

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3127

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 5, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH A. LAGANA

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

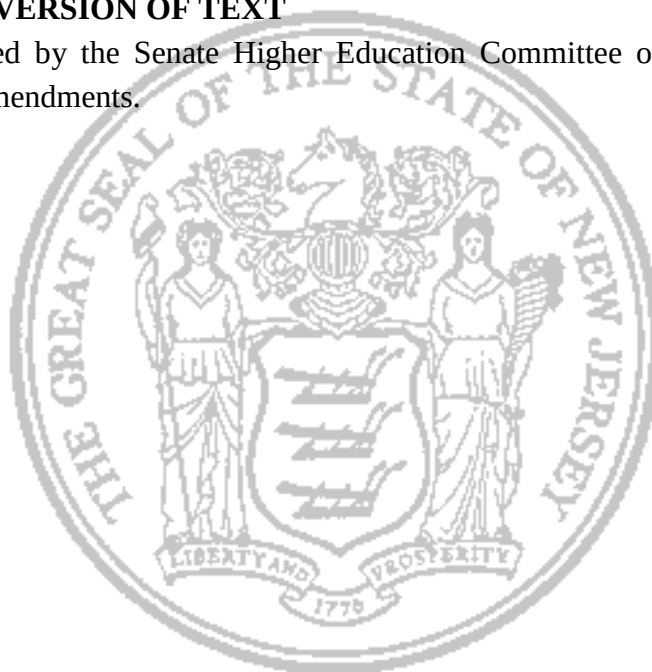
Senators Corrado, Pou, Cunningham and O'Scanlon

SYNOPSIS

Requires institutions of higher education to provide students with access to mental health care programs and services and to establish a hotline to provide information concerning the availability of those services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Higher Education Committee on December 9, 2021, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/6/2022)

1 **AN ACT** concerning the mental health care programs and services
 2 offered by institutions of higher education and supplementing
 3 chapter 61D of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

7
 8 1. a. Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year and in each
 9 academic year thereafter, a public and independent institution of
 10 higher education shall ¹:

11 (1)¹ ensure that all ¹on-campus¹ students have access to campus-
 12 based mental health care programs and services ¹**[,]**;

13 (2) provide assistance and referrals to mental health support
 14 services to any student unable to access on-campus services;¹ and
 15 ¹**[shall]** (3)¹ provide each newly-enrolled student with information
 16 concerning the location and availability of those programs and
 17 services.

18 b. Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, each public
 19 and independent institution of higher education shall establish and
 20 maintain, on a 24-hour basis, a toll-free telephone hotline for
 21 students. The hotline shall receive and respond to calls from
 22 students seeking counseling for depression, anxiety, stress, or other
 23 psychological or emotional tension, trauma, or disorder. The
 24 operators of the hotline shall seek to identify those callers who
 25 should be referred to additional counseling services, and to provide
 26 such referrals.

27 The number for the hotline shall be posted in each dormitory,
 28 library, and student center, and any other facility or area on campus
 29 that the institution determines to be appropriate.

30 c. The operators of the hotline shall be, to the greatest extent
 31 possible, persons who by experience or education are (1) familiar
 32 with the emotional and psychological tensions, depressions, and
 33 anxieties unique to higher education students; or (2) trained to
 34 provide counseling services involving substance abuse, personal
 35 stress management, and other emotional or psychological disorders
 36 or conditions which may be likely to adversely affect the well-being
 37 of students.

38 ¹d. An institution of higher education may satisfy the hotline
 39 requirement established pursuant to subsection b. of this section by
 40 providing each student with the hotline number for the National
 41 Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the NJ Hopeline, or any 24/7 mental
 42 health hotline deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Higher
 43 Education. In addition to providing students with the hotline
 44 numbers, the institution shall post the hotline numbers in each

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.

1 dormitory, library, and student center, and any other facility or area
2 on campus that the institution determines to be appropriate.¹

3

4 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
5 the 2021-2022 academic year.