supervision of either a Director or Chief of the Office of Trial and Criminal Justice Process. The office shall promote and facilitate the performance or provision of victim support and assistance services set forth in section 3 of P.L.2023, c.167 (C.52:4B-60.6), coordinate and set policy for crime victims as they navigate the criminal justice process, and enhance crime victims' access to services. The office's responsibilities shall include:

(1) advising the New Jersey State Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and the county prosecutor's victim witness advocates;

(2) receiving and reviewing reports from the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and the county prosecutor's victim witness advocates;

(3) setting Statewide policy, identifying best practices, and receiving and reviewing reports regarding performances and compliance with policies and rules for the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and the county prosecutor's victim witness advocates;

(4) developing policy for witnesses and victims of crime who are not currently served entities at the State, county, or municipal levels;

(5) identifying best practices and setting policies aimed at better informing and empowering victims of crime; and

(6) coordinating with organizational units under the direction of the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance and other divisions or departments regarding services affecting victims in the criminal justice process.

C.52:4B-60.11 Rules, regulations.

8. The Executive Director of the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance shall adopt rules and regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) necessary to implement the provisions of P.L.2023, c.167 (C.52:4B-60.4 et al.).

9. Section 2 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-2) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-2 Definitions.

2. As used in P.L.1971, c.317:

“Agency” means the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency;

“Child” means an unmarried person who is under 21 years of age and includes a stepchild or an adopted child;

“Dependent” means a relative of a deceased victim who was wholly or partially dependent upon the victim’s income at the time of the victim’s death and shall include the child of a victim born after the victim’s death;

“Legal assistance” means assistance provided to a crime victim in the enforcement of victim’s rights in all courts; family law matters, including, but not limited to, child protection actions, divorce, custody, parenting time, child support, emancipation, dependency, guardianship, and family reunification; obtaining protective and restraining orders; employment matters, including, but not limited to, wage and hour claims; accessing public benefits; life planning; and any other situation for which an eligible crime victim needs legal services related to the victimization;

“Personal injury” means actual bodily harm and includes pregnancy and mental or nervous shock;

“Relative” of any person means the person’s spouse, parent, grandparent, stepfather, stepmother, child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, or parent of the person’s spouse;

“Relevant evidence” means evidence having a tendency in reason to prove or disprove any fact of consequences to the determination of the action and that is deemed to be admissible under the rules of evidence and does not include rumor, supposition, and speculation, hearsay or opinion, except as otherwise deemed admissible under the rules of evidence;

“Review Board” or “board” means the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board established by section 2 of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2);

“Victim” means a person who suffers personal, physical, or psychological injury or death as a result of the conduct of another person who commits against that person any of the offenses specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11) or an act by a juvenile, which if committed by an adult, would constitute a violation of any of these offenses. The term shall include, in the case of a criminal homicide or an act by a juvenile which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a criminal homicide, the spouse, parent, legal guardian, grandparent, child, sibling, domestic or civil union partner of the decedent, or parent of the decedent’s child;

“Victims of Crime Compensation Office” or “office” means the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency established pursuant to P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-1 et seq.) which is continued as the Victims of Crime Compensation Office pursuant to P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2 et al.) and Reorganization Plan No. 001-2008 and allocated to the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2023, c.167 (C.52:4B-60.7).

10. Section 5 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-5) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-5 Duties, compensation, employees.

5. The agency is authorized to appoint and fix the duties and compensation of such officers, examiners, and other experts as may be necessary for carrying out its functions under this act, and the provisions of section 4 of P.L.1970, c.74 (C.52:17B-100) shall be applicable to these employees. The agency may, subject to Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes, "Civil Service," appoint and fix the duties and compensation of such other assistants and employees as are necessary. The compensation fixed pursuant to this section shall be within the limits of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the agency for that purpose.

11. Section 6 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-44) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-44 Standards, law enforcement agencies, ensure rights of crime victims.

6. a. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety and in consultation with the county prosecutors and the Office of Trial and Criminal Justice Process in the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance, promulgate standards for law enforcement agencies to ensure that the rights of crime victims are enforced.

b. The standards shall require that the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice and each county prosecutor's office provide the following services upon request for victims and witnesses involved in the prosecution of a case:

(1) Orientation information about the criminal justice system and the victim's and witness's role in the criminal justice process;

(2) Notification of any change in the case status and of final disposition;

(3) Information on crime prevention and on available responses to witness intimidation;

(4) Information about available services to meet needs resulting from the crime and referrals to service agencies, where appropriate;

(5) Advance notice of the date, time and place of the defendant's initial appearance before a judicial officer, submission to the court of any plea agreement, the trial and sentencing;

(6) Advance notice of when presence in court is not needed;

(7) Advice about available compensation, restitution and other forms of recovery and assistance in applying for government compensation;

(8) A waiting or reception area separate from the defendant for use during court proceedings;

(9) An escort or accompaniment for intimidated victims or witnesses during court appearances;

(10) Information about directions, parking, courthouse and courtroom locations, transportation services and witness fees, in advance of court appearances;

(11) Assistance for victims and witnesses in meeting special needs when required to make court appearances, such as transportation and child care arrangements;

(12) Assistance in making travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-State witnesses;

(13) Notification to employers of victims and witnesses, if cooperation in the investigation or prosecution causes absence from work;

(14) Notification of the case disposition, including the trial and sentencing;

(15) Assistance to victims in submitting a written statement to a representative of the county prosecutor's office about the impact of the crime prior to the prosecutor's final decision concerning whether formal charges will be filed;

(16) Advice to victims about their right to make a statement about the impact of the crime for inclusion in the presentence report or at time of parole consideration, if applicable;

(17) Notification to victims of the right to make an in-person statement, prior to sentencing, directly to the sentencing court concerning the impact of the crime;

(18) Expediting the return of property when no longer needed as evidence;

(19) Advise and counsel, or refer for advice or counseling, victims of sexual assault, or other criminal acts involving a risk of transmission of disease, concerning available medical testing and assist such victims, or refer such victims for assistance, in obtaining appropriate testing, counseling and medical care and in making application to the Victims of Crime Compensation Office for compensation for the costs of such testing, counseling and care;

(20) Assistance to victims in submitting a written impact statement to a representative of the county prosecutor's office concerning the impact of the crime which shall be considered prior to the prosecutor's accepting a negotiated plea agreement containing recommendations

as to sentence and assistance to victims in securing an explanation of the terms of any such agreement and the reasons for the agreement;

(21) Notification to the victim of the defendant's release from custody which shall include:

(a) notice of the defendant's escape from custody and return to custody following escape;

(b) notice of any other release from custody, including placement in an Intensive Supervision Program or other alternative disposition, and any associated conditions of release;

(c) notice of the filing by an inmate of an application for commutation of sentence pursuant to N.J.S.2A:167-4 and its disposition;

(d) notice of parole consideration pursuant to provisions of P.L.1979, c.441 (C.30:4-123.45 et seq.); and

(e) notice of the pending release of an inmate due to expiration of sentence;

(22) Interpreting services for victims and witnesses when necessary to assist a victim or witness who is hearing impaired or developmentally disabled as defined in section 3 of P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3) to understand questions and frame answers; and

(23) Providing any applicable assistance to victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct who are incarcerated in a State correctional facility that is available to other victims or witnesses.

c. In a case involving a victim of aggravated sexual assault or sexual assault as defined in subsection a. or c. of N.J.S.2C:14-2, the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy or the county prosecutor's office involved in the case shall:

(1) Notify the victim of the victim's right to obtain an approved serological test for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or any other related virus identified as a probable causative agent of AIDS, and assist the victim, or refer the victim for assistance, in obtaining a test and appropriate counseling and medical care;

(2) Notify the victim of the victim's right to obtain a court order pursuant to subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1993, c.364 (C.2C:43-2.2) requiring the offender to submit to an approved serological test for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or any other related virus identified as a probable causative agent of AIDS in the event that the offender is indicted, formally charged, convicted or adjudicated delinquent;

(3) Communicate the request of a victim who agrees to seek an order pursuant to subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1993, c.364 (C.2C:43-2.2) to the prosecutor handling the case and notify the victim or arrange for the victim to be notified of the test result; and

(4) Assist the victim in applying to the Victims of Crime Compensation Office for compensation for the costs of testing, counseling and medical care.

d. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Health, the Superintendent of State Police and representatives of providers of sexual assault services, to be designated by the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, coordinate the establishment of standard protocols for the provision of information and services to victims of sexual assault, and shall make such protocols available to victims upon request, except that the provision of information and services with regard to emergency contraception and sexually transmitted diseases shall be in accordance with P.L.2005, c.50 (C.26:2H-12.6b et al.).

e. In a case involving a victim of human trafficking as defined in section 1 of P.L.2005, c.77 (C.2C:13-8), the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy or the county prosecutor's office involved in the case shall ensure that the victim of human trafficking obtains assistance in receiving any available benefits or services, including assistance in receiving any necessary

certifications or endorsements needed to be recognized as having federal T non-immigrant status for the purpose of receiving any federal benefits or services available pursuant to the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003," 22 U.S.C. s. 7101 et seq.

f. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Health, the Superintendent of State Police and representatives of providers of services to victims of human trafficking, to be designated by the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, coordinate the establishment of standard protocols for the provision of information and services to victims of human trafficking, including coordination of efforts with the appropriate federal authorities pursuant to the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003," 22 U.S.C. s. 7101 et seq. and shall make such protocols available to victims upon request.

g. The Attorney General, shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Corrections, promulgate standards to ensure that the rights of female crime victims incarcerated in State correctional facilities are enforced. The standards shall include a requirement that unannounced visits be made to the facilities housing female inmates and random surveys be conducted for the purpose of identifying inmates who are the victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct; an inmate who is determined to be a victim shall be informed of the available services set forth in subsection b. of this section and, upon request, be provided with any of these services. An inmate chosen by inmates in a housing unit as the liaison between the correctional facility administration and the inmate population shall be provided with a copy of this section of law. The liaison also shall be provided with a summary of the assistance and services available pursuant to subsection b. of this section for dissemination to the inmates in the housing unit.

h. The Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy shall issue, upon request of the Office of Trial and Criminal Justice Process in the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance, reports regarding the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy's performance of its duties as may be requested, and all State departments and agencies, boards, commissions, and authorities, as well as municipal and county governing bodies, boards, commissions, and authorities, shall cooperate fully in the preparation of any reports to the extent required and appropriate.

12. Section 7 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-55) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-55 Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program Coordinating Council.

7. a. The Attorney General shall establish a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program Coordinating Council comprised of: the Attorney General, the Director of the Division on Women, the Chief of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, the Executive Director of the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and the Executive Director of the New Jersey Board of Nursing, or their respective designees; a representative from the New Jersey County Prosecutor's Association; and the program coordinators appointed or designated pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-51).

The Attorney General, through the sexual assault unit established pursuant to section 8 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-56), and in consultation with the coordinating council, shall oversee the Statewide Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program and identify and obtain any State and federal funding available to supplement the funds appropriated to operate the program.

b. The coordinating council shall review the effectiveness of the services provided by the State to victims of sexual assault and make recommendations to the Attorney General for any

needed changes in the standards, regulations or State policy concerning the provision of victim services.

13. Section 8 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-56) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-56 Sexual assault unit, Department of Law and Public Safety.

8. The Attorney General shall establish a sexual assault unit within the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety which shall include a sexual assault investigator and a certified forensic sexual assault nurse examiner.

The unit shall consult with the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance in its oversight of the operation of the county sexual assault nurse examiner programs, and provide assistance to counties in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assaults. The unit shall review all complaints received regarding a county's investigation and prosecution of a sexual assault and shall provide recommendations to the Attorney General regarding the county's investigation and prosecution of the case. The unit also shall provide training to law enforcement officials and county prosecutors, on an ongoing basis, in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault. Any training the unit may provide to county prosecutors and assistant county prosecutors shall comply with the requirements of section 1 of P.L.2021, c.66 (C.52:4B-54.2).

14. Section 1 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.52:17B-237) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:17B-237 Commission on Human Trafficking.

1. a. There is hereby created, in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety, a commission to be known as the Commission on Human Trafficking, consisting of 17 members as follows: the Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee; the Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee; the Commissioner of Human Services, or the commissioner's designee; a county prosecutor, appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the County Prosecutors Association of the State of New Jersey; one member of the New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force established within the Department of Law and Public Safety, designated by the Attorney General; the Executive Director of the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance or the executive director's designee; two public members appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Senate President, one representing law enforcement and one representing a victim's assistance organization; one public member appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Senate Minority Leader representing either a non-profit health care facility or mental health services; two public members appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly, one representing law enforcement and one representing a victim's assistance organization; one public member appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Assembly Minority Leader representing either a non-profit health care facility or mental health services; and five public members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of a child advocacy organization concerning missing, abducted, or exploited children, and one of whom shall be a human trafficking survivor. All public members shall have experience with, possess a background in, or demonstrate a specialized knowledge of, the legal, policy, educational, social, or psychological aspects of human trafficking.

b. (1) Of the public members first appointed:

(a) the following shall serve for a term of three years: one member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate President; one member appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly; and two members appointed by the Governor; and

(b) the following shall serve for a term of two years: one member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate President; one member appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly; each member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate and Assembly Minority Leaders; and three members appointed by the Governor.

(c) Upon the conclusion of the initial terms, each public member shall be appointed for a term of three years.

(2) Each member appointed shall hold office for the term of appointment and until a successor shall have been appointed and qualified.

(3) Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be filled by appointment in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

c. (1) The commission shall organize upon the appointment of a majority of its authorized membership. The members shall elect one of the members to serve as chair and vice-chair, and the chair may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the commission.

(2) The commission shall meet at those times and places within the State of New Jersey as the commission shall determine. A majority of the commission's authorized membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business, for the performance of any duty, or for the exercise of any power of the commission.

d. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be eligible for reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the commission for its purposes.

e. The Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety shall, at the direction of the Attorney General, provide legal, stenographic, technical, clerical, and other staff and resource assistance to the commission, and additionally the commission may incur expenses as may be necessary in order to perform its duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for its purposes.

f. It shall be the duty of the commission to:

(1) Evaluate the existing law concerning human trafficking and the enforcement thereof, and to make recommendations for legislation, if appropriate;

(2) Review existing victim assistance programs and analyze the costs, organization, and availability of these services for victims of human trafficking and to make recommendations for legislation, if appropriate;

(3) Promote a coordinated response by public and private resources for victims of human trafficking; and

(4) Develop mechanisms to promote public awareness of human trafficking, victim remedies and services, and trafficking prevention including the creation of a public awareness sign promoting the national, 24-hour toll-free hotline telephone service on human trafficking described under section 18 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-11), and the promotion of training courses and other educational materials for use by persons required under section 19 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-12) to undergo training on the handling of and response procedures for suspected human trafficking activities.

g. The commission shall report annually to the Governor and to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), its activities, as well as its findings and recommendations for any needed new services or resources for victims of human trafficking, and any proposed changes to the current law concerning human trafficking.

15. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved October 17, 2023.