

[Second Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1176

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

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Assemblyman Rooney, Assemblywomen Park, Quijano, Mosquera,
Senators Corrado, Gopal, Ruiz, Codey, Diegnan, Schepisi, Zwicker and
Assemblyman McKeon**

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 Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee on June 20, 2023, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2023)

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. ¹~~【The】~~ ²~~【These】~~ individuals¹
14 Individuals² ¹with training and experience in mental health issues¹
15 shall also work with, and annually train, faculty and staff on ways
16 to recognize the signs of depression and the warning signs and risk
17 factors associated with student suicide, and on the referral of
18 students to 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 ¹An 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.¹

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:

¹Assembly AHI committee amendments adopted February 3, 2022.

²Senate SBA committee amendments adopted June 20, 2023.

- 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 ¹f. 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.¹
20 (cf: P.L.2016, c.18, s.2)
- 21
- 22 2. This act shall take effect ¹【immediately】 in the first full
23 academic year next following the date of enactment¹.