

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2620 Session of
1998

INTRODUCED BY CALTAGIRONE, GANNON, RAMOS, FAIRCHILD, ITKIN,
MELIO, E. Z. TAYLOR, GIGLIOTTI, McNAUGHTON, STABACK,
M. COHEN, TANGRETTI, JAMES, WOJNAROSKI, C. WILLIAMS, BEBKO-
JONES, HENNESSEY, STEELMAN, KIRKLAND, YOUNGBLOOD, HORSEY,
DeWEESE, WASHINGTON AND SERAFINI, MAY 11, 1998

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MAY 11, 1998

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for instruction on persons
3 with disabilities.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 53 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 § 2172. Instruction on persons with disabilities.

9 (a) General rule.--In accordance with the act of October 27,
10 1955 (P.L.744, No.222), known as the Pennsylvania Human
11 Relations Act, the commission shall include in the minimum
12 course requirements of section 2164(1) (relating to powers and
13 duties of commission) instruction to enhance the officers'
14 ability to recognize various disabilities for the purpose of
15 affording people with disabilities the same access, services and
16 protection provided to all citizens. The instruction shall
17 enhance officers' ability to recognize the nature and

characteristics of various disabilities and provide awareness regarding appropriate physical and emotional support to people with disabilities who seek access to police services or who come in contact with the police. Training shall include but not be limited to:

(1) Recognition of symptoms and appropriate medical and emotional support for people experiencing seizures.

(2) Sensitivity to and appropriate physical support in aiding people who are mobility-challenged, who need physical supports or who use guide or aide dogs.

(3) Rapid access to interpreters for people with hearing and speech disabilities who have a need to communicate with police personnel and the use of basic sign language.

(4) Recognition of the difference between characteristics common to certain disabilities, including, but not limited to, epilepsy, diabetes and deafness, and those associated with antisocial or criminal behavior or reaction to alcohol and drug abuse.

(5) Recognition of the symptoms of mental retardation, autism and other developmental disabilities and the impact those disabilities have on communication and interaction between police officers and citizens with such disabilities.

(6) Other accommodations to ensure service and programmatic access to all people with visual, auditory, physical, mental and emotional disabilities and diabetes, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, learning disabilities, loss of hearing and other disabilities.

(b) Development of curriculum.--The curriculum shall be developed through consultation with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission as provided in section 7(e) of the

1 Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, and in consultation with
2 groups or individuals having expertise in this area, including,
3 but not limited to, The Epilepsy Foundation, Alzheimer's
4 Association, Tourette Syndrome Association, Pennsylvania Society
5 for the Advancement of the Deaf, Learning Disabilities
6 Association of Pennsylvania, Temple University Institute on
7 Disabilities, Office of Mental Health and Retardation and
8 Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and shall be reviewed and updated
9 as necessary every four years.

10 (c) Frequency of in-service training.--Certified officers
11 shall receive in-service training as part of a continuing
12 education program at least every four years regarding the
13 recognition and response to persons with disabilities.

14 (d) Definition.--As used in this section, the term
15 "disability" means:

16 (1) any physical disorder or condition, cosmetic
17 disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of
18 the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal,
19 special sense organs, respiratory, including speech organs,
20 cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic
21 and lymphatic, skin and endocrine;

22 (2) any mental or psychological disorder such as mental
23 retardation, Alzheimer's disease and related disorders,
24 emotional or mental illness and specific learning
25 disabilities; or

26 (3) any contagious and noncontagious disease such as
27 HIV, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, tuberculosis,
28 muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart
29 disease, diabetes, and conditions such as orthopedic, visual,
30 speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

1 The term does not include:

2 (1) transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia,
3 exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not
4 resulting from physical impairments, or other sexual behavior
5 disorders;

6 (2) compulsive gambling, kleptomania or pyromania; or

7 (3) psychoactive substance use disorders resulting from
8 current illegal use of drugs, as defined in schedules I
9 through V of the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64),
10 known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic
11 Act.

12 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.