
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1271 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY MIHALEK, APRIL 17, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, APRIL 17, 2019

AN ACT

1 Requiring information relating to parenting and prenatal
2 depression, postpartum depression, postpartum psychosis and
3 other emotional trauma counseling and screening to be
4 provided to a pregnant woman; and providing for the powers
5 and duties of the Department of Health.

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

8 Section 1. Short title.

9 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Prenatal and
10 Postpartum Counseling and Screening Act.

11 Section 2. Counseling information and screening.

12 (a) Duty to provide.--A hospital, birthing center,
13 physician, nurse-midwife or midwife who provides prenatal care
14 to a pregnant woman during gestation or at delivery of an infant
15 shall:

16 (1) Provide the woman with a fact sheet that includes
17 common symptoms of the medical conditions of prenatal
18 depression, postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis
19 and for emotional traumas associated with pregnancy and
20 parenting. The fact sheet shall present, in a prominent

1 place, the following statement:

2 Prenatal depression, postpartum depression and postpartum
3 psychosis are serious medical conditions that require a
4 physician's evaluation and recommendations for treatment.

5 If you are suffering from any of the signs and symptoms
6 of these conditions, you should immediately inform your
7 treating physician or psychiatric physician.

8 (2) Provide the woman with a resource list of the names,
9 addresses and telephone numbers of professional organizations
10 that provide prenatal counseling, postpartum counseling and
11 assistance to parents.

12 (3) Screen the woman for postpartum depression symptoms
13 prior to discharge from the birthing facility and at the
14 first few postnatal check-up visits.

15 (4) Document in the patient's record that the patient
16 received the information described in paragraph (1).

17 (5) Retain the documentation for at least three years in
18 the hospital's, birthing center's, physician's, nurse-
19 midwife's or midwife's records.

20 (b) Resources to be included.--The information under
21 subsection (a) shall include resources a pregnant woman may
22 contact to receive treatment, counseling and assistance for the
23 medical conditions of prenatal depression, postpartum depression
24 and postpartum psychosis and for emotional traumas associated
25 with pregnancy and parenting.

26 (c) Presumption of compliance.--A hospital, birthing center,
27 physician, nurse-midwife or midwife who provides prenatal care
28 to a woman during gestation or at delivery is presumed to have
29 complied with this section if the woman received prior prenatal
30 care from another hospital, birthing center, physician, nurse-

1 midwife or midwife in this Commonwealth during the same
2 pregnancy.

3 Section 3. Powers and duties of Department of Health.

4 The Department of Health shall:

5 (1) Adopt and promulgate rules and regulations as
6 necessary to carry out the purposes and provisions of this
7 act.

8 (2) Enforce this act and the rules and regulations
9 promulgated under this act.

10 (3) Make available on the department's publicly
11 accessible Internet website a printable list of professional
12 organizations that provide pregnancy counseling and
13 assistance to parents, along with a fact sheet and the
14 statement as referenced in section 2(a)(1).

15 (4) Update the list required under paragraph (3) on a
16 monthly basis.

17 Section 4. Effective date.

18 This act shall take effect in 60 days.