

STATE OF NEW YORK

9018--A

IN ASSEMBLY

January 12, 2018

Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to establishing an office of the state medical indemnity fund ombudsman and a medical indemnity fund advisory panel

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Title 4 of article 29-D of the public health law is amended
2 by adding two new sections 2999-k and 2999-l to read as follows:

3 § 2999-k. Medical indemnity fund ombudsman. 1. There is hereby estab-
4 lished an office of the state medical indemnity fund ombudsman for the
5 purpose of receiving and resolving complaints affecting qualified plain-
6 tiffs, where appropriate, referring such complaints to the appropriate
7 agencies and acting in concert with such agencies. The commissioner, in
8 consultation with the superintendent of financial services, shall
9 appoint a full-time medical indemnity fund ombudsman to administer and
10 supervise the office of the state medical indemnity fund ombudsman. The
11 medical indemnity fund ombudsman shall be selected from among individ-
12 uals with expertise and experience in the field of neurological injuries
13 and advocacy, and with such other qualifications as shall be determined
14 by the commissioner, in consultation with the superintendent of finan-
15 cial services. Such ombudsman may, with approval of the commissioner, in
16 consultation with the superintendent of financial services, appoint one
17 or more authorized deputies to assist in his or her duties pursuant to
18 this section; provided, however, that no such deputy shall have any
19 conflict of interest, or be employed by the fund administrator or other
20 party involved in the management of the fund. The medical indemnity fund
21 ombudsman shall, personally or through authorized deputies:

22 (a) identify, investigate and resolve complaints that are made by or
23 on behalf of qualified plaintiffs, and that relate to actions, inactions
24 or decisions that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare or
25 rights of qualified plaintiffs;

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

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1 (b) provide services to assist qualified plaintiffs, or their repre-
2 sentatives, in navigating the fund and understanding the fund's regu-
3 lations, guidelines and procedures;

4 (c) inform qualified plaintiffs, or their representatives, of their
5 rights and means of obtaining the services, supplies and modifications
6 to which they are entitled;

7 (d) analyze and monitor implementation of the laws and regulations
8 relating to the fund; and

9 (e) carry out other such activities as the commissioner, in consulta-
10 tion with the superintendent of financial services, shall determine
11 appropriate.

12 2. Neither the medical indemnity fund ombudsman, nor any of his or her
13 deputies shall disclose to any person outside the office of the state
14 medical indemnity fund ombudsman any information obtained from a quali-
15 fied plaintiff's records without the consent of the qualified plaintiff
16 or his or her representative.

17 3. Within one year of the effective date of this section, and annually
18 thereafter, the medical indemnity fund ombudsman shall submit to the
19 commissioner, the superintendent of financial services, the speaker of
20 the assembly and the temporary president of the senate, a report which
21 shall include, but not be limited to, a detailed summary of the activ-
22 ities of the office of the state medical indemnity fund ombudsman, data
23 regarding the complaints and issues within the fund, the process used in
24 resolving issues, and recommendations for legislative or regulatory
25 amendments to improve the fund.

26 § 2999-1. Medical indemnity fund advisory panel. There is hereby
27 established an advisory panel to be comprised of the commissioner, the
28 superintendent of financial services, qualified plaintiffs or represen-
29 tatives of qualified plaintiffs, physicians, medical suppliers, advoca-
30 tes and other interested parties. The advisory panel shall be
31 co-chaired by the commissioner and the superintendent of financial
32 services, and shall be composed of not less than nine additional members
33 appointed by the governor, of which two shall be appointed upon recom-
34 mendation of the temporary president of the senate and two shall be
35 appointed upon the recommendation of the speaker of the assembly. The
36 advisory panel shall meet biannually, with the first meeting occurring
37 within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this section, to
38 discuss the functioning of the fund and any relevant issues. The commis-
39 sioner and the superintendent of financial services shall consider the
40 input and comments of the advisory panel in drafting and amending regu-
41 lations, guidelines or policies pertaining to the fund administration.

42 § 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
43 have become a law; provided, however, that effective immediately, the
44 addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary
45 for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized
46 and directed to be made and completed on or before such effective date.