
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL
No. 2261 Session of
1998

INTRODUCED BY FAIRCHILD, LESCOVITZ, MARKOSEK, BELFANTI, O'BRIEN,
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STRITTMATTER, SURRA, TANGRETTI, E. Z. TAYLOR, TRAVAGLIO,
TULLI, WALKO, C. WILLIAMS, WOJNAROSKI, YEWCIC, ROSS, STERN,
CORRIGAN, COLAFELLA, CAPPABIANCA AND JAMES, FEBRUARY 17, 1998

AS AMENDED ON THIRD CONSIDERATION, IN SENATE, NOVEMBER 18, 1998

AN ACT

1 Requiring public hearings before closing State mental HEALTH OR <—
2 MENTAL RETARDATION facilities.

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

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Mental HEALTH <—
7 OR MENTAL RETARDATION Facility Closure Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

1 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
2 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
3 context clearly indicates otherwise:

4 "Decision." A decision to close or transfer operational
5 ~~control of a mental facility or to allow a material reduction of~~ <—
6 ~~bed complement, services or staff at a mental facility~~ CONTROL <—
7 OF A FACILITY OR TO ALLOW A RESIDENT/PATIENT CENSUS REDUCTION OR
8 STAFF COMPLEMENT REDUCTION OF ~~25%~~ 10% OR MORE AT A FACILITY. <—

9 "Department." The Department of Public Welfare of the
10 Commonwealth.

11 ~~"Material reduction." A reduction of 10% or more.~~ <—

12 ~~"Mental facility." A mental retardation center or mental~~
13 ~~hospital funded and operated by the Commonwealth.~~

14 "FACILITY." A STATE-OPERATED MENTAL HEALTH OR MENTAL <—
15 RETARDATION FACILITY.

16 Section 3. Public hearing.

17 (a) Requirement.--Within 30 days after the department ~~makes~~ <—
18 ANNOUNCES a decision, the department must hold a public hearing <—
19 in the county where the ~~mental~~ facility is located. <—

20 (b) Subjects.--The hearing under subsection (a) must ~~deal~~ <—
21 ~~with~~ CONSIDER EACH OF the following subjects WHICH IS RELEVANT <—
22 TO THE DECISION:

23 (1) Estimated timelines FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE <—
24 DECISION.

25 (2) Types and array of available services for
26 individuals with disabilities and their families.

27 (3) Rights of individuals with disabilities and their
28 families.

29 (4) Process used to develop a community living plan.

30 (5) Individual and community monitoring and safeguards

1 to protect health and safety.

2 (6) Responsibilities of State and local government.

3 (7) Process used to transfer ownership or reuse
4 property.

5 (8) Other issues IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT which may <—
6 affect individuals with disabilities and their families,
7 employees and the community.

8 Section 4. Noncompliance.

9 If the department does not ~~comply with~~ HOLD THE HEARING <—
10 REQUIRED UNDER section 3, the department shall not implement a
11 decision.

12 ~~Section 5. Applicability.~~ <—

13 ~~This act shall apply to decisions made after December 31,~~
14 ~~1997. For the purposes of this section, the Department of Public~~
15 ~~Welfare shall have 30 days from the effective date of this act~~
16 ~~to comply with section 3.~~

17 SECTION 5. APPLICABILITY. <—

18 THIS ACT SHALL APPLY TO DECISIONS MADE AFTER DECEMBER 31,
19 1997. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
20 WELFARE SHALL HAVE 60 DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ACT
21 TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 3.

22 Section ~~6-5~~ 6. Effective date. <—

23 This act shall take effect immediately.