

EDUCATION (24 PA.C.S.) - SUICIDE PREVENTION IN INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

Act of Oct. 24, 2018, P.L. 711, No. 110

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Session of 2018

No. 2018-110

HB 1822

AN ACT

Amending Title 24 (Education) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for suicide prevention in institutions of higher education.

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

Section 1. Title 24 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

CHAPTER 71

SUICIDE PREVENTION IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Sec.

7101. Scope of chapter.

7102. Definitions.

7103. Student mental health and suicide prevention plans.

7104. Certified suicide prevention institution of higher education.

§ 7101. Scope of chapter.

This chapter relates to suicide prevention in institutions of higher education.

§ 7102. Definitions.

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

"Institution of higher education." Includes any of the following:

(1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.

(2) A university within the State System of Higher Education.

(3) The Pennsylvania State University, the University of Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University or any other institution designated as State-related by the Commonwealth.

(4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

(5) A college established under Article XIX-G of the Public School Code of 1949.

(6) An institution of higher education located in and incorporated or chartered by the Commonwealth and entitled to confer degrees as set forth in section 6505 (relating to power to confer degrees) and as provided for by the standards and qualifications prescribed by the State Board of Education under Chapter 65 (relating to private colleges, universities and seminaries).

(7) A private school licensed under the act of December 15, 1986 (P.L.1585, No.174), known as the Private Licensed Schools Act.

(8) A foreign corporation approved to operate an educational enterprise under 22 Pa. Code Ch. 36 (relating to foreign corporation standards).

§ 7103. Student mental health and suicide prevention plans.

(a) Plan required and minimum required contents.--Each institution of higher education may develop and implement a plan to advise students and staff on mental health and suicide prevention programs available both on campus and off campus. The mental health and suicide prevention plan should, at a minimum, include:

(1) Contact information for national, State and local suicide prevention hotlines.

(2) Crisis intervention services, which shall include providing the address, telephone number or any other contact information of individuals with training and experience in mental health issues who focus on suicide prevention. An institution of higher education shall make individuals with training and experience available on campus or remotely for students 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

(3) Mental health services and access, which shall include providing the necessary information to access mental health services, including, but not limited to, health promotion and wellness, student health and counseling, crisis services, local mental health providers and mental health clinics.

(4) Multimedia access, which shall include mental health and suicide warning signs, services available to individuals at no cost and available mental health and suicide prevention resources, which may include mobile applications.

(5) Student communication plans, which shall consist of outreach plans regarding, at a minimum, mental health services and suicide prevention.

(6) Postintervention plans, which shall include a process to create a strategic plan to communicate effectively with students, staff and parents after the loss of a student to suicide.

(b) Public posting.--If an institution of higher education adopts a plan under subsection (a), the institution of higher education shall post on the institution's publicly accessible Internet website the following:

(1) The mental health and suicide prevention plan adopted by the institution of higher education.

(2) Applicable free prevention materials or programs.

(c) Information for students.--If an institution of higher education adopts a plan under subsection (a), the following shall apply:

(1) The institution of higher education shall provide all incoming students with the information required under subsection (a)(1) and (2).

(2) No less than twice a calendar year, the institution of higher education shall transmit to each student by mail or e-mail the information under subsection (a)(1) and (2).

(d) Review and update.--If an institution of higher education adopts a plan under subsection (a), the institution of higher education shall review and update the plan at least once annually.

§ 7104. Certified suicide prevention institution of higher education.

(a) Transmittal of plan.--If an institution of higher education adopts a plan under section 7103(a) (relating to student mental health and suicide prevention plans), the institution of higher education shall transmit a copy of the plan to the Department of Education by August 1 of each year.

(b) Duties of department.--

(1) If the Department of Education receives a student mental health and suicide prevention plan from an institution of higher education, the department shall post that information on its publicly accessible Internet website.

(2) If an institution of higher education submits a plan to the Department of Education containing information under section 7103(a), the department shall designate the institution of higher education as a certified suicide prevention institution of higher education.

(3) The Department of Education may adopt or create a logo for institutions of higher education that have been certified as certified suicide prevention institutions of higher education. If the Department of Education adopts or creates a logo, an institution of higher education which has been certified by the Department of Education may use the logo.

(c) Designation of institution of higher education.--Upon listing of an institution of higher education's plan containing information under section 7103(a) on the Department of Education's publicly accessible Internet website, the institution of higher education may use and market the designation of "Certified Suicide Prevention Institution of Higher Education."

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 120 days.

APPROVED--The 24th day of October, A.D. 2018.

TOM WOLF