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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 917 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY BROWNE, BAKER, WILLIAMS, FONTANA, ALLOWAY,  
TARTAGLIONE, BREWSTER, VULAKOVICH, RAFFERTY, COSTA, DINNIMAN,  
MENSCH AND HUGHES, JUNE 24, 2015

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REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, JUNE 24, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the  
2 Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in juvenile matters,  
3 providing for interagency information sharing.

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

6 Section 1. Title 42 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 § 6352.2. Interagency information sharing.

9 (a) General rule.--The contents of county agency, drug and  
10 alcohol, mental health and education records regarding a child  
11 who is the subject of an open child protective services or  
12 general protective services investigation, who is alleged to be  
13 dependent, who has been accepted for service by a county agency,  
14 who has been placed under supervision under an informal  
15 adjustment or consent decree, who has been found to have  
16 committed a delinquent act or who has been found to be dependent  
17 or delinquent shall be provided, upon request, to the county  
18 agency, court or juvenile probation department, under and except

1 as prohibited by the following:

2 (1) This chapter.

3 (2) Section 5944 (relating to confidential  
4 communications to psychiatrists or licensed psychologists).

5 (3) The act of November 29, 1990 (P.L.585, No.148),  
6 known as the Confidentiality of HIV-Related Information Act.

7 (4) The act of July 9, 1976 (P.L.817, No.143), known as  
8 the Mental Health Procedures Act.

9 (5) The act of February 13, 1970 (P.L.19, No.10),  
10 entitled "An act enabling certain minors to consent to  
11 medical, dental and health services, declaring consent  
12 unnecessary under certain circumstances."

13 (6) Federal law, including the Family Educational Rights  
14 and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 90-247, 20 U.S.C. §  
15 1232g), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability  
16 Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936) and the  
17 procedures, limitations and criteria set forth in regulations  
18 adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services  
19 relating to the confidentiality of drug and alcohol records.

20 (b) Sharing of information.--

21 (1) The county agency, court or juvenile probation  
22 department shall, in accordance with the procedures  
23 established under this section, use the information contained  
24 in the records in furtherance of a disposition under this  
25 chapter of the child who is the subject of the records.  
26 Unless otherwise prohibited by this chapter or by the  
27 statutes or regulations listed under subsection (a) (2), (3),  
28 (4), (5) and (6), the information contained in the records  
29 may, notwithstanding any other provision of law, be shared  
30 among authorized representatives of the county agency, court

1 and juvenile probation department in furtherance of a  
2 disposition under this chapter of the child, or, if no child-  
3 specific or other confidential information is disclosed, in  
4 furtherance of efforts to identify and provide services to  
5 children who are determined to be at risk of child abuse,  
6 parental neglect or initial or additional delinquent  
7 behavior.

8 (2) Unless otherwise prohibited under this chapter or by  
9 the statutes or regulations listed under subsection (a)(2),  
10 (3), (4), (5) and (6), the information under paragraph (1)  
11 may also be shared with other agencies or entities if there  
12 is a specific need to do so. The information shall be shared  
13 for the limited purposes set forth under this section under  
14 an interagency information-sharing agreement developed under  
15 subsection (c) or upon order of court or the written consent  
16 of the parent or guardian of the child who is the subject of  
17 the records or any person otherwise having the authority to  
18 consent to the sharing of the information.

19 (c) Interagency information-sharing agreements.--

20 (1) Subject to approval of the court and the  
21 requirements of this chapter and the statutes and regulations  
22 listed under subsection (a)(2), (3), (4), (5) and (6), an  
23 interagency information-sharing agreement may be developed in  
24 each county among the county agency, juvenile probation  
25 department, local law enforcement agencies, mental health  
26 agencies, drug and alcohol agencies, local school districts,  
27 and other agencies and entities as deemed appropriate, to  
28 enhance the coordination of case management services to and  
29 the supervision of children who have been accepted for  
30 service by a county agency, who are being supervised under an

1 informal adjustment or a consent decree, who have been found  
2 to have committed a delinquent act or who have been found to  
3 be dependent or delinquent, to enhance the coordination of  
4 efforts to identify children who may be at risk of child  
5 abuse, parental neglect or initial or additional delinquent  
6 behavior and to provide services to these children and their  
7 families. Any agreement under this subsection shall be signed  
8 by the chief executive officers of the entities referred to  
9 in this section as well as the public defender's office and  
10 guardian ad litem in each county and shall be submitted to  
11 the court for approval. In counties that do not have agencies  
12 with primary responsibility for representing delinquent or  
13 dependent children, the court shall designate attorneys at  
14 law with experience in representing those children to satisfy  
15 the requirements of this paragraph.

16 (2) All interagency information-sharing agreements  
17 shall, at a minimum, do all of the following:

18 (i) Provide that information will be shared under  
19 this chapter and the statutes or regulations listed under  
20 subsection (a) (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) to enhance  
21 the coordination of case management services to and the  
22 supervision of children who have been found to be  
23 dependent or delinquent, who are being supervised under  
24 an informal adjustment or a consent decree, who have been  
25 found to have committed a delinquent act or who have been  
26 accepted for service by a county agency, and to enhance  
27 the coordination of efforts to identify children who may  
28 be at risk of child abuse, parental neglect or initial or  
29 additional delinquent behavior and to provide services to  
30 these children and their families.

1           (ii) Whenever possible, the preferred method for  
2 obtaining authorization to share confidential information  
3 shall be upon the written, informed consent of the person  
4 authorized under applicable law to consent to the release  
5 of information after that person has been provided a full  
6 understanding of the circumstances under which and with  
7 whom the information will be shared.

8           (iii) Set forth the specific activities in which the  
9 signatories and the signatories' representatives will  
10 engage, either collectively or individually, in  
11 furtherance of the purposes of the agreement.

12           (iv) Prohibit the release of information shared  
13 under this agreement with other parties, except as  
14 otherwise required or permitted by statute.

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