

360

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   A S S E M B L Y

(PREFILED)

January 7, 2015

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Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to due process procedures for all adults with mental disabilities

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

1     Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "protection  
2 of adults with mental disabilities act".

3     S 2. Legislative findings and intent. Certain federal and state laws  
4 and regulations currently provide various due process protections for  
5 certain categories of persons with mental disabilities. For example,  
6 the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provides a child  
7 or parents of a child with a disability important due process  
8 protections, including the right to an impartial hearing to challenge a  
9 determination regarding the appropriate setting for a child with a disa-  
10 bility. New York state also provides substantial due process protections  
11 for the parents of a child with a disability who needs residential care  
12 while this child is in school.

13     However, when a mentally disabled individual reaches the age of twen-  
14 ty-one, their due process protections become significantly diminished  
15 or, in some cases, end completely. Specifically, those developmentally  
16 disabled adults in transitional care who reach the age of twenty-one on  
17 or before June 30, 1996 have minimal due process protections pursuant to  
18 section 13.38 of the mental hygiene law, and those who reached age twen-  
19 ty-one on or after July 1, 1996 receive no due process protections. Some  
20 of New York's most vulnerable adult populations, including those who  
21 remain continuously disabled and continuously in need of residential or  
22 other forms of care, thus lose important due process protections simply  
23 because of their age.

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

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1 The legislature recognizes that inappropriate or ineffective place-  
2 ments and/or services for persons with mental disabilities can have  
3 devastating effects for those persons impacted, including abuse, self-  
4 harm, improper medication or even death. Additionally, the legislature  
5 recognizes the harm a person with mental disabilities can suffer from  
6 the disruption to his/her current treatment needs, home life and famil-  
7 iar surroundings that an inappropriate change in placement, or an  
8 improper change in services, entails. Moreover, it is increasingly the  
9 policy of the state of New York to afford persons with disabilities the  
10 opportunity to participate in their treatment and residential placement  
11 decisions, and to obtain their or their guardian's consent prior to any  
12 changes of placement.

13 The legislature hereby finds that New York state must ensure that all  
14 mentally disabled adults are afforded necessary and basic due process  
15 protections, and fair and meaningful due process proceedings, relating  
16 to proposed changes in placement, or proposed changes in services  
17 rendered, to those mentally disabled adults under the care of New York  
18 state agencies to ensure that appropriate, effective treatment and  
19 placements are provided for this highly vulnerable adult population.

20 In order to ensure that New York state is providing the most appropri-  
21 ate setting and services for all persons with mental disabilities, the  
22 legislature hereby finds that it is incumbent upon New York state to  
23 institute uniform minimum due process protections for all persons with  
24 mental disabilities age twenty-one and older. These protections provide,  
25 in part, for fair and meaningful due process proceedings relating to a  
26 proposed change of placement or a proposed change in services by the  
27 offices of the department of mental hygiene, and are intended to supple-  
28 ment and strengthen the patchwork of various protections for adults with  
29 mental disabilities in place under existing laws.

30 S 3. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 13.36  
31 to read as follows:

32 S 13.36 PROTECTION OF ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES.

33 1. DEFINITIONS. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS OTHERWISE EXPRESSLY  
34 STATED OR UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

35 (A) "ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES" MEANS ALL PERSONS WITH A MENTAL  
36 DISABILITY, AS THAT TERM IS DEFINED IN SECTION 1.03 OF THIS CHAPTER, AND  
37 WHO ARE TWENTY-ONE YEARS OLD OR OLDER, OR THE GUARDIAN OR GUARDIANS OR  
38 REPRESENTATIVE OR REPRESENTATIVES OF ANY SUCH PERSON, IF ANY EXIST.

39 (B) "SERVICES" MEANS ANY AND ALL CARE AND TREATMENT RENDERED TO ADULTS  
40 WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES (I) WHO ARE UNDER THE CARE, AUTHORITY, JURIS-  
41 DICTION, SUPERVISION OR CONTROL OF THE VARIOUS OFFICES OF THE DEPART-  
42 MENT, AND/OR (II) WHICH ARE FUNDED IN ANY PART BY ANY OFFICE OF THE  
43 DEPARTMENT. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, "SERVICES" INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT  
44 LIMITED TO, "SERVICES FOR THE MENTALLY DISABLED" AS THAT TERM IS DEFINED  
45 IN SECTION 1.03 OF THIS CHAPTER, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER TREATMENT OF ANY  
46 FORM OR TYPE.

47 (C) "TRIGGERING EVENT" MEANS ANY PROPOSED ACTION, OR DENIAL, BY THE  
48 DEPARTMENT OR ANY OF ITS OFFICES, AS DESCRIBED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF  
49 PARAGRAPH (A) OR SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF PARAGRAPH (B) OF SUBDIVISION TWO OF  
50 THIS SECTION.

51 2. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT; TRIGGERING EVENTS. THE DEPARTMENT, THROUGH ITS  
52 VARIOUS OFFICES AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY OTHER NECESSARY STATE AGENCY  
53 OR OFFICE, WHERE APPLICABLE, SHALL DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, AND ENSURE A  
54 SYSTEM OF MEANINGFUL DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR ADULTS WITH MENTAL  
55 DISABILITIES, AND SHALL DEVELOP AND PROMULGATE REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND  
56 PROCEDURES NECESSARY TO RESOLVE OBJECTIONS BY OR ON BEHALF OF ADULTS

1 WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES IN CONFORMANCE WITH THIS SECTION. SUCH DUE  
2 PROCESS PROTECTIONS SHALL BE AFFORDED TO ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES  
3 WHEN:

4 (A) ANY OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT INITIATES A PROPOSAL WHICH MAY RESULT  
5 IN:

6 (I) A CHANGE IN PLACEMENT FOR AN ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES,  
7 INCLUDING ANY PROPOSED DISCHARGE OR RELOCATION FROM A FACILITY WHERE  
8 SERVICES ARE BEING PROVIDED; OR

9 (II) A REDUCTION, SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF SPECIFIC SERVICES OR  
10 FUNDING WHICH IS BEING PROVIDED TO AN ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES  
11 PURSUANT TO AN INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PLAN, INCLUDING AN INDIVIDUAL-  
12 IZED SERVICES PLAN; AND,

13 (III) A TIMELY OBJECTION TO SUCH PROPOSAL OR PROPOSALS AND A REQUEST  
14 FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL IS MADE BY OR ON BEHALF OF AN ADULT WITH  
15 MENTAL DISABILITIES; OR,

16 (B) ANY OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT:

17 (I) DENIES AN ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES SPECIFIC SERVICES OR A  
18 SPECIFIC PLACEMENT WHICH IS RECOMMENDED FOR THAT INDIVIDUAL PURSUANT TO  
19 AN INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PLAN, INCLUDING AN INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES  
20 PLAN; AND,

21 (II) A TIMELY OBJECTION TO SUCH DENIAL OR DENIALS AND A REQUEST FOR AN  
22 ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL IS MADE BY OR ON BEHALF OF AN ADULT WITH MENTAL  
23 DISABILITIES.

24 3. MINIMUM DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS. DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR ADULTS  
25 WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS OFFICES  
26 SHALL INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE RIGHTS OF ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABILI-  
27 TIES:

28 (A) TO BE PROVIDED WITH ADVANCE WRITTEN NOTICE BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE  
29 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANY TRIGGERING EVENT, WHETHER IT BE A PROPOSED  
30 ACTION OR A DENIAL BY SUCH OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT, WHICH NOTICE SHALL  
31 SET FORTH ALL REASONS AND DOCUMENTATION, IF ANY, IN SUPPORT OF THE  
32 DETERMINATION BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT, AND WHICH SHALL  
33 SPECIFICALLY ADVISE AN ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES AS TO HIS OR HER  
34 RIGHT TO FORMALLY OBJECT IN WRITING AND TO REQUEST AN ADMINISTRATIVE  
35 HEARING WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF RECEIPT OF NOTICE OF THE TRIGGERING  
36 EVENT, AND AS TO THEIR OTHER RIGHTS AS PROVIDED WITHIN THIS SECTION;

37 (B) TO BE REPRESENTED IN ANY PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF  
38 THE DEPARTMENT BY ANY PERSON INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, A PARENT,  
39 GUARDIAN, CORRESPONDENT, ADVOCATE, LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE, THEMSELVES, OR  
40 ANY OTHER PERSON OR REPRESENTATIVE;

41 (C) TO REQUEST, AND TO BE PROVIDED WITH, AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT, IN  
42 A MEANINGFUL FASHION AND AT A REASONABLE TIME NOT LESS THAN FOURTEEN  
43 DAYS FROM THE DATE A WRITTEN REQUEST FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING IS  
44 MADE, ANY OBJECTION TO A TRIGGERING EVENT BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE  
45 DEPARTMENT TO AN IMPARTIAL DECISION MAKER IN THE CONTEXT OF AN EVIDENTI-  
46 ARY HEARING;

47 (D) TO DISCOVER AND OBTAIN, AND HAVE A MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY TO  
48 REVIEW IN ADVANCE OF THE EVIDENTIARY HEARING, ANY DOCUMENTS TO BE USED  
49 BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN SUPPORT OF ITS DETERMINATION  
50 AT SUCH HEARING;

51 (E) TO PRESENT AND ELICIT EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES, AND CONFRONT AND  
52 CROSS-EXAMINE EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES AT SUCH EVIDENTIARY HEARING;

53 (F) TO OBTAIN A REASONABLY PROMPT WRITTEN DETERMINATION BY THE IMPAR-  
54 TIAL HEARING OFFICER, WHICH SHALL BE BASED ON THE EVIDENCE AND TESTIMONY  
55 INTRODUCED AND RENDERED AT THE HEARING, AND IN WHICH IT IS DETERMINED  
56 WHETHER THE TRIGGERING EVENT TAKEN OR PROPOSED BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF

1 THE DEPARTMENT, IF ULTIMATELY ALLOWED, WOULD BE (I) IN THE OVERALL BEST,  
2 INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS OF THE ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES, (II) RESULT  
3 IN APPROPRIATE, EFFECTIVE SERVICES AND/OR PLACEMENT FOR SUCH INDIVIDUAL,  
4 AND (III) SO AS TO BEST ENABLE THEIR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT;

5 (G) TO APPEAL, IF NECESSARY, THE WRITTEN DETERMINATION RENDERED BY THE  
6 IMPARTIAL HEARING OFFICER TO THE COMMISSIONER OF THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF  
7 THE DEPARTMENT, WHO MAY REMAND THE MATTER TO THE HEARING OFFICER FOR  
8 FURTHER REVIEW OR FINDINGS, IF NECESSARY, AND WHO SHALL, AFTER REVIEW OF  
9 THE MATTER, ISSUE A FURTHER WRITTEN DETERMINATION WHICH SHALL BE BINDING  
10 ON THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT AS ITS FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE  
11 DETERMINATION;

12 (H) TO APPEAL, IF NECESSARY, THE FINAL WRITTEN DETERMINATION RENDERED  
13 BY THE COMMISSIONER ON BEHALF OF THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT  
14 BY WAY OF A PROCEEDING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE SEVENTY-EIGHT OF THE CIVIL  
15 PRACTICE LAW AND RULES; AND

16 (I) TO CONTINUED SERVICES, PROGRAMMING, FUNDING AND PLACEMENT BY THE  
17 RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT, OF THE SAME LEVEL AND TYPE AS THAT  
18 PROVIDED BY SUCH OFFICE PRIOR TO THE TRIGGERING EVENT, DURING THE PERIOD  
19 THAT AN OBJECTION BY AN ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES IS UNDERGOING  
20 ADMINISTRATIVE AND/OR APPELLATE REVIEW, UNLESS AS OTHERWISE AGREED TO BY  
21 SUCH OFFICE AND SUCH ADULT WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES OR HIS OR HER GUARD-  
22 IAN OR REPRESENTATIVE.

23 4. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL PREVENT THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS  
24 OFFICES FROM DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS  
25 WHICH ARE NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR ADULTS  
26 WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES SET FORTH BY THIS SECTION, INCLUDING EXPEDITED,  
27 OR INFORMAL (NON-BINDING), DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS THAT MAY BE  
28 AGREED TO BY THE RELEVANT OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT AND SUCH ADULT WITH  
29 MENTAL DISABILITIES OR HIS OR HER GUARDIAN OR REPRESENTATIVE.

30 5. THE MINIMUM DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABIL-  
31 ITIES SET FORTH WITHIN THIS SECTION SHALL SERVE TO SUPPLEMENT AND REIN-  
32 FORCE ANY AND ALL OTHER LAWS OR AUTHORITIES WHICH PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN  
33 RIGHTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED ADULT POPULATION, INCLUDING THE  
34 STATE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT OR APPLICABLE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS,  
35 IF ANY, PERTAINING TO DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR SUCH INDIVIDUALS. IN  
36 THE ABSENCE OF REGULATIONS, THE PROVISIONS OF THE STATE ADMINISTRATIVE  
37 PROCEDURE ACT SHALL CONTROL THE HEARING PROCESS WHERE NOT INCONSISTENT  
38 WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION. THE DEPARTMENT, THROUGH ITS  
39 OFFICES, SHALL TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED  
40 COMPLIANCE WITH ANY APPLICABLE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES TO THE EXTENT THAT  
41 ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION MAY BE DEEMED TO CONFLICT WITH SUCH  
42 AUTHORITIES.

43 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately.