

[First Reprint]

**ASSEMBLY, No. 1176**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**220th LEGISLATURE**

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

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**District 27 (Essex and Morris)**

**Assemblyman JAMES J. KENNEDY**

**District 22 (Middlesex, Somerset and Union)**

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**SYNOPSIS**

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

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Assembly Higher Education Committee on February 3, 2022, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/16/2022)

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. <sup>1</sup>~~【The】~~ These<sup>1</sup> individuals <sup>1</sup>with  
14 training and experience in mental health issues<sup>1</sup> shall also work  
15 with, and annually train, faculty and staff on ways to recognize the  
16 signs of depression and the warning signs and risk factors  
17 associated with student suicide, and on the referral of students to  
18 crisis hotlines and mental health screenings.

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

23 <sup>1</sup>An institution of higher education may satisfy this requirement  
24 by providing each student with the hotline number for the National  
25 Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the NJ Hopeline, or any 24/7 mental  
26 health hotline deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Higher  
27 Education. In addition to providing students with the hotline  
28 numbers, the institution shall post the hotline numbers in each  
29 dormitory, library, and student center, and any other facility or area  
30 on campus that the institution determines to be appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

31 c. A four-year institution of higher education shall require all  
32 students who serve as resident assistants to receive annual training  
33 on the signs of depression, the warning signs and risk factors  
34 associated with college student suicide, the referral of students to  
35 campus mental health resources, and responding to students in  
36 crisis. The training shall be developed by a licensed mental health  
37 professional with experience in treating depression in college  
38 students.

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

- 41 (1) provide students with information on depression and suicide;  
42 (2) raise awareness about the mental health services available on  
43 and off campus; and

**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:

<sup>1</sup>Assembly AHI committee amendments adopted February 3, 2022.

1       (3) reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health  
2 services.  
3       e. The president of an institution of higher education, or a  
4 designee, shall establish a mental health crisis assessment and  
5 response plan. The purpose of the plan shall be to act as the official  
6 protocol to be used by campus staff, faculty, and resident assistants  
7 in the case of four-year institutions, to identify, assess, and respond  
8 to a student who is experiencing a mental health crisis. The plan  
9 shall include an assessment, every five years, of elements of the  
10 campus environment that might be used in a suicide attempt  
11 including, but not limited to: access to building rooftops, balconies,  
12 windows, and bridges; access to toxic substances including  
13 chemicals in campus laboratories; and access to drugs, alcohol,  
14 controlled dangerous substances, and firearms.  
15       <sup>1</sup>f. No campus staff member, faculty member, or resident  
16 assistant at an institution of higher education shall be held liable for  
17 any good faith act or omission consistent with the provisions of this  
18 section. For purposes of this section, good faith shall not include  
19 willful misconduct, gross negligence, or recklessness.<sup>1</sup>  
20 (cf: P.L.2016, c.18, s.2)  
21  
22       2. This act shall take effect <sup>1</sup>**[immediately]** in the first full  
23 academic year next following the date of enactment<sup>1</sup>.