
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 971 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, HILL-EVANS, KOSIEROWSKI, SANCHEZ,
SCHLOSSBERG, CIRESI, BURGOS, SCHWEYER, ISAACSON AND GALLOWAY,
MARCH 18, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MARCH 18, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No.111),
2 entitled "An act providing for victims' rights; imposing
3 penalties; establishing remedies; establishing the Office of
4 Victim Advocate, the Bureau of Victims' Services, the
5 Victims' Services Advisory Committee, the State Offender
6 Supervision Fund and other funds; and making repeals," in
7 preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions;
8 and, in services, further providing for establishment of
9 basic services for victims of crime.

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

12 Section 1. Section 103 of the act of November 24, 1998
13 (P.L.882, No.111), known as the Crime Victims Act, is amended by
14 adding a definition to read:

15 Section 103. Definitions.

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

19 * * *

20 "Hospital." An institution with an organized medical staff
21 established for the purpose of providing to inpatients, by or

1 under the supervision of physicians, diagnostic and therapeutic
2 services for the care of individuals who are injured, disabled,
3 pregnant, diseased, sick or mentally ill or rehabilitation
4 services for the rehabilitation of individuals who are injured,
5 disabled, pregnant, diseased, sick or mentally ill. The term
6 includes facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of disorders
7 within the scope of specific medical specialties. The term
8 excludes facilities caring exclusively for the mentally ill.

9 * * *

10 Section 2. Section 902(2)(ii) of the act is amended to read:
11 Section 902. Establishment of basic services for victims of
12 crime.

13 The commission shall provide technical assistance to and make
14 grants to district attorneys, other criminal justice agencies or
15 victim service agencies which provide crime victims with the
16 following services:

17 * * *

18 (2) Protection services, including all of the following:

19 * * *

20 (ii) A secure waiting area during court proceedings
21 which does not require them to be in close proximity to
22 defendants and families and friends of defendants[.] as
23 follows:

24 (A) The secure waiting area shall be a locked
25 room within the judicial center or courthouse which
26 is exclusively used by victims, witnesses, attorneys
27 and family members of victims and witnesses. The
28 secure waiting area shall be designed to accommodate
29 such individuals.

30 (B) The commission shall set standards of

1 construction for a secure waiting area and complete
2 annual inspections of each secure waiting area in
3 this Commonwealth to ensure compliance with the
4 standards set by the commission.

5 (iii) A secure waiting area in a hospital which does
6 not require them to be in close proximity to defendants
7 and families and friends of defendants as follows:

8 (A) The secure waiting area shall be a locked
9 room within a hospital which is exclusively used by
10 victims, witnesses, attorneys and family members of
11 victims. The secure waiting area shall be designed to
12 accommodate such individuals.

13 (B) The commission shall set standards of
14 construction for the secure waiting area and complete
15 annual inspections of each secure waiting area in
16 this Commonwealth to ensure compliance with the
17 standards set by the commission, in collaboration
18 with the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

19 * * *

20 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.