

1877

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

January 12, 2011

Introduced by M. of A. JEFFRIES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the civil rights law, in relation to regulating the collection, recording and disclosing of confidential information by state employees obtained by state employees in the course of official duties

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Section 1. The civil rights law is amended by adding a new section
2 50-f to read as follows:
3 S 50-F. DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION BY STATE EMPLOYEES. 1.
4 DEFINITIONS. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, "CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION" MEANS
5 ANY INFORMATION MAINTAINED OR OBTAINED BY A STATE AGENCY, STATE OFFICER
6 OR STATE EMPLOYEE CONCERNING AN INDIVIDUAL'S HEALTH OR DISABILITY
7 STATUS, INCOME TAX RECORDS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, STATUS AS A VICTIM OF
8 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, STATUS AS A CRIME VICTIM OR WITNESS, PUBLIC ASSIST-
9 ANCE STATUS, IMMIGRATION STATUS OR ANY INFORMATION THAT IS OTHERWISE
10 PROTECTED FROM DISCLOSURE BY ANY PROVISION OF FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL
11 LAW.
12 2. PROCEDURE FOR THE DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.
13 A. EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH B OF THIS SUBDIVISION, NO
14 STATE OFFICER OR STATE EMPLOYEE SHALL DISCLOSE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
15 TO ANYONE EXCEPT ANOTHER STATE OFFICER OR STATE EMPLOYEE ACTING IN THE
16 SCOPE OF HIS OR HER OFFICIAL DUTIES.
17 B. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED BY A STATE OFFICER OR
18 STATE EMPLOYEE ONLY IF:
19 (I) THE STATE AGENCY EMPLOYING SUCH OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE IS REQUIRED BY
20 LAW TO DISCLOSE SUCH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND PROVIDED THAT SUCH
21 DISCLOSURE IS LIMITED TO THAT REQUIRED BY LAW; OR
22 (II) THE STATE AGENCY EMPLOYING SUCH OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN
23 AUTHORIZED, IN WRITING SIGNED BY THE INDIVIDUAL OR, IF THE INDIVIDUAL IS

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 A MINOR OR OTHERWISE INCOMPETENT, SIGNED BY THE INDIVIDUAL'S PARENT OR
2 LEGAL GUARDIAN, TO DISCLOSE SUCH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, AND PROVIDED
3 THAT THE DISCLOSURE IS LIMITED TO THAT AUTHORIZED IN WRITING BY THE
4 INDIVIDUAL; OR

5 (III) THE DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS NECESSARY TO COOP-
6 ERATE WITH A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OR AGENCIES INVESTIGATING THAT CRIM-
7 INAL ACTIVITY.

8 3. PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING AND RECORDING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.
9 THIS SUBDIVISION SHALL APPLY TO ANY DOCUMENTATION, QUESTIONNAIRE, INTER-
10 VIEW SHEET OR OTHER OFFICIAL FORM USED TO APPLY FOR OR OTHERWISE ACCESS
11 BENEFITS OR SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE STATE.

12 A. NO STATE OFFICER OR STATE EMPLOYEE SHALL MAKE INQUIRY REGARDING
13 COLLECTING OR RECORDING OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OF ANY INDIVIDUAL,
14 WHEN SUCH INDIVIDUAL, ON HIS OR HER BEHALF OR ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER, IS
15 APPLYING FOR OR IS RECEIVING ANY SERVICE OR BENEFIT PROVIDED BY THE
16 STATE, UNLESS SUCH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED BY
17 FEDERAL OR STATE LAW TO BE PROVIDED AS A CONDITION OF RECEIPT OF SUCH
18 SERVICE OR BENEFIT.

19 B. IF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL OR STATE LAW TO
20 BE PROVIDED AS A CONDITION OF RECEIPT OF A SERVICE OR BENEFIT PROVIDED
21 BY THE STATE, THE STATE OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE SHALL MAKE ONLY THOSE
22 INQUIRIES NECESSARY TO DETERMINE IF AN APPLICANT OR RECIPIENT IS QUALI-
23 FIED FOR AND OTHERWISE MEETS THE CONDITIONS FOR RECEIPT OF SUCH SERVICE
24 OR BENEFIT.

25 4. PENALTIES FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE. ANY STATE OFFICER OR EMPLOY-
26 EE WHO VIOLATES THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE SUBJECT TO A
27 FINE OF NOT LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS. ANY STATE OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE
28 SHALL BE SUBJECT TO A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR
29 EACH VIOLATION OCCURRING WITHIN FIVE YEARS OF A PRIOR VIOLATION.

30 5. OTHER LAWS RESPECTING CONFIDENTIALITY. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION
31 SHALL BE DEEMED TO LIMIT, ABRIDGE OR OTHERWISE AFFECT ANY OTHER
32 PROTECTION IN FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL LAW RESPECTING THE CONFIDENTIALITY
33 OF INFORMATION.

34 6. SEVERABILITY. IF ANY SUBDIVISION, SENTENCE, CLAUSE, PHRASE OR OTHER
35 PORTION OF THIS SECTION IS, FOR ANY REASON, DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL OR
36 INVALID, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY ANY COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION,
37 SUCH PORTION SHALL BE DEEMED SEVERABLE, AND SUCH UNCONSTITUTIONALITY OR
38 INVALIDITY SHALL NOT AFFECT THE VALIDITY OF THE REMAINING PORTIONS OF
39 THIS SECTION, WHICH REMAINING PORTIONS SHALL CONTINUE IN FULL FORCE AND
40 EFFECT.

41 S 2. Section 51 of the civil rights law, as amended by chapter 674 of
42 the laws of 1995, is amended to read as follows:

43 S 51. Action for injunction and for damages. 1. Any person whose
44 name, portrait, picture or voice is used within this state for advertis-
45 ing purposes or for the purposes of trade without the written consent
46 first obtained as above provided may maintain an equitable action in the
47 supreme court of this state against the person, firm or corporation so
48 using his name, portrait, picture or voice, to prevent and restrain the
49 use thereof; and may also sue and recover damages for any injuries
50 sustained by reason of such use and if the defendant shall have knowing-
51 ly used such person's name, portrait, picture or voice in such manner as
52 is forbidden or declared to be unlawful by section fifty of this arti-
53 cle, the jury, in its discretion, may award exemplary damages. But noth-
54 ing contained in this article shall be so construed as to prevent any
55 person, firm or corporation from selling or otherwise transferring any
56 material containing such name, portrait, picture or voice in whatever

1 medium to any user of such name, portrait, picture or voice, or to any
2 third party for sale or transfer directly or indirectly to such a user,
3 for use in a manner lawful under this article; nothing contained in this
4 article shall be so construed as to prevent any person, firm or corpo-
5 ration, practicing the profession of photography, from exhibiting in or
6 about his or its establishment specimens of the work of such establish-
7 ment, unless the same is continued by such person, firm or corporation
8 after written notice objecting thereto has been given by the person
9 portrayed; and nothing contained in this article shall be so construed
10 as to prevent any person, firm or corporation from using the name,
11 portrait, picture or voice of any manufacturer or dealer in connection
12 with the goods, wares and merchandise manufactured, produced or dealt in
13 by him which he has sold or disposed of with such name, portrait,
14 picture or voice used in connection therewith; or from using the name,
15 portrait, picture or voice of any author, composer or artist in
16 connection with his literary, musical or artistic productions which he
17 has sold or disposed of with such name, portrait, picture or voice used
18 in connection therewith. Nothing contained in this section shall be
19 construed to prohibit the copyright owner of a sound recording from
20 disposing of, dealing in, licensing or selling that sound recording to
21 any party, if the right to dispose of, deal in, license or sell such
22 sound recording has been conferred by contract or other written document
23 by such living person or the holder of such right. Nothing contained in
24 the foregoing sentence shall be deemed to abrogate or otherwise limit
25 any rights or remedies otherwise conferred by federal law or state law.

26 2. A. ANY PERSON WHOSE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION WAS DISCLOSED IN
27 VIOLATION OF SECTION FIFTY-F OF THIS ARTICLE MAY MAINTAIN AN EQUITABLE
28 ACTION IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THIS STATE AGAINST THE PERSON OR PERSONS,
29 FIRM OR CORPORATION DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCLOSING SUCH CONFIDEN-
30 TIAL INFORMATION, TO PREVENT AND RESTRAIN THE USE THEREOF.

31 B. IN ADDITION TO SUING FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH A
32 OF THIS SUBDIVISION, AN AGGRIEVED PARTY MAY INSTITUTE A CIVIL ACTION
33 AGAINST THE PERSON OR PERSONS, FIRM, OR CORPORATION DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE
34 FOR DISCLOSING THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FOR THE GREATER OF HIS OR
35 HER ACTUAL DAMAGES OR ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS. IN ADDITION TO ANY MONETARY
36 AWARD, AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL IS ENTITLED TO COSTS AND HIS OR HER ACTU-
37 AL ATTORNEYS' FEES.

38 S 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
39 it shall have become a law.