

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 2447

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 7, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

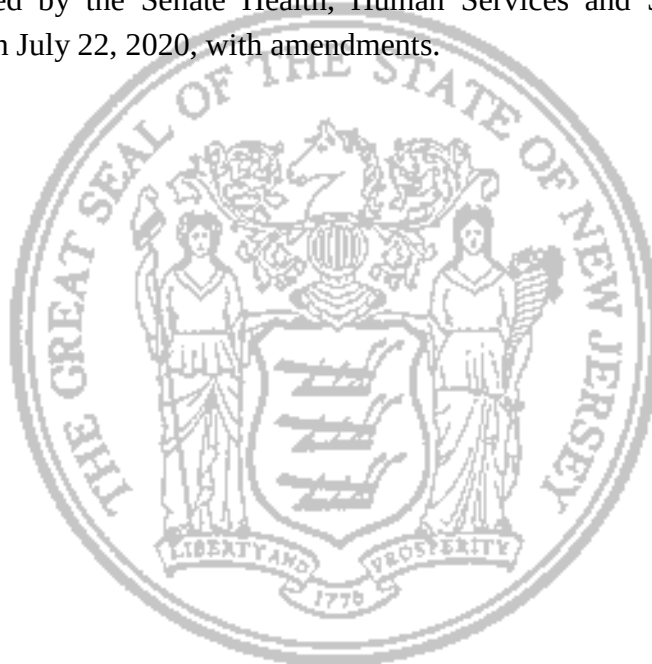
Senators Gopal, Holzapfel, O'Scanlon, Madden and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Establishes toll free helpline for first responders and health care workers experiencing mental health issues related to COVID-19 pandemic.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on July 22, 2020, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/27/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning ¹**post-traumatic stress disorder and** mental
 2 health issues related to¹ the coronavirus disease 2019 and
 3 supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

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

7
 8 1. a. The ¹**Department of Health** Division of Mental Health
 9 and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services¹ shall
 10 establish ¹**,** in coordination with University Behavioral HealthCare
 11 of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,¹ a toll free
 12 helpline for first responders ¹**,** and¹ health care workers ¹**,** and
 13 other frontline workers¹ experiencing ¹**post-traumatic stress**
 14 **disorder** mental health issues¹ due to their work during the
 15 coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic ¹, which mental health issues
 16 may include, but shall not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder,
 17 anxiety, depression, and substance use disorder. In developing the
 18 helpline, the division shall be authorized to utilize or expand
 19 existing mental health resources available through the division, and
 20 shall be further authorized to consult or contract with an appropriate
 21 third party entity¹ .

22 b. The helpline shall be accessible 24 hours a day, seven days
 23 per week and shall respond to calls from first responders, health
 24 care workers, ¹**other frontline workers,**¹ and their families. The
 25 operators of the helpline shall seek to identify first responders,
 26 health care workers, ¹**other frontline workers,**¹ and ¹members of¹
 27 their families who should be referred to further peer support and
 28 counseling services ¹**,**¹ and provide ¹appropriate¹ referrals.

29 c. To the greatest extent possible, the operators of the help line
 30 ¹**,**¹ shall be ¹:¹ (1) familiar with ¹**post-traumatic stress disorder**
 31 and the emotional and psychological tensions, depressions, and
 32 anxieties¹ the mental health issues commonly experienced by first
 33 responders, health care workers, and their families, including post-
 34 traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and substance use
 35 disorder, as well as the aspects of those mental health issues that
 36 are¹ unique to first responders, health care workers, ¹**other**
 37 **frontline workers,**¹ and their families ¹:¹ or (2) trained to provide
 38 counseling services involving marriage and family life, substance
 39 ¹**abuse** use disorder¹ , personal stress management, and other
 40 emotional or psychological disorders or conditions which may be
 41 likely to adversely affect the personal and ¹**service related**
 42 service-related¹ well-being of first responders, health care workers,
 43 ¹**other frontline workers,**¹ and their families.

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

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted July 22, 2020.

- 1 d. The ¹‘[Department of Health and Rutgers, The State
2 University of New Jersey] Division of Mental Health and Addiction
3 Services in the Department of Human Services¹ shall ¹‘[provide for
4 the confidentiality of] ensure¹ the names ¹and identities¹ of the
5 persons calling, the information discussed, and any referrals for
6 further peer support or counseling ¹are kept confidential¹ ;
7 provided, however, the ¹‘[Department of Health and Rutgers, The
8 State University of New Jersey] division¹ may establish guidelines
9 providing for the tracking of any person who exhibits a severe
10 emotional or psychological disorder or condition which the operator
11 handling the call reasonably believes might result in harm to the
12 first responder, health care worker, ¹‘[other frontline worker,]’¹ or
13 any other person.
14
- 15 2. The Commissioner of ¹‘[Health] Human Services¹ shall
16 adopt rules and regulations, in accordance with the “Administrative
17 Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as are
18 necessary to effectuate the provisions of this act.
19
- 20 3. This act shall take effect immediately.