SENATE, No. 1207

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator JAMES BEACH
District 6 (Burlington and Camden)
Senator MICHAEL L. TESTA, JR.
District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senators Greenstein and McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Requires Sexual Assault Response Team to include person trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities; designated as “Harrison’s Law.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.
AN ACT concerning Sexual Assault Response Teams, designated as “Harrison’s Law,” and amending P.L.2001, c.81.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 6 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-54) is amended to read as follows:

6. a. The county prosecutor’s office in each county shall establish a Sexual Assault Response Team or shall enter into a collaborative agreement with another county to share the services of that county’s response team. The response team shall be comprised of: a certified forensic sexual assault nurse examiner, a rape care advocate from the county program established, or designated by the Division on Women in the Department of Children and Families, as provided under section 3 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-51), a person who is trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities, and a law enforcement official. The response team shall:

(1) respond to a report of sexual assault at the request of a victim of sexual assault pursuant to guidelines established by the Attorney General pursuant to section 17 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-60); provided however, a person who is trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities shall only be required to respond to a report of sexual assault if the victim has a developmental disability; and

(2) provide treatment, counseling, legal, and forensic medical services to a victim of sexual assault in accordance with the standard protocols developed by the Attorney General pursuant to subsection d. of section 6 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-44).

b. Each member of the response team shall complete the standardized education and training program developed by the program coordinator pursuant to subsection e. of section 4 of P.L.2001, c.81 (C.52:4B-52).

(cf: P.L.2012, c.16, s.135)

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month after enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill, designated as “Harrison’s Law,” requires every Sexual Assault Response Team to include a person trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities.

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.
Under current law, the county prosecutor’s office in each county is required to establish a Sexual Assault Response Team or enter into an agreement with another county to share the services of that county’s response team. Current law requires the response team to be comprised of a certified forensic sexual assault nurse examiner, a rape care advocate, and a law enforcement official. This bill requires the response team to also include a person who is trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities. Under the bill, a person who is trained in interacting with persons with developmental disabilities is only required to respond to a report of sexual assault if the victim has a developmental disability.