

ASSEMBLY HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1443

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 3, 2020

The Assembly Human Services Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1443.

This bill requires suicide prevention training both as a condition of initial mental health licensure and as an ongoing requirement for mental health practitioners in the State. The bill requires that new applicants for licensure as a mental health practitioner complete a minimum of four hours of suicide prevention training and submit proof of completion to the appropriate State Board of Examiners or Committee. Following their licensure, mental health practitioners are to complete a minimum of four hours of suicide prevention training every six years. Mental health practitioners who are already licensed to practice on the bill's effective date will be required to complete a minimum of four hours of suicide prevention training within one year following the bill's effective date, and every six years thereafter, and provide proof of completion to the appropriate State Board of Examiners or Committee.

The bill defines "mental health practitioner" as a clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist, alcohol and drug counselor, professional counselor, associate counselor, rehabilitation counselor, clinical mental health counselor, psychologist, or psychoanalyst who is licensed or otherwise authorized to practice pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised Statutes. The bill defines "suicide prevention training" as a training program, provided online, in person, or through telephonic means, concerning the prevention, assessment, screening, treatment, and management of suicide in the clinical context that has been approved by the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

The bill requires the Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs to establish a list of approved suicide prevention training programs and a protocol by which providers of suicide prevention training may seek approval of their training programs by the division.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.