

STATE OF NEW YORK

616--A

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. L. ROSENTHAL, LUPARDO, SEAWRIGHT, OTIS, JACKSON, GONZALEZ-ROJAS, KELLES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Correction -- reported and referred to the Committee on Rules -- Rules Committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the correction law, in relation to the rights of pregnant inmates

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

1 Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subdivision 1 and subdivision 2 of section
2 611 of the correction law, paragraph (c) of subdivision 1 as amended by
3 chapter 17 of the laws of 2016 and subdivision 2 as amended by chapter
4 242 of the laws of 1930, are amended and a new subdivision 4 is added to
5 read as follows:

6 (c) No restraints of any kind shall be used when such woman is in
7 labor, admitted to a hospital, institution or clinic for delivery, or
8 recovering after giving birth. Any such personnel as may be necessary to
9 supervise the woman during transport to and from and during her stay at
10 the hospital, institution or clinic shall be provided to ensure adequate
11 care, custody and control of the woman, except that no correctional
12 staff shall be present in the delivery room during the birth of a baby
13 unless requested by the medical staff supervising such delivery or by
14 the woman giving birth. The woman shall be permitted to have at least
15 one support person of her choosing accompany her in the delivery room
16 and when such woman is in labor and recovering after giving birth. A
17 support person shall not need to have visited the woman at a correction-
18 al facility prior to serving as a support person. A person may not be
19 denied eligibility to serve as a support person solely on the basis of a
20 past criminal conviction or that such person is on probation, condi-
21 tional release, parole or post release supervision. Any decision by an

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

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1 agency to deny a woman's request to have a specific person serve as a
2 support person shall be made with reasons specified in writing within
3 five days of her request and promptly provided to the woman. A support
4 person shall be notified immediately after such woman goes into labor,
5 or immediately after a caesarean section or termination is scheduled. If
6 available, a doula, midwife or other birthing support specialist may
7 also assist during labor and delivery in addition to at least one
8 support person of the woman's choosing. Any woman confined in a state or
9 local correctional facility shall receive notice in writing in a
10 language and manner understandable to her about the requirements of this
11 section upon her admission to such state or local correctional facility
12 and again when she is known to be pregnant. The superintendent or sher-
13 iff shall publish notice of the requirements of this section in promi-
14 nent locations where medical care is provided. The superintendent or
15 sheriff or his or her designee shall cause such woman to be subject to
16 return to such institution or local correctional facility as soon after
17 the birth of her child as the state of her health will permit as deter-
18 mined by the medical professional responsible for the care of such
19 woman. If such woman is confined in a local correctional facility, the
20 expense of such accommodation, maintenance and medical care shall be
21 paid by such woman or her relatives or from any available funds of the
22 local correctional facility and if not available from such sources,
23 shall be a charge upon the county, city or town in which is located the
24 court from which such inmate was committed to such local correctional
25 facility. If such woman is confined in any institution under the control
26 of the department, the expense of such accommodation, maintenance and
27 medical care shall be paid by such woman or her relatives and if not
28 available from such sources, such maintenance and medical care shall be
29 paid by the state. In cases where payment of such accommodations, main-
30 tenance and medical care is assumed by the county, city or town from
31 which such inmate was committed the payor shall make payment by issuing
32 payment instrument in favor of the agency or individual that provided
33 such accommodations and services, after certification has been made by
34 the head of the institution to which the inmate was legally confined,
35 that the charges for such accommodations, maintenance and medical care
36 were necessary and are just, and that the institution has no available
37 funds for such purpose.

38 2. A child so born may be returned with its mother to the correctional
39 institution in which the mother is confined unless the chief medical
40 officer of the correctional institution shall certify that the mother is
41 physically unfit to care for the child, in which case the statement of
42 the said medical officer shall be final. A child may remain in the
43 correctional institution with its mother for such period as seems desir-
44 able for the welfare of such child, but not after it is one year of age,
45 provided, however, if the mother is in a state reformatory and is to be
46 paroled shortly after the child becomes one year of age, such child may
47 remain at the state reformatory until its mother is paroled, but in no
48 case after the child is eighteen months old. If a pregnant woman or
49 mother of a child under the age of eighteen months is incarcerated at a
50 state or local correctional facility, the department shall inform her of
51 her ability to apply to any nursery program run by the department and
52 the locality. Any woman confined in a state or local correctional facil-
53 ity shall receive notice in writing in a language and manner understand-
54 able to her about the requirements of this section upon her admission to
55 a state or local correctional facility and again when she is known to be
56 pregnant. The superintendent or sheriff shall publish notice of the

1 requirements of this section in prominent locations where medical care
2 is provided. The officer in charge of such institution may cause a child
3 cared for therein with its mother to be removed from the institution at
4 any time before the child is one year of age. He or she shall make
5 provision for a child removed from the institution without its mother or
6 a child born to a woman inmate who is not returned to the institution
7 with its mother as hereinafter provided. He or she may, upon proof
8 being furnished by the father or other relatives of their ability to
9 properly care for and maintain such child, give the child into the care
10 and custody of such father or other relatives, who shall thereafter
11 maintain the same at their own expense. If it shall appear that such
12 father or other relatives are unable to properly care for and maintain
13 such child, such officer shall place the child in the care of the
14 commissioner of public welfare or other officer or board exercising in
15 relation to children the power of a commissioner of public welfare of
16 the county from which such inmate was committed as a charge upon such
17 county. The officer in charge of the correctional institution shall send
18 to such commissioner, officer or board a report of all information
19 available in regard to the mother and the child. Such commissioner of
20 public welfare or other officer or board shall care for or place out
21 such child as provided by law in the case of a child becoming dependent
22 upon the county.

23 4. Upon admitting a woman known to be pregnant, or upon learning of
24 pregnancy status, the chief medical officer of each correctional facili-
25 ty housing female inmates, including the medical professional responsi-
26 ble for each local correctional facility housing female inmates, or such
27 officer or professional's designee, shall immediately inform such woman
28 of the option of participating in pregnancy counseling services and the
29 right to abortion services.

30 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after
31 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
32 ment and/or repeal of any rules or regulations necessary for the imple-
33 mentation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made by
34 the department of corrections and community supervision in consultation
35 with the department of health on or before such effective date.