

[Second Reprint]
SENATE, No. 2958

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN

District 20 (Union)

Senator NELLIE POU

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Corrado, Gopal and Ruiz

SYNOPSIS

Requires institutions of higher education to implement suicide prevention programs and raise awareness of mental health services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As amended by the Senate on December 20, 2021.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/9/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning suicide prevention programs at institutions of
2 higher education and amending P.L.2016, c.18.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2016, c.18 (C.18A:3B-73) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. An institution of higher education shall have individuals
10 with training and experience in mental health issues who focus on
11 reducing student suicides and attempted suicides available on
12 campus or remotely by telephone or other means for students 24
13 hours a day, seven days a week. The individuals shall also work
14 with, and annually train, faculty and staff on ways to recognize the
15 signs of depression and the warning signs and risk factors
16 associated with student suicide, and on the referral of students to
17 crisis hotlines and mental health screenings.

18 b. No later than 15 days following the beginning of each
19 semester, an institution of higher education shall transmit to each
20 student via electronic mail the contact information of the
21 individuals required pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

22 c. A four-year institution of higher education shall require all
23 students who serve as resident assistants to receive annual training
24 on the signs of depression, the warning signs and risk factors
25 associated with college student suicide, the referral of students to
26 campus mental health resources, and responding to students in
27 crisis. The training shall be developed by a licensed mental health
28 professional with experience in treating depression in college
29 students.

30 d. An institution of higher education shall annually conduct a
31 mental health public awareness campaign on campus designed to:

32 (1) provide students with information on depression and suicide;

33 (2) raise awareness about the mental health services available on
34 and off campus; and

35 (3) reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health
36 services.

37 e. The ¹["governing board"] president¹ of an institution of
38 higher education ¹, or a designee,¹ shall establish a mental health
39 crisis assessment and response plan. The purpose of the plan shall
40 be to act as the official protocol to be used by campus staff, faculty,
41 and resident assistants in the case of four-year institutions, to
42 identify, assess, and respond to a student who is experiencing a
43 mental health crisis. The plan shall include an assessment, every
44 five years, of elements of the campus environment that might be
45 used in a suicide attempt including, but not limited to: access to

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 SHI committee amendments adopted December 9, 2021.

²Senate floor amendments adopted December 20, 2021.

1 building rooftops, balconies, windows, and bridges; access to toxic
2 substances including chemicals in campus laboratories; and access
3 to drugs, alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, and firearms.

4 ²f. No campus staff, faculty, or resident assistant at an
5 institution of higher education shall be held liable for any good faith
6 act or omission consistent with the provisions of this section. For
7 purposes of this section, good faith shall not include willful
8 misconduct, gross negligence, or recklessness.²

9 (cf: P.L.2016, c.18, s.2)

10

11 2. This act shall take effect immediately.