

8307

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

June 19, 2015

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

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to duty to report incidents to 9-1-1 and the county district attorney's office

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

1 Section 1. Section 491 of the social services law, as amended by  
2 section 1 of part B of chapter 501 of the laws of 2012 and subdivision 4  
3 as amended by chapter 126 of the laws of 2014, is amended to read as  
4 follows:

5 S 491. Duty to report incidents. 1. (a) Mandated reporters shall  
6 report allegations of reportable incidents to A 9-1-1 OPERATOR, THE  
7 COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND the vulnerable persons' central  
8 register as established by section four hundred ninety-two of this arti-  
9 cle and in accordance with the requirements set forth therein.

10 (b) Allegations of reportable incidents shall be reported immediately  
11 to A 9-1-1 OPERATOR, THE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND the  
12 vulnerable persons' central register upon discovery. For purposes of  
13 this article, "discovery" occurs when the mandated reporter witnesses a  
14 suspected reportable incident or when another person, including the  
15 vulnerable person, comes before the mandated reporter in the mandated  
16 reporter's professional or official capacity and provides the mandated  
17 reporter with reasonable cause to suspect that the vulnerable person has  
18 been subjected to a reportable incident. A report to the register shall  
19 include the name, title and contact information of every person known to  
20 the mandated reporter to have the same information as the mandated  
21 reporter concerning the reportable incident. [Nothing in this subdivi-  
22 sion shall be construed to prohibit a mandated reporter from contacting  
23 or reporting to law enforcement or emergency services before or after  
24 reporting to the vulnerable persons' central register.]

25 (c) The substance or content of any psychological, psychiatric, thera-  
26 peutic, clinical or medical reports, evaluations or like materials or  
27 information pertaining to the treatment of a patient or client of a  
28 mandatory reporter who reports a reportable incident of such patient or

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

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1 client pursuant to this article, must be provided by such mandatory  
2 reporter upon request of the justice center for the protection of people  
3 with special needs if such records are essential for a full investi-  
4 gation of such allegation, notwithstanding any applicable privilege  
5 which would otherwise bar the disclosure of such materials and records  
6 pursuant to article forty-five of the civil practice law and rules or  
7 other provision of law except applicable federal law governing the  
8 disclosure of patient and related medical records.

9 2. Any person or official required to report allegations of reportable  
10 incidents pursuant to this section may take or cause to be taken color  
11 photographs of visible trauma and the face of the vulnerable person  
12 named in the report and upon the consent of a person authorized to  
13 consent to medical care for the vulnerable person, shall, if medically  
14 indicated, cause to be performed a radiological examination of the  
15 vulnerable person. Any photographs or radiological examinations taken  
16 shall be provided to the justice center for use only for the purposes of  
17 an investigation of a reportable incident.

18 3. (a) Any human services professional required by this article to  
19 report a case of suspected abuse or neglect to A 9-1-1 OPERATOR, THE  
20 COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND the vulnerable persons' central  
21 register who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a  
22 class [A misdemeanor] E FELONY.

23 (b) A mandated reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a  
24 case of suspected abuse or neglect to A 9-1-1 OPERATOR, THE COUNTY  
25 DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND the vulnerable persons' central register  
26 may be subject to termination, subject to any applicable collective  
27 bargaining agreement. Any person or official required by this article to  
28 report a case of suspected abuse or neglect to A 9-1-1 OPERATOR, THE  
29 COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND the vulnerable persons' central  
30 register who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be civilly  
31 liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure.

32 4. A medical or other public or private institution, state agency,  
33 school, facility or provider agency or its vendors or contractors shall  
34 not take any retaliatory personnel action, as such term is defined in  
35 paragraph (e) of subdivision one of section seven hundred forty of the  
36 labor law, against an employee or agent or vendor or contractor because  
37 such employee or agent or vendor or contractor believes that he or she  
38 has reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable person has been  
39 subjected to a reportable incident and that employee or agent or vendor  
40 or contractor therefore makes a report in accordance with this section  
41 and/or cooperated with the investigation of a reportable incident. A  
42 court of competent jurisdiction may grant injunctive relief to any  
43 person determined to have been subjected to such retaliation.

44 5. ALL STATE AND PRIVATE AGENCIES WITH MANDATORY REPORTERS SHALL  
45 RETRAIN ALL STAFF ON REPORTING TO A 9-1-1 OPERATOR AND THE COUNTY  
46 DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND ALL STATE AND PRIVATE WEBSITES, TRAINING  
47 MANUALS, INFORMATIONAL BROCHURES OR PAMPHLETS DIRECTING REPORTING SHALL  
48 STATE THAT SUCH INSTANCES BE REPORTED TO A 9-1-1 OPERATOR AND THE COUNTY  
49 DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE. ALL FORMER POSTERS AND WALLET CARDS AND ANY  
50 OTHER INFORMATION DIRECTING REPORTING OF CRIMES AND EMERGENCIES TO THE  
51 JUSTICE CENTER SHALL BE REMOVED AND REPLACED BY 9-1-1 REPORTING POSTERS,  
52 WALLET CARDS AND ALL OTHER SOURCES THAT SHALL BE LOCATED CONSPICUOUSLY  
53 IN A TIMELY MANNER.

54 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.